

SUBSTANCE AND SHADOWS;

OR,

PHASES OF EVERY-DAY LIFE.

BY

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AUTHOR OF "UNCLE SAM'S PALACE," "HOUSE-KEEPING AND
KEEPING HOUSE," ETC. ETC. ETC.

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SUBSTANCE AND SHADOWS.

PERFECTION IN LIVING.

How few understand the art of living happily! Is it not strange, when so many have lived before us, and we might derive the advantage of their experience, that, after all, we so fail of attaining the desirable end? We begin wrong, and then keep on wrong, and, of course, are doomed to end wrong. Take, for example, a newly-married pair. The inquiry is not often "what can we afford, and how can we best consistently live?" — but, "what can I induce my father to give me? — how handsome an outfit can I possibly obtain?" The Brussels carpets and long mirrors, in the houses of the affluent, did not always hang there. There was a tedious process of accumulation before sufficient was earned to justify the outlay. The father, ten chances to one, sailed to foreign lands, encountered storms and shipwreck, but, not disheartened, still pursued his employment, and at length became a successful owner, and retired from his exposed condition upon the waves. But he has a daughter. She never knew of her mother's anxieties lest master and cargo should be

lost; for she was too young to be distressed with imaginary troubles. She is to be married; and this same hard-earned money is freely expended, and the new mansion outvies the old one; but, alas! we fear the experience of that toiling pair is wanting to learn the art of living rightly. The idea that "father is rich, and I shall never want," has been the ruin of thousands.

There, too, is the opulent merchant. Was he always so? Some may tell you he once traded in a very small way; but they remember, too, how carefully he kept an eye to his accounts, that expenditures should not exceed the income. Is the son pursuing the same course? Where he rides, the father walked. When the father began life, the evenings were not spent at the theatres nor amusements; but in a snug corner, with a little square table before a small fire, he used to "figure up" how much he could afford to purchase for the enlargement of his stock; and then his prudent wife was willing to dispense with all useless finery. How is it now? He is worth two hundred thousand! Does he enjoy more at the marble table, when the son is vexing him to know if he may not go abroad, as an apology for doing nothing, than at that little square one, where only one candle shone upon his Day-Book and Ledger? He will tell you, "But Frank must be indulged;" and the money is launched out which will unfit him for a busy, industrious, happy life. Travelling merely to be idle, never benefited anybody; for they are too indolent to improve.

But what comes of all this living? Certainly there is little happiness; for, at present, a busy round of exciting pleasure is counted as the perfection of living.

Now, satiety follows all this effort to be happy; whereas a steady, industrious person, who lives with forethought, who really desires to improve, does not do so.

Things that are had for the mere asking are not prized like those for which we have toiled. It is a miserable notion that we must shield children from knowing how to labor—ay, and from actual labor. They never can know happiness; they never will live well.

When shall we learn that it is not what is *without*, but what is *within*, that gives the true perfection of living? I believe the trouble lies in not doing, as well as in overdoing. When I see people so vexed because they cannot procure some one to do for them what they would feel all the better for doing themselves, my envy for the wealth which occasions the torment, ceases. The fretfulness of the present day is much on the increase, simply because we are so dependent on others. The multiplication of luxuries makes the multiplication of servants. We overload our tables, and at the same time have a distaste for viands which no toil has sweetened. The poor body is put under "electric shocks," because our nerves are too weak to oversee our cook or direct our chambermaid.

We are forced to ride where we should walk, and then complain of the inattention of the coachman, and scold him about his carelessness. "Getting one's living" is considered vulgar; and, as no passport to good society is furnished people who work, is it any wonder so many are striving to be gentlemen and ladies? This causes the clerk to lay out all his salary (it is well if he does not more), in imitation of the rich man's son, who dresses no

better than he; and the little shop-girl foregoes many comforts, that she may secure a silk dress like a customer's? With these perverted views, where are we to end? Who will make the next generation? Let us learn to be as independent as possible of others. Let us ask, with a manly courage, can I afford to do thus and so? Will it dignify my character to yield to this indulgence? Shall I gain the respect of the truly worthy by these false shows? Give a bold, thoughtful, attention to these things, and be guided by the answer; for the perfection of living is in beginning to live rightly.

SUDDENLY RICH.

MR. ATHOL went to bed a poor man, and awoke the next morning worth some two hundred thousand dollars! Before the accession of wealth, he was a toiling man for a dependent family; yet he always acquired sufficient, by his industry, to keep his children in good condition, and his wife a light-hearted woman; besides having an agreeable intercourse with neighbors in the same block, under similar circumstances. With a free and easy heart, every Saturday night Athol settled with the world, and squared all his accounts; so he went to church with a feeling of independence as long as his health should be continued him. To be sure, riches in the prospective looked inviting to this worthy couple. They used to wish for them to enable them to highly educate their children, to befriend the poor widow in the next street, and, as they needed, to bestow a pittance upon their aged parents; but they never coveted luxurious fare, showy dress, or a splendid equipage; perhaps because they were so unattainable they left no room for such wishes.

But we said John Athol awoke one morning and found himself a rich man. Being descended of English parents, it appeared, by an advertisement in the evening paper, "that the heirs of Peter Athol could learn some-

thing greatly to their advantage by calling upon Smich & Co." That intelligence was neither more nor less than that an aged uncle — a rich, miserly man, who had never married — had recently died, and left a will, bequeathing to sundry unknown relatives in America, the heirs of his brother Peter, the whole of his estate, after defraying his funeral expenses, and giving an annuity to his trusty servant, Jude.

The estate could not be exactly appraised; it was thought that it could not fall short of as many English pounds as in our currency would amount to two hundred thousand dollars; and John Athol, a laboring man, was the only heir to all this property!

The curious sensations which this event awakened were worthy of a graphic sketcher. The postman handed honest John the letter just as he awoke at early dawn. His behavior was not unlike the wild excess of joy which a lunatic would manifest on some special breaking out of sunshine in his heart. He read the letter first to his wife. Her exclamation was characteristic of such a woman:

"Well, John, we shall not be obliged to work any more, and can dress ourselves as well as the best of 'em."

"Yes," said John; "and we can have a new house, and keep a carriage if we like, and have our servants, and eat all the luxuries in the market. Turkeys and plum-puddings will make our daily dinners, instead of soup and mutton broth, and cheap vegetables. And besides, we can travel all over the world. How kind it was in uncle Peter thus to remember us! We must pay

our respects to his burial-place, and this, of course, will carry us abroad. But let us wake the children, and tell them of our good luck."

Peter, Nancy, Susy and Tommy, were all old enough to know what money could do for them, and such a merry household as the news created was never before in John Athol's premises. Every one of them immediately proceeded to tell what they could now purchase, and how happy it would make them.

"Now," said Susy, "we must not associate with the poor people around us. Having wealth, gives us a new standing in society, and when we move we will bestow some little presents upon the poor about us, just to keep them in good favor, and then we will leave them forever."

"That's a lucky thought," replied the mother; "but would it not be best to conceal for the present our great wealth, until we can get some plans matured?"

They all thought so, and agreed to keep the matter close.

There was a heavy rap at the door. A whole company of the neighbors were standing without to welcome and congratulate honest John upon his good fortune. Not a few, however, hinted that "they hoped this sudden rise in the world would not turn their heads;" and an old farmer in the neighborhood suggested "it was always well to ask the Lord's blessing, that we be not led astray by the snares thus thrown in our way." Honest John thanked him, but we fear forgot to put up the petition.

Our friends will notice that what this worthy couple coveted riches for, before they came, had never been

mentioned by them since, namely, the education of their children, helping the poor, and giving a lift to the aged parents. Susy, to be sure, had spoken of having a music-master, and buying a harp, because pianos were so common; and Peter said he should like to go through college, if he could do so and not study. All seemed to have wishes very different from their former ones. The news ran like telegraphic despatches, that John Athol was a millionaire, gathering a growing sum in the mouth of each one who heralded it. The Athol family were nearly insane.

Never were people before in such a dilemma! They began to be far more unhappy than ever before, and when the steamer brought a remittance of several thousands in specie, it was, on the whole, the most disquieted day the family had ever known. Stepping out from daily employment, and looking upon such a store of uncounted gold, and then feeling such a restless desire to appropriate it in such a manner as to make themselves happy, was anything but agreeable to lookers-on. Singular as it may appear, they began to be selfish in the very beginning; or rather they were so contracted they had no regard to supply anybody's wants but their own; and herein lay the secret of feeling such disquietude. Indeed, so entirely had the family immured themselves in consultations at home, that they were not regretted, as they might have been, when they removed from their cheap, small tenement, to the granite house upon the hill. Once, however, fairly settled in great splendor in their new abode, and the name of Athol glittering showily upon the door, inquiries were at once commenced among

the neighbors as to who occupied the dwelling; and being told how they had suddenly risen from daily labor to be "somebody," the wealthy old aristocrats' children, if not their sires, turned up their noses and laid a veto upon their acquaintance.

The first winter, therefore, was passed in most "inglorious ease." John Athol dressed in broadcloth and had nothing to do, and, more than all, he had no associates; for his former companions in toil he foolishly supposed would interfere with his dignity, by coming too closely in contact with him, and, to most of the old citizens, John had an ungainly appearance which broadcloth could not hide. His wife, too, was never so unhappy before. She kept a great supply of servants, and erroneously concluded she could be thus relieved from all labor herself. In a very short time, however, she heard disagreement among the servants, and saw waste and destruction in larder, kitchen and cellar; and sometimes, forgetting her wealth, she plunged into domestic matters as formerly, and somehow she confessed she felt much better than with her hands folded in the drawing-rooms. She supposed it was natural to her to work, but now she hid her labors from observation, lest it should not be *creditable* to her station.

But the children much more readily fell into the new mode of living. They soon learned what it was to be "fashionable;" but it evidently did not agree with their constitutions. They grew puny, wasp-waisted, and dependent. The boys were in a fair way to be ruined! They aped the complete dandy—wore patent leather boots or French calf-skins, carried walking-sticks with

gold heads, wore broad-brimmed hats and fashionable neck-ties; and, more than all, rose late in the morning, because they were out so late at nights. Evidently John Athol's family were depreciating; and before long he became aware of the fact, that money, invested in mere luxuries, dwarfed the better part of human nature.

Still there came continual remittances, and Mr. Athol was now forced to consult with a broker as to investing it. He bought stocks in newly-formed companies, in the expectancy of doubling his property; but his schemes did not all work as he had promised himself; still there was a large margin wherein he could speculate. It looked to John Athol like prairie grass to a northerner, when he has just left a stunted half-crop at home. Yet gradually the money seemed to elude his grasp, and he soon found it was quite as much a task to learn to keep it as to earn it, and far more unsatisfactory. The children grew clamorous — they grew dyspeptic, too, from want of exercise, and they grew impatient and unhappy from want of employment. The girls were in no fair way to keep their present position, for one was flirting with a profligate dandy, and the other was engaged to one who lived on ice-creams and drank sarsaparilla bitters, if nothing stronger — and he had a character corresponding to his diet.

John Athol and his wife began to be alarmed about their children more than themselves. They therefore concluded to break up the city establishment in the spring, and begin a new life. They concluded upon a trip across the water, and all the family embarked for Europe. On the passage there was a clergyman, with

whom they formed a decided intimacy. John told him all his former history. They had serious conversations by moonlight upon the deck of the vessel, and the rich man seemed troubled in mind. Sometimes he seemed to be impressed that he was not making a right use of his property, and he began to be afraid to give an account of his stewardship. No one could rise up and plead for him; no one could say they had been blessed by him, no widow's heart ever sang for joy because he remembered her "low estate." He told his wife of his wretched misgivings. She tried to comfort him, yet herself felt condemned. The children only laughed at their superstitious fears.

There came a heavy storm upon them during their passage. The captain looked out fearfully, and the pilot felt dismayed; the passengers were terror-stricken, and John Athol quivered like an aspen leaf, and begged the clergyman to pray for him. Money at this time seemed of little consequence; all they coveted was the enduring riches of an inheritance above.

John made most solemn promises if his life should be spared; indeed, all his family seemed impressed while the danger impended; but when the storm ceased, the children forgot their resolutions, and frolicked as before. Not so did their parents.

They were at length safely landed in England, and there John Athol engaged in a lucrative business, and again commenced an industrious career, taking his two boys under his immediate supervision, and allowing them only what was necessary for a respectable appearance, and obliging them to work for that. At first, they

reluctantly acceded, but finding little enjoyment in complete idleness, they soon were happy in their new occupations.

Mrs. Athol attempted an amendment in the young ladies, and so far succeeded as to make them cheerfully surrender their foolish engagements; and, as in England, air and exercise are deemed so essential to strength of body and mind, they all fell into such "fashionable" and healthful habits, and, by slow degrees, they all learned the luxury of doing good with their abundance; and the delightful letters just received in America, represent them in the most vigorous exercise of their powers, fully convinced that to "become rich" without a ballast of character proportionate to their weight, is always more likely to prove a snare than a blessing.

THE BEST ROOMS.

THERE is a kind of grim, staid air, which always gathers around one on entering the spacious drawing-rooms which are devoted wholly to select visitors and fashionable parties. Who does not prefer the free and easy atmosphere of the basement or dining room, or the snug little nursery, where everything lies about carelessly, but not untidily? You can sit down in these places, and feel you are a privileged guest; the stiff demeanor is thrown off, and the thoughts run in an easy channel, and you feel at home.

But the "best rooms" in a city do not wear such a gloomy air as those select places in the country. Deliver me from the tomb-like, sombre appearance of the best parlor in a large wooden house, situated on some bleak hill, where the wind is keeping the *Æolian* harps in continual play through the interstices between the window casements. Such a room is only opened on great occasions. Weddings are celebrated there, and so also are funerals. Once in a few weeks, in summer, invited guests are seated there a few hours previous to dinner or tea. If it is a very warm day, it may be a luxury to stop awhile in this apartment; for the flies rarely enter such a place. It is too cheerless for any living creature to vol-

untarily make it a home, unless it be a company of spiders, and they weave strange network in such places.

It happened during the last summer months, a friend, who was distinguished for her uncommon neatness and keen observation wherever paint was discolored or slightly soiled, threw open the doors of her best parlor to a party of city friends. Unluckily, a huge cobweb was displayed from the mirror to the ceiling, thence the fancy device ran obliquely to the mantel shelf, and as it arrested the attention of one of the party, her eyes seemed riveted to the spot. The hostess, observing it, proposed a walk in the garden, and, having rid her room of visitors, she lost no time in displacing the cobwebs. When they returned, however, the lady very ungallantly joked upon the removal of the web, and added, "I was so delighted to see such an appendage in *your* room, my dear friend, that I am amply repaid for the effort I made to visit you." This practical joke was not, however, pleasantly received, and it only serves to confirm the truth that joking upon facts is at all times quite a hazardous business.

And there is "the parlor chamber" in the country! It has long, snowy-white curtains, deeply fringed, and looped on one side, while the closed blinds give it a sad, sickly hue; but a solemn air seems to gather about you even here. The mahogany bureau looks darker than in any other room; the bed presents an appearance of great comfort beneath its white exterior, but you feel a strange aversion to tumbling and rumpling it. It seems a fit couch for a fevered patient, who longs for a cool and still apartment, where the light of day is excluded. Such

are the associations which gather around "best rooms!" O! I would infinitely prefer the more common-place, where the sun has free access, and people come in and go out cheerfully; where even the children play ball, and roll hoop, and blow soap-bubbles; for all these things indicate that life is within, and merry hearts make us love to live in their sunshine.

Yet, what a strange idea have I broached against such parlors and chambers! Who does not furnish and keep such? We hire a house or buy one. Forthwith we shut up a certain part of it, and reserve it only to open on great occasions. Woe to the child that ventures within one of these sanctums with his playthings! If he is dressed nicely, and his little feet are perfectly clean, when mamma has a fashionable call from a lady who is fond of children, little Tommy may go in and ask the lady "how her little Susy is." But if he touches the tassels upon that embroidered couch, or lifts up the covering a bit to look at the pretty damask all concealed beneath, his mother tells him, "Tommy, dear, you may go into the nursery with Margaret, now. Mother don't allow mischievous boys in this room." Poor child! how gladly he runs out of his prison, to where he can play unrestrained and run without fear! Tell me frankly, kind reader, do *you* love the restraints which these "best rooms" impose?

FANCY WORK.

THE young lady who spends most of her time in doing "fancy work," has a variety of complaints. What *can* produce them? She lies in bed till she is called to breakfast, drinks a strong cup of Mocha, eats a roll, and sits to the *fancy work*! It is "so enchanting," she would just finish that bud, or draw the outline of that superb dahlia, before she dresses for dinner; but, hark! the bell rings, and she took no note of time; father has come home, and Miss Paulina has her morning's work to show him. He praises it exceedingly, gives her a two dollar bill to expend in variegated worsted; declares he does not believe a girl in town is more industrious than she. But, somehow or other, she has little appetite for her dinner; she utterly discards meat; will take a thin slice of currant pudding, and finishes her dessert with a few nuts and raisins. She desires her mamma to purchase those "worsted;" it will save *her* the trouble of *going out*. In a few weeks, a beautiful screen is produced, the work of Miss Paulina's own fingers! How it is shown, by her admiring parents, to numerous friends!

This but goads on the young lady to undertake a set of chair-coverings, and a piano-cloth, to match! In her mind's eye, how splendidly they will look in her own

parlor! for Paulina expects to be married at no distant day, when her lover returns from abroad. With this *engagement*, and the *fancy work*, she has little inclination for society; when she takes a respite, it is to answer her beau's last letter, or to linger over those sentences which he penned on a foreign shore.

Two or three coverings are completed, when the mother finds her daughter lounging upon the couch more frequently, and complaining of a pain in her chest, between her shoulders, and in her side. She looks pale; and, as she gets no better, it is thought best to send for a physician. He comes, examines her pulse, looks at her tongue, thumps on her lungs, leaves a prescription, and goes away. But not so with the *disease*; a universal debility follows, and a cough succeeds. People speak of it as a case of consumption; but the parents are strangely blinded, and talk about Paulina's *native constitution*; that she never from infancy was sick a day before — her cough is a cold; she must take a composition of some sort, which will remove it. The physician leaves a recipe; says little respecting his patient, but examines the lungs more frequently; and finally ends the chapter by telling her friends she had better take a journey to the Sulphur Springs. She does so, and is charmed with the effect. The scenery, and bracing air, and entire change, almost make her well before she reaches the Springs. The parents are joyous — they knew Paulina had no *serious disease*; and, excepting a *slight cough*, and a little tendency to *night-sweats*, they cannot discover but she is perfectly well. Just to amuse a few dull hours, Paulina took her *fancy work*.

At the great hotel, filled with strangers and invalids, she cares not to make herself common. A girl whose affections are pledged to another, cares nothing for the mass of people about her. She drinks the water, bathes, eats at the public table, has a voracious appetite, and, although she looks like an invalid, her parents do not believe her to be one. She spends a month with them, and returns home greatly invigorated, having completed *three chair-coverings*, and traced the outlines for the piano-cloth!

The physician sees not so decided a change for the better as he hoped; but who wishes to communicate such intelligence to fond parents? Mr. Gill is daily expected in the packet ship at New York, and Paulina is on the tiptoe of expectation, and appears in her best humor to meet him. He arrives, but exclaims, "Heavens, Paulina! what have you been about? Why, you are as pale as a lily, and I left you the color of the rose."

Mamma interposes, and details the child's illness; says she attributes a good deal of it to anxiety on *his* account, and quiets the lover with the assurance that she will soon be well again. She does grow better; for she walks now, rides occasionally, and obeys more of the laws of nature, which she has too long defied. Mr. Gill does not seem pleased with the fancy work; has brought some home from Germany, far richer; and so Paulina throws by her worsteds, and bestows all her labor upon her mother, as a parting present. Keep it, fond mother; it was at the expense of a ruined constitution, those buds and flowers were made! Those cypress leaves will have a peculiar significance soon; — they should form the chaplet which

encircles the birth, age, and death of this young girl!

But she marries, — a frail, delicate creature, constantly under the care of a physician, and a perpetual source of anxiety to her husband. Her cough is more and more troublesome, and they are on the eve of starting to pass the winter in Charleston, S. C., when Mrs. Gill is seized with *bleeding at the lungs*, and is utterly prostrated! Her physician only wonders the crisis has been delayed so long! The husband is distressed beyond measure; her mother is frantic, and all at once is awakened to the danger of the case. Now, what efforts are used — to produce recovery! Physicians of acknowledged celebrity are consulted; panaceas that have "never failed" do not reach the case. Nurses and skill may prolong the sufferer's life, but the termination will soon come. The announcement is made that Mrs. Gill is seized with another fit of bleeding, and, shortly after, that she is dead! There is no post mortem examination, although the friends desire it; it is so clearly a plain case of consumption, that medical men ask for no testimony but that already furnished. There should, instead of a post mortem examination, have been a *coroner's inquest*, and it would have been clearly proved that the parents were guilty of murder, certainly in the *second* degree; and they should have been made to atone for such a crime as permitting a child to live without any regard to physical laws, and thus lay the foundation of incurable disease.

But how reads the community such events?

"By a *mysterious Providence*," says the biographer, "a young and interesting female, who had just entered

upon the responsibilities of domestic life, has been suddenly snatched from among us by the insatiate destroyer who spares no mark, however prized. Endowed by nature with a vigorous constitution, the insidious advances of the common enemy were not observed until he had sapped the citadel of life, and thus, in a few short months, the parents' pride, the husband's hope, the light of many a circle, has been snatched away, leaving a numerous band of mourners the reflection that all which friendship and skill could effect was promptly done; but, alas! they proved unavailing." This *libel upon Providence* ought not to be borne! This natural effect of transgression, which as surely followed disobedience, as wilful suicide, should not be ascribed to an *inscrutable decree*! If we thus sin ignorantly, it is all our *own* fault, and we justly deserve the penalty; since every school-book might teach us that exercise and air are indispensable to any tolerable measure of health, particularly in young females.

Fancy work has been the death of hundreds. Who can take any satisfaction in examining the nicest piece of elaborate workmanship, when the penalty paid for it was a spinal affection, or an aching side, or diseased lungs? A great religionist once exclaimed, as he looked upon such a piece of labor, "It is red with the blood of murdered time," alluding to the most conspicuous color in the embroidery. Rather would I call it *suicidal murder*, inflicted by known causes, for reasons *unknown*; for, after all, a yard of tapestry may be twice as beautiful as that upon which life has been sacrificed.

By these remarks I would not be understood to discard the use of the *needle*, and instead thereof substitute *street*

spinning! Far from it—it is *fancy work*, that enchanting labor, which binds some fingers to the employment, regardless of proper exercise, about which we declaim. There is no need of enforcing upon a female not to have so strict a watch over her hosiery and common sewing. I never knew the health to fail by too close application to common work. How seldom is one obliged to be reproved for over-practising upon a piano! How few for mending, or remodelling, their own clothing! How few for attending to *domestic affairs*! It is only upon this useless, *body-destroying*, and, for aught I know, *soul-destroying*, fancy work, that I would pass the laws of condemnation. Believe me, when I add, I am acquainted with a young lady who ruined her health, some years since, *by working a black lace veil*!

CHASING THE RAINBOW.

THERE was a dark cloud in the western horizon. The low mutterings of distant thunder were heard, and a few drops of rain gave warning of a timely character to the loiterer unprotected in his way. And as that heavy cloud united with others, and assumed a still more terrific aspect, the lightning began to play upon the magnetic wires, the wind with redoubled fury swept the foliage against the window-panes, and suddenly the rain fell in torrents. Now, the lately parched street was filled with foaming, rushing water, and pedestrians sought shelter in every nook that offered, and all the by-places were secured as a shelter against the untimely blast. The strife of the elements seemed maddened and fearful; man, in his lofty strength, felt his insecurity and inability to control the mandates of his Creator's will, and shrank like a child, to adore in silence that wordless voice which attested such almighty power. But look now,—the clouds have parted; a narrow strip of clear blue sky is discernible, and a splendid rainbow is over-arching the heavens. Yon little urchin would fain take hold of its foot; for the rainbow seems to have settled down just back of yonder hill. He runs to find its termination; for he would examine the prismatic

colors which are so blended together. He would find how they are commingled—would fain hold in his tiny hand the blue, the violet, and the delicate shaded pink; but, arrived at the hill, it seems still further onward, and its foot now rests as far beyond his present location, as when he first started. Chase the rainbow as far as he will, it is always terminated in the distance.

The child cries over the delusion; he wonders *of* what and *for* what rainbows were made; they are emblematic of no promise to him; he wants a *grasping reality*. But is it the *child* only who chases the rainbow? How many, who have started in life with the heavy cloud above them, have, as it parted and unfolded some magic colors, been allured by the dazzling brightness, and entered upon a vain pursuit to catch the illusion, and yet have always found it still further from their grasp! I would not that so many misguided travellers should rise before me; for that thunder-cloud ought to have left a salutary influence; those heavy rain-drops were designed to moisten the parched soil of the human affections, and that rainbow which followed was a sure pledge that the promises thus awakened would be fulfilled—only we are too curious to examine the blended colors, which are the precursors of our future welfare.

Yet, look out once more upon nature when the transient shower has subsided. That furious blast, which so curled and bent, and even prostrated, the delicate buds; that rain, which so washed the roots and made numberless little seams of earth as if lacerated to the very foundation, has unsealed the bud, and, as we look, the flower is imperceptibly but beautifully opening to our gaze;

the drooping tendrils again rise with renewed strength; the bright sun kisses off the pearly drops that stood upon leaf and tender limb, and the beautiful reflection of the rainbow tinges this once fearful shower with a beauty worth the skill of the heavenly Architect.

Just so in daily life—the discipline of dark clouds is only an augury of bright manifestations in the distance; our tears are but the fertilizing of dry and dusty spots which needed their genial influences, and the rainbow is but the light of our Father's countenance, to illumine the eye of faith with the tokens of his love.

TIMIDITY.

THE feeling of timidity, which sometimes embarrasses us in the presence of our superiors, often makes us unjust to ourselves. Our timidity drives our senses out of us. We are ashamed of our bashfulness, and this consciousness makes us awkward in our attempts to overcome it. We have a friend who is very loquacious, and always talks to the purpose, save in the presence of *one man*; and before him he never uttered a sentence worth repeating. We were forcibly struck with the same kind of reserve which Hazlitt describes in a visit he paid to Coleridge.

The thought of the meeting had worn heavily upon him, for he seemed to disparage his own powers, and magnify his friend's. After the small-talk incident to meeting was discussed, Hazlitt undertook to give Coleridge an account of some thoughts he had written "On the Natural Disinterestedness of the Human Mind." "But," said he, "I failed; and, after I had tried for the twentieth time, I got some new pens and paper, and determined to make clear work of it. I wrote a few meagre sentences in the skeleton style of a mathematical demonstration; but I was forced to stop when half way down the second page, for I tried in vain to pump

words, images, notions, apprehensions, fancies, and facts, from that gulf of abstraction in which I was plunged, and concluded by shedding a few tears of despondency on the blank, unfinished paper. I can write better now! Am I better than I was then? O, no! my timidity has left me."

Great minds undoubtedly feel distanced as well as attracted by each other. Only weak heads with shallow brains will chatter on regardless of their superiors. But we are fast, as a mass, getting out of this bashfulness. We are running too far at random, reckless of what people think or say of us. Hence, possessed of one idea, we carry it about with us, and throw it in everybody's face; — we write with lightning speed, and the thoughts are scorching, and show only the wildness of the brain. Such people know not the definition of timidity, and we question whether, in the progress of the nineteenth century, the word, if used at all, will not be found in our dictionaries with a parenthesis, marked (obsolete).

THE HOLIDAY WALK.

WOULD that everybody were happy about these festival days! We would iron out the wrinkles from the careworn brow, and put a jubilant tone into the speech of those who are brooding over "memories of the past," and show every gloomy countenance how it may be irradiated by a cheerful smile in the contemplation of the blessings which, although withdrawn, were continued so long and gave so much of zest to former days. But we must remind such that they must look out from *themselves*; and if they will put on their winter garments and go with me into the crowded thoroughfares of our great metropolis, where at every other step they will see the inviting placards, "Christmas and New-Year Gifts at reduced prices," "Dry Goods at cost," "California outdone," "Secure your bargains here," &c., just as we happen to stop at the window of a toy-shop we shall be sure to find Mr. Jones, or Smith, or Brown, who has taken his wife and their two little precocities into this very shop, to select their holiday presents. The parents of these children have concluded it is best that "Sammy and Tommy" shall make their own selections this year. It will throw them more on their own resources, help them develop their immature judgment, and, in short,

make them *more manly*. Now the spectator would judge there is little need of that conclusion, for they both are dressed in small-clothes with knee-buckles, wear tiny beaver hats, and carry walking-sticks, which they flourish with more of an air than "Grandpa." Besides, the little fellows know enough of the definition of words to tell you the different meanings of "I will" and "I won't," as they are selecting their holiday presents. "Mamma" has stood this half hour trying to persuade "Sammy" to take a little box entitled "The Wonders of Creation in a Nut-shell;" but he has seen a drum, with the two sticks attached to its sides, and master Tommy is blowing a miniature fife, and five and seven years are not insensible to martial music, and they are resolved to secure these noisy playthings, and act the part of soldiers; for Biddy has promised to make them each a paper cap and put a red feather in it. Well, they have carried the day, and the purchases are made.

Just at the further end of the same counter little "Susy" is selecting a big doll. "No, she don't want any other but that;" although mother thinks five dollars is a great sum to pay for a miniature baby, when so many real, living foundlings are set down at our doors for nothing. Watch a moment.

"Susy" has secured her treasure, and it is laid in a bit of a trundle-bed, and her little eyes sparkle with delight, and she jumps and capers and tosses up the baby, and imitates the exact movements of the nursery-maid at home. All this is very pretty for sport in both instances. But by and by, when we take a miff at some foreign country, or fancy Cuba would be a pretty append-

age to our United States, the little boys who are to-day playing rub-a-dub will, perchance, have grown to manhood, and the fires of patriotism will burn so fiercely that they cannot be restrained from fighting either "to conquer or die;" and should they be united to the little miss who bought the big doll, but has now grown to womanhood, and tosses a real, live baby, that crows and cries and wants to put his fingers in the gas light, the glorious fun which the purchasers to-day have made, causing them to be so gay and happy, will settle off in a monotone, and they will talk plaintively together about separating, perhaps forever, if slain upon the *battle field*! So, after all, we see there is a responsibility attached even to a holiday present. By these very gifts we may lay the foundation of a ferocious spirit, or sow the seeds of a proud and vain superciliousness, which may flower in after years, when you can never eradicate the root, and shall even have forgotten that you helped the germination by gratifying the indulgence of the first tiny wants of childhood.

THE HYDROPATHIST.

WHY not be a fish, and swim all the time in your native element? Why dart out from the aquatic tub to be placed between feather beds, encased in wet sheets, and thus sweat out thy existence contrary to the law of old, "by the sweat of thy *brow* thou shalt *earn thy bread*"? Do not become a monomaniac upon one idea. Bathing is good,—daily ablution is refreshing, invigorating, cleansing, purifying; but, like all good things, it *may* be perverted. Cold water is not the panacea for every ailment and ill in life; a wet jacket will not always ward off every attack. But let us not quarrel about this liquid element, water. It is to be highly prized,—we will admit all its excellences; but, in doing so, we would not overlook other bountiful provisions of nature, by which both the outer and inner man is made a worthy temple for the human soul. An exclusive medicine, like an exclusive thought, is very apt to derange all the natural functions. You have lost flesh, but you have the cleanly, wholesome appearance of a duck. You have wasted your system by injudiciously applying this element. Some have broken down, by thus doing violence to constitutional laws. Yet you still persist in this daily practice; its use occupies all your

thoughts; your medicine has become your daily thought; and when this is the case, it is the more doubtful whether the malady will leave you. Cheerful occupation for the mind has done more toward recovery of the body than all other remedies put together. Again I caution you, use, but do not abuse, this kindly element. A duck with the mind of a man would be a natural phenomenon. Be a hydropathist if you will, but for humanity's sake do not ally yourself with any other species but that God intended for you.

Look at the canary in your window; watch his habits. Early in the morning he dips his wings, and flutters about in his tiny pond; but no sooner has he done so, than he rises to the top of his cage, and begins to carol forth his song. He is not again in the element rioting in excess. Learn of the bird to be cleanly, but like him plume thy wings for an upward flight.

THE WIFE ON THE HOMESTEAD.

THERE are few positions in life more trying than the situation of a daughter-in-law; particularly if she be doomed to reside with the "old folks," and a variety of brothers and sisters, who are all pledged to their own ways, and feel infallible in their judgment upon others. We are all frail; but the covering with which we shield the faults of our *own kindred* seems to be cast aside in this new relationship. "Richard" never does an improper thing; but if "Mary" has purchased a rich shawl, or has treated herself to a new silk dress, and appears out fresh and neat, without a previous consultation, what a whispering and wondering, perhaps what a jealous and envying disposition is manifested! The old lady says, "she never brought up her girls to such extravagance. Hitty never owned a nice silk in her life, but she earned it in keeping school; and Sarah Ann has never afforded herself a silk cloak. Now, to have such an interloper come right in upon us, and set such fashions, is quite too much for me. Besides, it will fail Richard, poor boy, who has always kept his money in such a snug way." But stop, my good friend; Mary brought to your son some thousands, and has more in expectancy; or she is a sweet-tempered lady, and such conduct will sadly grieve her.

Then woe to the young wife if they live in common! The veriest trifles are often magnified, and the happiness of a family is often marred by the addition of a single extra egg in the pudding, or a disposition to make a little tasteful arrangement upon the table, even with her own purchased articles. In this case, it is said, "modern upstarts wish to begin where their fathers left off. The country is all tending to pauperism, and there is no such thing as economy practised now-a-days."

But the trials are not all told; indeed, no pen could portray all the petty vexations with which some young housekeepers are assailed. A few friends to tea, a light entertainment for the evening, a few extra lamps, an accompaniment to the piano as the finale piece, how it grates and jars on the ears of the old people in the sitting-room! There may have been performers on flutes and tamborines; solos and duets may have been sung for years by their *own* daughters, without a word of complaint; but the scene is changed now! These modern wives have friends with whom they correspond, and sometimes they do not feel as if their time is entirely thrown away if they attend to some literary pursuits, read a valuable book, or even glance over the contents of the daily journal. But to encounter the imputation of "sauntering away one's time," or being charged with "being indifferent to the interests of a husband," because one is sometimes out of the treadmill, is, indeed, a hard lot.

And to fail in well-meant efforts, to have a wrong construction placed upon all one's actions, to be watched, questioned, bored and fretted at, why, it would destroy the serenity of an angel. But worse than all is to have

a backbiting spirit going on with Richard, the husband, by loving sisters and an affectionate mother, to make him feel he has erred in his choice ! Let me tell you, Richard, when it comes to this, for pity's sake find other quarters ; board at some third-rate hotel is preferable, for there independence is felt, and this often atones for a frugal table. If you remain where you are, *as you are*, you will not be troubled many months with a cheerful companion ; she will first pine away without any apparent cause ; the family will never think her much ill ; the advice of a physician will be deemed unnecessary ; and, ere long, she, the light-hearted, rosy-cheeked wife, will slowly decay, like the damask rose with a worm at its root.

This is not all a fancy sketch. Thousands have endured similar trials, and if they have survived them, you will find cross-grained, peevish women have been the result of such living ; and who can tell how many fatal diseases have followed in the train of blighted hopes ?

In most cases, the smallest establishment is more conducive to happiness than taking the wife to the homestead. Exceptions there may be ; but they are few, like the stars in the horizon when most of the sky is overcast.

A CHAPTER ON CORNS.

Who ever wrote out a pain ? What word can express the twinging, indefinable sensation, which arises from the small protuberance called *a corn* ? Yet how few regard such an irritation, that literally makes you so miserable and unhappy ! True, you apply a plaster when your patience is worn out, or you wrap the aching excrescence in emolient, or bathe it in cold water ; but who ever thinks of commiserating with one who has *only a corn* ? A fever may bring more debility with it, but not half so much pain ; a disease which calls for medical aid may excite more alarm, but is not so trying as *a corn*. Did you ever take a walk in the country when the windows of heaven had been shut up some days, and, after you had broiled an hour in the sun, attempt to remove the tight shoe which enclosed your corn ? Could you ever describe the sensation ? Did you ever put on a new pair of boots, and set off in a car or coach, where you were confined all day without remedy, and not suffer more distress than language could describe ?

I appeal to the great brotherhood of humanity, for they are legions, who know by experience that I have sketched realities.

But the foot must be dressed neatly. One must have a good fit, and that means a *snug* one; consequently we go *limping* through the world with a distorted countenance, and walk as if treading on precious gems, simply because our feet are scourged. How we welcome the sight of our best friend, an *old shoe*! How gladly we raise the aching foot to another chair, and feel how comfortable is *solitary confinement*, if we are only at ease! Whence come these afflictive evils — what produces them? "Tight shoes, tight boots," is again and again reiterated. You tell your shoemaker these troubles; he measures you, gives plentiful allowance to ease; but, alas! a woful twinge gives you warning that he has misunderstood the case. You grow despairing, threaten to cut a slit in the side of the new boot or shoe, when along comes the newspaper. The advertisement headed "Corns Cured" has more interest to you than the *Compromise Bill*. The corn can be extracted for the trifling sum of one dollar! The coin in the desk drawer is drawn out most cheerfully, and you are soon on your way to submit to amputation. Some one in the crowded street treads on you, and your corn is touched in the most sensitive part, so that you literally cry out. You arrive at the surgeon's. He looks at the cause of all your nervous agitation, and tells you he can directly relieve you. You throw down the dollar; without much ado he extracts the corn, and you are a happy being. Life seems all sunshine; you fit out in French boots and narrow-toed shoes, and patent shining leather pumps, and really *dance* on, where before you only *limped*.

But did ever an ecstatic joy last long? All at once,

in a hot dog-day, you feel another twinge. There is no mistake in the feeling; a new corn is springing up just where the old one was taken out. You feel that you have been humbugged — go to your doctor with the perspiration on your brow, and demand the reason of this sensation? He tells you, "My dear sare, for one dollar I relieve you. You treat your toe like well person, whereas it be *in val id*." You swing open the door and return, wisely concluding if you are always to wear moccasins and loose slippers, you will help him to no more amputations. In a few days he calls on you to inquire, "If, sare, you object to append your name to von certificat, that you were entirely cured by mine agency?" How lucky it is we were taught lessons of good breeding! How fortunate that we call it "vulgar and low" to kick over a dumb animal, much more a contemptible quack!

There are ills we are born to bear, and *corns* come under this catalogue. We cannot tread firmly, and we need not expect it; we cannot feel easy, and we need not covet it, only when in a dark evening, or about our own home, we find the old slippers and give ourselves to free and easy treatment.

We read that St. Paul says, "a thorn was given him in the flesh." Commentators are divided as to what the annoyance was; but who can doubt but it was a *corn*?

PLEASURE-SEEKING.

TRUNKS and bandboxes were never in greater requisition than at the present time. Look at the coach at the door of your opposite neighbor. See the vast quantity of baggage that is to be piled on behind, beside the carpet-bags and valises under the driver's feet, and the innumerable smaller boxes, and sunshades, and umbrellas, that are to ride inside. We have often pondered upon the show the contents of such an outfit would make, displayed to the eye of the multitude. What bachelor would ever again think of marrying, after having witnessed it? We are now speaking of the mere sight-seeing and pleasure-travelling public. They are starting, they scarcely know where; they expect to touch at fashionable resorts, to rest in quiet country inns, to see life as it is, life as it *should* be, and life as we make it. All these places require a great variety of apparel, adapted to climate, situation, and the company to be met. So "madam" must take her brocades, lest it become too cool for her lighter fabrics; but the "tissues" must not be omitted, because in some places there is a great display of fancy dresses even among the "mammias," on account of the daughters. Then the rigging for the head — the false fronts, or half or whole wigs, fresh from the

dresser's shop, all perfumed with bergamot; the tasteful head-dresses of ribbon, and lace and flowers; the nicely-flounced skirts, over which laundry maids have so copiously perspired, and quit their places; the network hosiery of the choicest silk, which has been whitened around black bottles for the occasion. Why, the legions of articles, which help compose the contents of trunks and bandboxes, who can enumerate half of them, all compressed tightly together, but so carefully wedged as not to wrinkle or tumble each other? Then there are the smaller trunk and little valise, belonging, as the girls say, to "father." These contain shirt-bosoms, stiff and shiny as new pieces of tin ware, dickeys made to wear, without wilting, the hottest of dog-days; perchance a light gossamer wig, or an extra "scratch," to cover the old gentleman's bald head, or a half-dozen cravats that the young ladies can tie into a Brobdignagian style; added to which is a cumbrous suit of new broadcloth, and a case of the nicest cigars.

But we are told that this starting off is in consequence of the poor health of the young ladies. And don't they look puny, low-spirited and dyspeptic, only as the present excitement has got up a little glow? Ten chances to one they are out this very minute, while their trunk is being packed, buying "Eva's Parting," or the very last fashionable music, and a small cargo of confectionery to consume at odd times. And have n't they a big trunk of dresses and flounced under-dresses, of which they alone know the uses and names? Mark it, how feeble they are! Is a walk proposed by the father or mother? "O dear, do let us have a carriage!" is the exclamation of

the youngest. Then they talk upon side-aches, and doctor's prescriptions, and wish they could rid themselves of nervous complaints; but they are too feeble to ride on horseback; they have no appetites for anything save ice-creams and syllabubs; consequently, they move on from the country inn to more fashionable quarters; and, after travelling the six weeks in dog-days, come home, little refreshed, to talk about winding up with a "European tour." The truth is, had they left those cumbrous trunks and handboxes at home, and travelled for comfort merely, they would have found what they sought.

Now take a peep at Mrs. Bogg's prospects. She has been directed to change the scene, — to seek variety as a restorative to "weakened nerves and general debility." No sooner does she receive the prescription, than up comes the inquiry, "What shall I want to wear?" The dressmaker is sent for; her work is slackened, and here is a good customer. She recommends foulards, silk bareges, light, graceful mantillas, and all the paraphernalia which a young bride would desire on her wedding tour. From inability to leave her chamber to attend to any domestic avocations, she places herself in a carriage, drives to our most splendid dry goods establishments, orders the most unique and expensive articles, slowly concludes which color will best become her lily cheeks, and finally orders a large parcel for the aforesaid dressmaker to select from. A fortnight, by day and night, is spent by seamstresses to array the invalid Mrs. Bogg for this journey for health! When she finally starts off, she is only sustained upon "Sarsaparilla bit-

ters," and a prescription from the physician, "to increase the tone of the system."

Why did she not put on her travelling habit, take a few useful articles of dress from her full closet, have them packed in one trunk or a large carpet-bag, and thus derive some benefit from her journey? Need we wonder that so many invalids return home no better than they left it? So long as they are slaves to fashion, and content to forego all the pleasurable benefits which a journey in a rational way might produce, so long will they talk about going "South" in the winter, and hardly keep soul and body together at the "North" in the summer.

Now, it is the contents of those big trunks and handboxes that work all the mischief. They cost a vast deal more than the two-dollar-a-day hotels; but the indulgent husband or affectionate father very cheerfully toils on to pay the semi-yearly bills, and makes no complaints, save "at the ruinous state of the times and the extravagant follies of people in general."

We go for a good appearance abroad as at home — for a "genteel outfit," if you term it, when among strangers; but neither the weak, nor the lazy or fashionable, will ever realize the full enjoyment to be derived from change of scene and air, until they rise above all foolish rivalry in dress and gewgaws. Half the day spent in bedecking one's self for dinner, and the other half in preparing for a "hop" in the evening, never created any more self-respect on account of the labor. A whirl-about in dog-days with gentlemen who wear "imperials," and who lie in bed till noon, and then surfeit upon mint juleps to

keep up the excitement, is not worth appearing in in all that formidable array of finery contained in those large trunks and handboxes. Young ladies should never marry nor be married for outside appearances; and if the qualities of the mind and heart are not sufficient to induce admiration, never imagine you can rummage anything out of a "great trunk or small handbox," that will enchain the affections during all the varieties which ever await the marriage state.

AN AGREEABLE COMPANION.

WE are often wearied with a great talker, but never with an agreeable companion. How eagerly the society of an agreeable friend is sought! How welcome they are on a journey, in a sick-room, or at home! Life assumes a very different aspect when we live in such a genial atmosphere. We are never tired of living, because there is a charm, a spell, that binds us to that fellow-being. Look at the opposite character, a disagreeable person, and you will understand my meaning. This is one whose daguerreotype is more easily taken,—and may we not fear the reason is, because the likeness is more common?—a fretful being, who never sees a ray of sunshine but a cloud all the darker follows it; one who entertains her friends with descriptions of petty grievances in her children, or who inveighs against her "help," who are always rude and unaccommodating; and who inflicts all yesterday's conversation with Bridget the cook, or Nancy the chambermaid, upon you, and is sure to narrate what "she said," and "I said to her." Such a person is severely trying, and more than once have I heard one and another remark, "O, we won't call there; Mrs. — is so tedious about her family affairs!"

An agreeable person never holds up the faults of her

connections, or friends, or domestics, to another for the sake of "making talk," as some call it. There are always a vast many subjects upon which we may dilate, according as the taste, occupation, or habits of those with whom we are conversing, may suggest, whereby mutual benefit may be conferred. Perhaps we have need again to cite the remark, the most agreeable are not of necessity the most loquacious. Dr. Johnson once said, he knew of but one agreeable woman in the world, and the whole secret of her being so arose from the fact, *she knew just when to speak, and just what to say.* A rare gift, truly.

MONEY.

Do you see that thin-fingered, slender old man, bending over the daily journal, the moment it is left at his door? What is he looking for with such intense interest? Why, in a small square the prices of "stocks" are quoted, and perhaps, in another square, some comments are made on "money and business;" and, having read these, he looks at the "Telegraphic" head, to learn how the New York market stands — what is said about "cotton," and other things, which materially affect his investments. If the "times" look favorable, that *gouty old toe* pains him less; if squally, woe to the household where he reigns supreme! Nothing goes right with him when monetary affairs go wrong. "Women must curtail; it's of no use to spend so much in finery; one silk dress is enough for any woman. As to servants, he will not pay so much wages." "But, who will rub your foot, grandpa?" asks his little, smiling grand-daughter. "I'll rub it myself," he answers gruffly, "before I'll come to nothing by extravagant help." All this comes from reading those little items mentioned above. His family never guess the reason of this irritability; he hardly knows what produces *it himself*; but, depend on it, its whole origin can be traced to *money*.

Now, I contend, much of our happiness, reason as we will about it, depends on *money*.

It is vain to enumerate what it will procure. The richest land, the best house, the most elegant furniture, the finest span of horses, the neatest vehicle, the best of attendants, the gayest troop of friends, the choicest old wines, the rarest London porter, the first box of strawberries, the finest salmon in the market, cucumbers in March, peas in April, beans the first day of May! If you are sick, it will make a most attentive physician, who will call in a "consulting" brother, at the sight of the most remote danger; it will make a person stand over you the longest night, and perform any kind of office. If you are asthmatic, it will prop up pillows behind you; if feverish, it will change your mattresses daily; if desirous of pleasant sights, it will command the most splendid bouquet, and make Hamburg grapes as plenty as hail-stones. If you are lonely, it will bring you a choice companion for the hour, week, month, or life even. If you are old, it will induce a pretty little girl of seventeen to marry you. If you are desirous of travelling, it will procure you the best berth in the steamship, and most remarkable attention during the passage, and whenever you land. It will give you the best pew in the church, and the most commanding influence in the congregation. All the weekly and daily journals can lie on your table, and you can make even an editor happy by your subscription, if he chances to be *proprietor* of the paper!

Now, who undervalues this great good? Why, the clergyman says, "It won't give you the keys to a heavenly inheritance;" and Aunt Judith says, "Your

money perishes with you." But all this admits of qualification. If you have opened your hearts to objects of benevolence, if, in your life and in your will, you have alleviated human woe, and mitigated sorrow and disease, who shall say that heavenly treasures have not been procured by the wise use of money?

Ay, in your life, that is the better way, appropriate some of those accumulating dividends, which so harass your day-dreams, and cause you to toss so uneasily at night, lest you should not reinvest them in a productive channel. Make somebody or something your favorite object of regard, so that "executors" and "administrators" need not quibble because the phraseology of your will is not perfectly understood.

COMING EVENTS.

THE habit of brooding over a coming event is not preparation to meet it. The faithful performance of to-day's duty is the truest test that we shall best meet to-morrow's trial. Some are forever living in the future; but this clearly is not the design of our heavenly Father. Else why are we so completely shut out from forthcoming misfortunes? Why no certain assurances that contemplated happiness will ever arrive? Plainly, because it is best it should be so. And herein God has made all alike, both high and low, subject to the same contingencies. The care he exerts over the beggar is the same as over the monarch — and this teaches us the emptiness of earthly honors.

The fear of death keeps some in perpetual bondage. Now, an event that our Creator has made certain, but indefinite as to *time*, was not designed to keep us in continual servitude. I have duties to perform; family and social engagements to meet; business wants to be attended to, and daily employments upon which my physical life depends. I need all the vigor of constitution, all the exercise of mental power, to meet these cares. My time cannot be frittered away in random fancies upon calculating chances. I *must* work! and if my time has come

that I must lie down and die, have I not made better preparation, by this discharge of present duty, for the retribution which awaits me?

But there is a preparation. Very true, but it is living as if under the eye of a kind Parent, looking to him for daily strength, and then pressing on to labor. I am to be wise; — the necessary knowledge of my physical frame will induce me to be temperate, and not pervert my powers; and if, by what *we* call accident, we are suddenly removed, or linger out in a fitful fever, all is well — God has thus ordained the event — it came in the right time and place, because it was his ordination.

A little child visited its mother's tomb. It had been told her that her mother lay in a sweet sleep. Thinking it could wake her, it shouted in its tiny voice, "Mother, dear mother, let me into your little room. Call me, mother; I would be with you; it is so cold and stormy here, and so quiet and warm in your little room. Do, mother, let me in. Once you took my little hand and held it fast. Take me again as you did once. They tell me you cannot hear — but where is heaven? Here is my mother."

An aged woman sat by the same tomb, and wept. "My daughter," said she, "how I wish I were quiet and happy like thee; thou art pure as an angel, and art gone to dwell with them. But I fear to enter the dark portals, lest my spirit should be separated from thine; for, alas! I have not lived like thee."

We should live so that the grave our Redeemer has hallowed should appear as the gate to Eternal Mansions.

MONDAY MORNING.

MONDAY morning! The most trying dawn of all the week! The quiet Sabbath has just passed, and a new week of vexations has commenced. It is washing-day! The cook is cross; the chamber-maid has a beau who keeps late hours, and discontent sits upon her brow on Monday. John, the eldest boy, says he feels ill, and does not care to go to school. This frets Emma, the little girl, who thinks, if Johnny is allowed to stay at home, she may as well have the headache, and stay too. The breakfast dishes are all on the table, unwashed, and Alice says it is none of her work to clean them, and Phebe says that chamber-girls never do it in "genteel families." A quarrel ensues; the washing gets behindhand, and the mistress perceives, just as she steps below to give orders for dinner, that she must encounter wry looks and short answers, although she is not conscious of any special fault. Added to this, the husband has discovered a hole under the arm of his coat, that he wishes his wife to darn very nicely, and a few stitches are to be taken in that fob-pocket, and a few more in cording anew the bottom of his pantaloons; and in the mean time he inquires "if it would be convenient to invite Mr. Simonds

to dinner?" Just as if, on washing-day, any food could be thought about, unless it be a "picked up" dinner!

The reign of disorder in the kitchen now increases; the process of starching is commenced; there is great haste to "hang out," and little care to rub clean, and a gentle hint from the mistress brings down a shower of abuse from the domestics, who declare every family in the city sends away all nice garments to the laundry, and intimate that hereafter they expect to be treated as other domestics.

The children have fretted the morning away. John went out to skate, about the middle of the forenoon, and grew sick at his stomach, and is a fit subject for water-gruel — a beverage he despises. Emma has broken her doll's face, which she promised papa she would keep forever, if he would buy it for a "Christmas present;" and, to complete the vexation, some "dear friends" from the country have come in just to deposit their baggage, get their food, and do some shopping.

Madam goes down to regulate affairs in the region of discord. The bell rings, and some of her genteel acquaintances have called; she would not but be dressed in silk, for the world, to receive them; so she departs hastily to her dressing-room, attires herself like a lady, and is only mortified by a chattering little fellow, who says, "Ma is getting dinner down stairs, but she went up to dress her just now." And what a meeting!

"How glad I am to see you, my dear Mrs. H.!"

"No more so than I am to find you at home. Now I really hope I have not interfered with any domestic engagement."

"Not in the least; I am perfectly at leisure; have nothing in the world to do."

"How were you pleased at the Philharmonic, or the Musical Fund, or the Handel and Haydn?"

"O! delighted."

Just then Mr. H. opens the door, and has come to dinner. The ladies retire. I will not portray the continuation of the scene. Suffice it to say, there is a magic charm which the serene countenance of the husband can diffuse, so that when gathered around a less expensive dinner than yesterday, the agreeable turn he can give his conversation shall leave all the discomforts of the morning in the distance.

Monday, then, has its alleviations. "After a storm there comes the calm." The domestics become better pleased; evening finds all things righted; life is not looked upon as in the morning, and we set out afresh, regardless of whatever trials may darken the successive days, well assured that no morning will be half so trying as this same Monday.

MRS. PELL'S EXPERIMENT.

THE entire wish of Mrs. Pell's heart had long been to remove into the country. She had taken so many afternoon rides, passing by white cottages covered with honeysuckle and woodbine; she had looked upon so many open piazzas, where rocking-chairs and rocking-horses composed the furniture of such shady retreats, and her mind was so entirely fixed upon trying the experiment, that General Pell had little peace until her wishes were fully carried out. So when "Rosebrier Cottage" was advertised, General Pell was the purchaser. Mrs. Pell was, at this time, the most blithe and delightful woman to be found. She was about to relinquish her city cares; to vacate her large granite house; to make an overturn in her domestic arrangements, and *move into the country*. We must do justice to Mrs. Pell's character; therefore we must not leave out of sight an avaricious propensity, which ever led her to count the cost before undertaking any great outlay. It was a long time, therefore, before she settled in her mind what would be a proper sum for the occupant of her city dwelling. She thought the difference in rent between city and country, with economy, would defray all the household expenses in her new home. General Pell was not such a nice calculator; he

was a military man, and when a heavy demand was made upon his purse to support his office, he never flinched, and it was in part to keep him more at home, away from such enjoyments, that Mrs. Pell had been induced to try the change. Then, again, the health of her children was another prime consideration. Arthur was just recovering from the effects of a whooping-cough, and Billy always was afflicted with some complaint incident and attendant upon hot weather. Her physician had for several years ordered them into the country during the rage of dog-days, and Mrs. Pell, and her children and servants, had not found so much comfort in staying by the sea-shore, or living at the "Springs," as some other ladies. Those heavy payments at the close of the term were a great drawback upon her enjoyment; for she was mistress of her own purse, from property inherited in her own right; so General Pell never contradicted or advised contrary to her preconceived plans.

The removal to "Rosebrier Cottage" was, in itself, quite an event in Mrs. Pell's life. The general had found a tenant for the city residence, — a member of the company whom he once commanded, — and a five years' lease was drawn; the general, however, reserving the privilege of one chamber in the mansion for his private use; so that when over-fatigued, or fearful, it might be, of a Caudle lecture, he could have a retreat where he could lie down in peace.

"Rosebrier Cottage" was just off from the great road; down a verdant lane, bordered on each side with shrubbery. Just the spot where a romantic couple would dream of living upon ethereal substances, forgetting all

about vulgar bodily wants. But Mrs. Pell had a different taste and a different family. She lived for her children *now*, and for her husband when he was *with her*. But, in this chosen retreat, for the first time in her life, she began to feel the effects of solitude. The nursery-maid had charge of the two boys, and in their gymnastic exercises and rural sports she could not largely participate.

The cottage was darkly shaded by heavy trees; there was a sombre look even in the sunshine, which reflected only quivering branches waving against the Venetian blinds; there was a deep silence, save when broken by the sound of the children's voices, and altogether a sense of loneliness crept over the new inmates of the cottage. General Pell, when at home, left early in the morning, and never returned till evening. So the dinner-table was headed by Mrs. Pell and her two children. To keep them under wholesome restraint was an impossibility; they would take advantage of their father's absence, and a scene of wild disorder generally led the nursery-maid to remove them from the table before the second course was brought on; and to a lonely woman in a lone cottage the attraction of a country home may be imagined. One cannot twist wreaths of flowers the long day. Few are listless enough to sit for hours at an open window to hear the robins sing; and, after all the bustle of city life, such profound quiet is but "inglorious ease," without friendly companionship.

It was a long while before Mrs. Pell's city friends found their way to "Rosebrier Cottage." She had not been pressing in her invitation that they should do so,

and so they sparingly came. Even then, there was a sort of discomfort about receiving them; there was no market near; she found it difficult to keep a cook, on account of the retired situation. There were few to consume the products of the market, and, as the general was seldom at home, the dinner dwindled into a very common affair. So a friend to pass the day, although it somewhat relieved the monotony, yet abated the pleasure by the effort to wait on her.

But how were the children progressing? They were quite as liable to illness as before. Arthur, from exposure to damp evening air, had several times been threatened with the croup, and Billy had broken one arm, through the nursery-maid's carelessness, of course, besides being subject to some chronic difficulties, wholly attributable to the location of "Rosebrier Cottage." The general, too, had been absent on duty the most of the summer; and Mrs. Pell began to wonder why the charms of a country life were so incomplete. She was certain she enjoyed nothing. The days seemed to her of interminable length; she had read all her books; she had even studied newspaper advertisements; she had hemstitched all her ruffles, and as to great care upon her own wardrobe, who but the croaking frogs, the chattering swallows, and the whippoorwills regarded her apparel? Ah! she had made a mistake, and we will tell you how she made it.

In the first place, her avaricious spirit led her to imagine a home in the country would be a more economical affair; secondly, she misjudged her husband's taste. And, hereafter, let no woman imagine, if the charms she

can throw about a city home are not sufficient to retain a husband there as his chosen resort, that leaving him among the high spirits he covets, will ever win him over to rural felicity. Then, as to the matter of children's health, there is no security against disease, where parental care is improperly bestowed or wholly entrusted to servants; and, last of all, it is never the part of wisdom for a wife to make a distinction between "mine and thine," hoping thereby to increase mutual esteem.

General Pell returned late in the autumn from one of his tours. "Rosebrier Cottage" had a forlorn look outwardly. The long, trailing vines were craving support. The gardener had long since left the place. Mrs. Pell was a mere skeleton; and the boys were wild, ungovernable, and unrestrained by parental discipline. But one domestic (the nursery-woman) remained on duty, and she received extra pay for doing so. The general met his wife in tears; but knowing it was not discreet to commence any comments upon the obvious condition of things, he waited until her proud spirit yielded, and importuned his assistance.

A new house was taken in the city; soon after, General Pell resigned his commission, and Mrs. Pell entrusted him with the investment of her money, and this repose of confidence led him to financier in the best possible manner, since their interests had now become a mutual affair. Since then he is much at home, and the perfect discipline with which he has controlled those wayward boys has convinced the mother which of the two is the better fitted to enforce obedience. Mrs. Pell has never since attempted to manage her family concerns

alone, having been taught the folly of seeking to control a husband and household, without having first laid the foundation upon *mutual confidence and esteem*.

The thought of her first experiment to live in the country, in a sort of half-fledged condition, always mantles her cheeks with the blush of shame; but her repentance was deep enough to effect a cure. We would not, however, deem it amiss to say a word to other Mrs. Pells, who are sighing for Rosebrier Cottages as the ultimatum of their hopes. We would by no means disparage the many pleasures connected with such a residence; but that they have serious trials to encounter, who go without forethought, admits of no doubt. The business of the husband not unfrequently renders such retirement a great inconvenience; he cannot be much at home while his children are actively employed; the etiquette of the table is too often neglected; the privileges of good schools are sometimes renounced; life too often degenerates into a mere holiday; and, some philosophers will have it, women become imperious by being unrestrained in gayety. Therefore, we would recommend to all husbands and wives to seek their pleasures as far as possible together; never separate enjoyment from each other's society; but, above all things, if you sustain the parental relation, live where you can live most with your children; if your inclination and means suggest a country home, seek it, — *but never disjoin the two*.

THE FAST YOUNG MAN.

THE "fast young man" does not remember where his father was born, nor what was his occupation. The slow means by which he gained his wealth is all an enigma to him. He stepped into his silver slippers when he died, and has worn them half out before he has arrived at years of discretion.

What a swell he makes! Money has made him somewhat popular with the upper ten; and the daughters of former shoemakers, barbers, and wine-merchants, who lived under ground, and "sold by the glass," now look upon him as a "nice young man;" and to be sure he is. His dickey is transparent with waxy gloss; his wristbands protude below his cuffs just far enough to show their quality; over his vest is displayed such an elegant massive California gold chain, that it is very pardonable to speak about it. Besides, he is so generous! If he meets a young lady, he forthwith conducts her to a confectioner's to take an "ice," or a cup of smoking Mocha; there the invitation is extended to a concert, then an opera; and, by this time, both have lost their natural vision, and can only see through expensive "eye-tubes."

But the fast young man has money, and what does he

care for labor, and old women's talk about the "road to ruin"? His motto is, "one life and a merry one."

At the expiration of five years we will look at him again. He has now lost much of the "dandy," and begins to exhibit quite a "seedy" appearance. His gait is stiff; he lounges at the corners of the street, or is found sitting, stooping and stupid, upon the loafer's bench; has quit those "divine young ladies," or, rather, they have left him, and he begins to think his prospects for the future are rather cloudy. If he could but raise an outfit, he would gladly take passage to Australia; but if he has a friend (generally he has none), as soon as he suggests the idea of borrowing enough for "a start," he is hushed by the reply, "Why, to a person of your habits that climate would soon prove fatal." Now, what hopes *can* he entertain? The past has been all wasted; the present finds him minus of character, cash, and credit; the future lies before him with a diseased, bloated body, filled with pains, and nobody to sympathize with him; and, beyond this world, he so dreads a retribution, that he envies the very dumb animal. He did not mean to finish off in this manner when he started in life.

SPEECH-MAKING.

WHY is it that our most talented public speakers are forever apologizing, in the outset, for appearing before the "vast and intelligent audience"? You may travel from one end of the continent to the other, and, in nine cases out of ten, when the great man rises to speak, he will tell you "the call was unexpected," or that "he is miserably jaded with the fatigue of a long journey," or "that he has made no sort of preparation for a speech," which he all the while intends shall electrify a whole multitude. I wonder if public speakers think they thus impose on their hearers, and get up a true sympathizing spirit for their professedly unsound condition? Why not tell the real state of their minds, if an exordium is so needful to going on with what they mean to say, and prepare their remarks something after this manner? —

"I rise, my friends, because I feel strongly inclined to do so, knowing the power I possess, and the eloquence for which I am distinguished; this props me up amidst all the privations and fatigue attendant upon coming before you. Fame (that is, popular favor) I covet, yet I would not be accounted vain or filled with self-esteem."

Every man should have a certain quantum of self-

conceit; for, after being repeatedly told that his talents are of the highest order, that he is remarkable for logical precision, and always bringing the strong points in his subject forward, so that they leave an overwhelming impression upon the audience, how can he forget such encomiums when he next rises in a crowded assembly?

Now, did a public speaker know how distasteful to an audience are his first apologies, he would never make them. If he is unprepared, why does he say anything? If he is hoarse, he need not tell of it. If he is tired, nobody can help it. Could he but see (I mean the apologizing man) how his best friends twirl their canes, or pick the fingers of their gloves, or look suspiciously into their neighbors' faces, there would be few who would venture to begin with talking about *themselves*.

We have sometimes fancied we saw a wag coming upon the stage, after all the speakers had apologized for addressing the audience, and, although not in very good taste to a refined assembly, yet commencing something like this: "My friends, I am exceedingly glad to have this opportunity to utter my sentiments. I know I am a good speaker. I love your applause, for it excites my eloquence. I have no cold or disease which now troubles me. I am not weary, for I have rested on purpose to appear before you in a healthy condition. I am, therefore, anxious to do my best. I trust the reporters will so herald my speech that my breakfast to-morrow morning may be swallowed with a seasoning of just praise, which I feel is my due; for I well know my superiority above all who have preceded me; besides, I always aim to leave a most powerful impression; my wit is not stale

and my reasoning is not overdone. My manner is unexceptionable, for I have practised some years to acquire it, and my personal appearance is dignified and imposing."

Can we be reproached as satirical if we appropriate much of what the wag has uttered, as being the real sentiment of many an apologist?

Let us have the truth; and, although a wise man will repress his vanity, yet let him not covet a sympathy to which he is not entitled, when his whole life-time has been a preparation for extemporaneous speech-making.

WEALTH WITH INDOLENCE.

WEALTH! Young ladies are prone to pay too much regard to riches. They seek showy rather than virtuous companions. A massive chain, an opal ring, a certain dandyish pretension, is extremely taking with some well-educated ladies. The young man who is unassuming, and slowly makes his way to fortune by untiring industry, is too often cast in the shade. Yet we will follow the two a few years, and most probably the one whom we cast aside will be considered the most useful citizen. Women err strangely in forming marriage engagements. They may not be altogether in fault here; for does not mamma, ay, and papa too, often inquire, *is he rich?* as if this were the saving clause.

An heir to a large estate lately married a poor girl. Every one looked on with the highest satisfaction. "How fortunate!" was in the mouth of all her friends. But the young husband had nothing to do; he wasted life in a public hotel, or he travelled to some watering-place, and the long dog-days were spent in brushing flies, or driving musquitoes. The wife fell into indolent habits, and, from having nothing to do, learned to do nothing. Some called it a state of *elegant ease*; nobody found fault, because, where bills are paid, and plenty of money

is left, the world will not complain. But as to the real happiness of such a life, it admits no comparison with that of those who started in life poor but hopeful, combating disappointment, and rising by degrees to an abundance; learning how to use and enjoy, and in the very *acquisition* deriving more pleasure than in *fruition*. For thus are we made, constantly finding new pleasure with new acquisition; and no sooner do we sit down to enjoy our wealth, than we find it insufficient to fill the vacuity.

For this reason people who retire from active business with scanty mental resources are rarely happy. They find a satiety they never knew in business; and I lament when I hear a wife so urgent that her husband should build a cottage and live upon his money — as if idleness and ease made pleasure.

THOUGHTS FOR THE GLOOMY.

IN the midst of the autumnal tinge I walk out in the country to revive the association of the past. It is not my taste to groan and sigh over the decay of nature. On the contrary, my thoughts are lively and buoyant. What is there to make one sad? All things that are dying we know will be again revived, and many of them will put on far more beautiful forms. The trees, like our bodies, will soon have a resurrection, and be clothed with fresher beauty. Why, then, mourn if disease invades our frame? What if it should yield to the influence of this or that malady? Can we not trust to the beneficent decrees of our Maker, who so planned the structure that from its present ruins an incorruptible clothing may be put upon it? Our thoughts need not be sad and enervating, cheating us of all pleasure in the present, and foreboding only gloom in the future. We cherish such pernicious feelings until life becomes the most unpalatable drug, and yet we shrink from quitting it, so distrustful are we of the kind care which placed us here. O, it is painful to hear some Christian people complain of "infections," and "their hard lot," all the while they are themselves making it so!

Autumn is thought particularly to awaken these

gloomy sensations. It need not be so. A new scene opens on us; our eyes are dazzled with the fading landscape; its purple and gold touch the heart with delight. I feel as if in holiday attire. To be sure, the flower-beds are stricken down; the broad sunflowers no longer wave majestically; the pinks and peonies have disappeared, but the box-tree is still as verdant as ever, the pine-tree maintains its greenness, and there is always something about me which retains its original. What if I muse unconsciously? I am not sad.

I remember that flower-garden, once my delight as I conveyed the water-pot to refresh it; how the scions and slips I procured grew fair and strong under my skilful training. They gave me satisfaction *then*, and the retrospect does so *now*. There, too, stood the kitchen garden.

The vegetables I so faithfully attended, yielded me their reward. They grew luxuriantly, and the recollection of those evening strolls, when I marked their progress, now yields me pleasure. I cannot sigh because they answered those uses, and are gathered and gone. My eyes are now opened to other scenes. The lively recollection of the past inspires me with hope for the future. Yonder is a boy flying his kite. I cannot say, "Poor fellow, I used to amuse myself like you; but that day of merriment will no more return to me!" I feel merry *now*. I can recall my fluttering emotions when I first let go the string, and I gazed to see it soar among the clouds. To be sure, I have a different stock of fears and hopes at this time, and these may yield me, if not

so *airy*, quite as substantial pleasure. So why should I mourn that I can no longer fly a kite?

We are always straining after some enjoyment beyond our reach, away in the distance. Some are longing for the season of winter gayeties, living on expectation of future parties, balls, lectures and the like; but such people never enjoy the *now* of existence. Retrospect and anticipation is the sum of all their pleasures. Give me a lively hope to sustain me *to-day*. I care not what season I am living in. When we cease to be children toys should no longer amuse us.

More than half the world are diseased, but they are not all filled with bodily maladies which a prescription will cure. They are *mind-sick*, and this is a malady drugs never reach. Narcotics, to be sure, may deaden sensibilities, but they do not give healthful vigor. I would rather do the most menial work, if I could only breathe a pure atmosphere, than cramp my faculties in devising schemes to make me happy at some distant period. *To-day* is all that I can call my own, and I must be busy in its sunshine. "But," says the croaker, "my days are all cloudy; I have had no sunshine since I was a child." Again I repeat, the fault is your own.

What do you gain by moping over your troubles? "You cannot help it," do you reply? You never *will* help it, so long as you permit yourself to dwell upon and talk about them. Do your own work faithfully, and have something ever on hand to do; keep up a cheerful exterior; and, nine times out of ten, you will cure the malady of which you complain.

SUNSHINE AND CLOUDS.

SUNSHINE and clouds! How beautifully they succeed each other in the natural world! The heavy cloud which rises in yonder western horizon emits flashes of lightning which almost removes our natural sight; and that low muttering report, which follows so closely upon it, shows to us with what majesty nature reveals herself. By and by comes the fertilizing shower, and the little, fainting, parched twig has a rain-drop upon its tiny leaf, and although the sun has come forth in its full splendor, the tear still glitters, and every hue of the rainbow is reflected from it.

Why is it not thus with the showers of affliction which are poured upon us? They are surely designed for a far higher end than the natural shower; for *that* waters only a parched earth, which will soon become thirsty and crave it again; whereas the shower of tear-drops which bruises our spirits carries with it the blessed influence of healing, which should so fertilize our Christian graces, as to need no repetition; but, like the varied hues of the rainbow, which are so blended that no one color takes precedence of the other, so the blended and harmonious mingling of the rain-drops of affliction should be irradiated by the sun of righteousness, that a perfect bow should span the horizon of our souls.

THE COUNTRY IN WINTER.

A WINTER'S residence in the country is much more than it is usually accounted to mean. To one especially, who does business in the city, some three, five, or ten miles off, the privileges are peculiar; the cars are so convenient and accommodating withal. You may miss seeing the man with whom you have business, a dozen times in a day; he may state the hour you *can* see him, — but the train leaves just ten minutes before that time; or you may conclude to stay over one train, and what confusion is made in the home where you were an expected guest! How the little ones clamor for "turkey and bread," not to say a word of the mother-in-law, who, perchance, is fretting and knitting in the corner, "wondering how people can expect to do business in one place, and keep themselves in another;" or the wife goes sighing through the room with a look of anxiety in her face, "hoping there is no accident to-day;" and, as she looks out, there is her neighbor who has been home and dined, and is ready for a fresh start; and Miss Muggins has happened from the city to spend the day just at the time you were wanting in butter and minus in groceries, and you buy everything in the city, where your husband has an account. And then the children behave

so when their father is absent; they are so boisterous. And when it is so cheerless within, as you look without, how the blues creep over you!

The old flower-stalks are all empty and dry, the grass all brown and crisped, the vines all tangled and overgrown with dead weed, the trees all dismantled, and the leaves heaved up like little mountains, awaiting a high gust to send them in mid air like snow-flakes; and, then, to break the monotony, there is the hissing of the tea-kettle, and the low kind of second which "Maggie" is continually singing, and, more than all, your meditations on this wise: "Why did I ever think of living in the country the year round? Why, for the health of the children, to be sure. And how has it proved? 'Ned' has had the scarlet fever, and little 'Nell' the whooping-cough, and we were obliged to send into the city to get our old physician (all practise on the new principle out here); and who cares for a fee, when a child's life is at stake? Well, then, as we were here, why, the plea of economy is urged, and a cheaper rent. How much cheaper? One hundred dollars less than we paid in the city, where conveniences were much more compact. Wood, water and drains all in a heap here. We are exposed to cold, sunshine and observation; our next neighbor exactly facing all our domestic operations, and always happening to be looking at us just as we would avoid scrutiny. Then the children must trudge half a mile to school, and when Sunday comes, in what a state we find ourselves! No Sunday-school very near; omnibus to take us to the city, but who can get ready seasonably? Besides, the children's shoes are out of order, and the

lacings are broken, and father forgot 'the memorandum' we so charged him to remember, and Maggie must go to church part of the day, and hints she prefers to live in the city, where she can attend mass in the morning."

And, then, it is so delightful to attend lectures, and concerts, and parties of all sorts in the city; to go to some friend's house and "fix," after riding in the omnibus, — bringing the baby atop of your best silk dress, — and to stay till midnight, find omnibus gone, and obliged to accept invitation to stay all night; to rise headachy, and put on your nice dress, and go home to find everything helter-skelter; and have your husband's mother meet you in the front-door passage, and inform you "that Billy hurt his leg last night, and Polly was very restless, and John has been a bad boy," and to feel that this is *your home*. O, it is worth a great deal to live in the country all the year round!

Again, it is so pleasant, when your husband does not come home to dinner, to take his place and help some half dozen lady guests, who are "so fond of the country that they have come to pass the day with you," although when in the city they never thought of more than a call! To sit and hear their admiration of your tasteful place, and "the lovely spot it must be in summer," and, perchance, hear the conclusion, — "but it is so dull, we never could live in the country in the winter."

Then the snow-storm! To inhabit a house facing due north, with a large hall on either side the parlors, where the *Æolian* harps constantly are played! To wake in the morning and find the house blockaded, the snow still falling, and no vestige of a road visible, and to feel that

your husband has got to face the weather, and break the paths, and thaw the pumps, and dig out some wood, and that he *must* go, for he has a note at the bank to pay, and you have such a dread of protested notes that you are willing he should make the sacrifice.

More than all, — to feel that the die is cast, — that you have actually *bought* this home in the country, and so have no changes to anticipate; no returning summer can find you again at board by the seashore; no plea can be urged for a healthful mountain region, for the selection was so made as to embrace all their salubrious influences, and your husband is so deeply immersed in business that all pleasure-seeking is forever at an end.

You may expect but few changes. The hinges will rust off the gate, and the blinds will need a new coat of paint, and the trellis-work will need repairing, and a kind of decay will come over your outward appearance; but unless you are hopeful, full of sunshine, love birds and annual plants, and children, and storms, and high winds, and short trips in the cars, and little vexations, and a *house of your own*, my advice is, never live in the country the year round, when your business is in the city!

THE FEMALE FINANCIER.

"THERE never *was* a woman who has lived longer on *promises* than I have, Mr. Oldbuck. More than a year ago, when I told you we must have new parlor carpets, you put me off till the 'election' was over, because then there would be such 'good times,' that I thought California and our metropolis would only be another name for the gold region. Now look at it, — where are my carpets?"

"You speak, wife, as if I had the whole control of events. How could I foresee that times would be as they are — money at nine and ten per cent., and banks refusing to discount only the best of paper — stocks down, and manufacturing interests at a stand comparatively for the last year, at least short dividends?"

"I wish I were a *man*, Mr. Oldbuck, and I'll warrant you I would have things different. Do you suppose I would have served on ward committees during all that exciting campaign to elect a President, attended caucuses, carried torch-lights, and given such entertainments, and, after all, be turned off without an office? This is the world's gratitude, Mr. Oldbuck. No; when I was in Washington, I would have kept there till I got something, if I had stayed a whole year to accomplish my purpose."

"You reason very foolishly, wife. Did I not secure all the testimonials of my ability for an office? Did I not go to great expense, and wait until 'hope deferred made my heart sick,' as Miss Kemble said last night? And did *you* not say I had better return and mind my own business?"

"What if I did? If I had been a *man*, I should have had more courage, I'll warrant ye. I would have made the President pay for all the champagne and time I had spent in his behalf, if I had filched it out of his own pockets."

"You would! Well, well, I did not, and so let the matter rest."

"But, I tell you, I want some new carpets."

"When my dividends warrant it, wife, you shall have them. You know, as well as I do, how 'stocks' stand now — no agitation in the market, no time to sell, and no time to buy."

"You are a fool, Mr. Oldbuck, to let your broker serve you such a game. Have you lost all confidence in your *own* judgment, that you must trust to him when it is best to 'sell out' or 'buy in'? He'll fleece you as clean as old Ichabod Gammon was served."

"Gammon, Gammon — who was he?"

"Why, my Uncle Ichabod, to be sure. Didn't he employ a broker to invest all *his* money, and didn't he keep changing stocks, and crying up this, and down that, until at last all his property got in the *worsted* mill, till it worsted him, poor old man, out of all he had? And your fate will be no better, Mr. Oldbuck, if you don't turn about and do your own business in your own way."

"What would you have had me do with the money I had, wife?"

"Let it out in the street, to be sure;—if money is worth twelve and twenty per cent., take it in State street, and when you found a man 'hard pinched,' as you call it, let it to him on time, with good security."

"Heigh-ho!" sighed Mr. Oldbuck. "When I invest again you shall certainly be consulted, wife."

"After it is all gone, and the time to get extra interest is gone by, I suppose I *may* take it. After stocks have gone down twenty per cent., and you have lost five thousand on this, and ten thousand on that, I suppose you would be very glad to have me undertake and clear up things, just as I regulate a disordered house, or repair a suit of old clothes; but, Mr. Oldbuck, this is not *my* place nor work. I married you to look after *out-door* concerns while I attend to the house."

There was to be a house auction the next day. A suit of Brussels carpets were to be sold, that had been down but two years, and the size exactly fitted Mrs. Oldbuck's drawing-rooms. She had never been at an auction, but her neighbor Grimshaw had often showed her great bargains she had procured. She thought she would ask her to accompany her, and if she got a decided bargain (as she felt confident she should), there would be no trouble but her husband could raise the money to pay for her purchases. The plan met with her neighbor's entire approval, and early the next morning both ladies were at the sale. There were some bedsteads of beautiful finish, some mattresses, and a number of articles which exactly filled Mrs. Oldbuck's eye, to furnish anew

her spare chamber. She resolved she would get some bargains, at any rate; they were "so new, so little soiled, so exactly what she wanted;" her vision magnified every time she looked upon them, and it was with the greatest impatience she waited for the auctioneer to come to the articles she meant to bid upon. At length the carpets were put up.

"How much am I offered for these beautiful carpets?" inquired the shrewd auctioneer—"new, clean, beautiful pattern, and been used but two years, without a stain or spot."

"One dollar per yard," said Mrs. Oldbuck.

Neighbor Grimshaw touched her—"You are too fast—don't bid again."

"One dollar five cents—ten—twelve I am offered—who says more for this splendid bargain?"

"Seven shillings," said Mrs. Oldbuck.

"One dollar twenty-five," hallooed an anxious by-bidder.

"One thirty," shouted Mrs. Oldbuck; and, nobody saying more, the carpets were knocked down to Mrs. Jedediah Oldbuck. "What a bargain!" said she to Mrs. Grimshaw. "I guess my husband will be"—

"Did you know, madam," said a bystander, "that these carpets were badly moth-eaten?—look under that sofa, and in that recess."

Poor Mrs. Oldbuck! how changed in a moment of time! But she comforted herself that she could fit it out to suit her rooms. She was great for contriving, and *such a bargain*, she still persisted in saying.

They walked up stairs. "That bedstead—solid mahogany, with slat bottom,—how much am I offered?"

"Ten dollars," said Mrs. Oldbuck.

Nobody bid over her,—it was fairly hers.

"The mattress—a new hair mattress, and how much am I offered," looking at Mrs. Oldbuck (for an auctioneer knows his company). "Five dollars."—"Five dollars for this splendid mattress—why, it is giving it away."

Seven, eight, ten, eleven, twelve,—"fifteen," again said Mrs. Oldbuck, greatly advancing on the company; and it was hers! And she purchased a bathing-tub, and shower apparatus, and an antique bureau, and some old prints, and a few old chairs; so that in all her bill amounted to two hundred and three dollars and six cents!

The articles were all sent home that afternoon, and *such* a motley exhibition was rarely seen. The same pattern and quality of carpeting was selling at *one dollar and twelve cents* at retail, the pattern being old-fashioned; besides, it was so moth-y that several yards must be thrown out. The mattress was filled with western hair, and smelt very disagreeably, and cost but six dollars originally! The bedstead looked as if some occupants had been, and were still, in embryo. The chairs were fit only for a miser's garret, and the shower-bath was broken, and Mrs. Oldbuck's physician said it never should be used, as showering the head was decidedly injurious to health.

Mr. Oldbuck came home at twilight, and looked upon the purchases, and then upon his unpaid bill, and then

upon the countenance of his wife. He said nothing—no, he never did;—she reproached him enough for both.

Mrs. Oldbuck did not sleep *that* night. She felt quite sick the next day. The auction furniture still stood in the back kitchen. It was a trying time for Mrs. Oldbuck.

A week after, Michael, the handcartman, was directed to carry every article to the auction store, to be resold; and a suit of fashionable tapestry carpets were sent home without any comments. Mrs. Oldbuck gradually recovered. There are certain kinds of *mortification* which do not prove fatal. Nothing was ever said of her purchases between husband and wife; but Mrs. Grimshaw had to "take it," for leading her into such foolish expenditures, and they are no longer neighbors.

Oldbuck was speaking of the money-market, the other evening, to a friend, when the gentleman addressed himself to Mrs. Oldbuck, saying, "I suppose if you women ruled *without*, as well as *within*, we should be saved from all this trouble."

Mrs. Oldbuck replied, "Female financiers who know how to invest, are rare. I tried it once, and have never complained of my husband since." And think you, reader, that Major Oldbuck ever regretted his wife attended *that* auction? They have lived happily ever since, and not a reproachful word has escaped her lips.

THE EXPRESSMAN.

How things change in this world! Hart, the stage-driver, is succeeded by Adams, the expressman. Now, the duties belonging to both these departments are very onerous. Nobody fully realizes the importance of the calling of the expressman, who has not lived in a country village. Just set yourself down, during a season, in a seven-by-nine village, where there are some half-dozen dress-makers, two or three milliners, a few grocers, and two or three dry goods' shops; one lawyer, a Universalist, a Methodist, Freewill Baptist and a Calvinist minister, whose whole members, put into one house, would make a barely respectable congregation. But there is but one expressman to attend to all the calls of this little heap of people.

The milliner wants to match that shade of silk, or to exchange a few shawls she purchased yesterday, for another set of colors, and she has an errand to be done she entirely forgot when in the city; and the dress-maker wants a new cloak-pattern she has seen advertised, and she negotiates with the expressman to get it for seventy-five cents, because she is one of the *trade*, and ought to be considered; and a great trouble comes out of this. The pattern-seller insists on her dollar; says she knows only one price, and "Miss Bond" is a dress-maker of whom

she never heard, and, after the poor fellow has haggled away his precious half-hour, and paid the full price, he must run down on Long Wharf and deliver Mr. Grocer's order, and out into Elm-street to speak for some dried fruit; and this reminds him the widow Ellery spoke to him a week ago to get her a drum of figs and a box of raisins. Then he must hurry to Washington-street, and leave an order from the dry goods' store for two pieces of nice black silk, to be delivered — at a dollar per yard — and the partner who sold it "is down town," and there is nobody who knows anything about such a piece; and then Sophia Blake wants a short lace veil, and Sally Slack sent for a pair of corsets, and the *measure was lost!*

Squire Low wanted some blanks and forms for land conveyances, besides a quire of ruled paper and a small, cheap blank book. Gershom Allen sent for a pair of chickens, "first chop;" and Solomon Twist wanted a shoulder of mutton. Tom Bowen desired the expressman to step into Boardman's and get a gallon of pure Cognac, and a dozen of Champagne, "Cilley's brand." Mr. Wyeth has not received his newspaper regularly, and sends to the office to get back numbers, and to know the cause of his not receiving them by mail. Old lady Constant wants a few gift books, *under price*, for Christmas and New-Year's presents to her grand-children, and likewise to know what good, strong gingham umbrellas are worth. He might give fifty cents for a prime article, with nice whalebone sticks! Nancy Gerrish wants a muff and boa, but limits the price to five dollars; and Susan Hart has heard that good Bay State shawls can

be bought for three dollars, and will take one at two seventy-five.

Added to all these items on the memorandum card is — "Call at 676 Washington-street, to get a bundle; down by Cragie's bridge, for a hat-case; at the West End to deliver a package, and at the North End for Mrs. Sly's cloak."

Now, all these errands are expected to be done precisely as they are directed, and the small sum of ninepence is considered a fair charge; but woe to the man who forgets a single message!

Besides, it is expected the expressman will carry about him a sunny countenance, never get vexed with anybody, thank everybody instead of receiving thanks, know every one, and be willing to oblige everybody, because *it is his business*. No matter how many flouting remarks are made to him, he is not expected to resent them; and, although he is the most important personage in the village,—better than clergyman, lawyer or representative, all of whom could be spared, and not be half as much missed,—yet every idle man in the village feels competent to undertake the business of an expressman. In truth, it is an important office, and he who fills it satisfactorily, must be a shrewd, good-natured, obliging, self-sufficient, all-sufficient, but by no means an *insufficient* man.

PHASES IN MARRIED LIFE.

ONE may well be amused at the changes which come over some people's domestic and connubial bliss. When we first knew Mr. Fennel, he was a young man of quite prepossessing appearance; at that time he was engaged to Angeline Bright. I seem to see them now, starting off at early twilight for a walk. Most lovingly and coseyly did they lag along, seeming to have an inexhaustible fund of conversation; so that, after being together till midnight, ten chances to one they would agree to see each other before noon the next day.

By and by Mr. Fennel married. There never was a more agreeable honeymoon passed this side of the celestial regions. They seemed to enjoy each other's society far better than any other; now they rode out every afternoon, and the old counting-room was deserted, after three o'clock, by the junior partner, much to the annoyance of the senior one, who used to prophesy, "these things will wear off by and by, when they have been married a few years." The man spoke from experience, and he spoke truly.

Fifteen years after marriage, you might have seen Mr. Fennel still taking a walk, but his *daughter* is hanging on his arm, and his wife *walks behind*, leading the

little boy. The poor woman seems to have lost that elastic step she once had; she looks faded and careworn, and talks about "Willy's fretfulness, having just cut his teeth;" and "Margaret Ann is feeble, and they apprehend a spinal difficulty;" and if you inquire why they do not go into the country and try a change, she will answer, "Bless me, Mr. Fennel is so busy at the store, I scarcely see him from morning till night!"

I don't know what ails the man, but he is so abstracted he never gives a positive answer to anybody but his customers, and his wife, when she inquires if it will be convenient to *replenish her purse*. An old friend occasionally tells him what a fool he is to be so absorbed in business; that his wife is much changed, and really looks like an invalid. This for a moment touches him in a tender spot. Perhaps he thinks, if she should die, what a terrible expense it would be to procure a housekeeper, and how much of his time it would take to oversee the household — the very thing which has worn her down. So he buys a horse and carriage, and resolves he will give the family an airing once or twice a week. He thinks once in the middle of the week, and Sunday afternoon, he can spare to drive them in the suburbs. But now he is so delighted with his new horse, he expects all the family to be continually talking about his good qualities. The children soon get tired of such frequent rides, and beg the privilege of staying at home, and playing with some of their school-fellows.

The next year, Mr. Fennel carries his wife to ride in a chaise. She is much emaciated, and has a hollow cough now. Still, he is accustomed to it, and, as she is uncom-

plaining, he does not apprehend anything more than a *constitutional ailment*. And as they ride, she is weary and does not care to talk; and he is thinking about some bad debts, or about dismissing his book-keeper; and when she inquires who lives in some splendid palace which they are passing by, he invariably answers, "I am sure I dunno;" then, perchance, he gives a long gape. How interesting!

Mrs. Fennel won't live a great while, but still there is no fear but he can get another companion, "he is such a *nice man*, and *so attentive to his business*." Lady reader, would you fancy Mr. Fennel for a husband?

"AND SO FORTH."

TRULY, a mighty wide margin should be allowed for all "and so forth" includes. It gives the closing zest to much of some people's conversation; it is the finale of the speech-maker, the end of the delineator, and affords the most ample field in which the imagination can riot. And yet what sources of contention it has opened! All the letters in the alphabet may be joined together, and their exact meaning plainly indicated; but *and so forth* is married to no letter, and so his bachelorship is quoted, and made subservient to all purposes. A friend engages board; he stipulates the terms, and the host enumerates privileges, "&c." The lover adds to his long epistle of proposal that he hopes one day to be forever united, where they shall realize one blissful dream amidst matrimonial comforts, "&c."

Now, although nothing is expressed in this winding up, yet everything is understood. The man procuring board sees a long array of agreeable privileges, which it is *never* intended he should realize. The disposer of a cargo includes many items in the termination with which the owner will *never* be furnished; the lover winds up with a delightful anticipation which may be dissipated in *imagination*.

Whoever would give the definition of "&c.," would confer a great blessing upon posterity. It certainly is taken to mean a great deal, and it is used as the excuse to mean nothing. And yet it is such a graceful close; it so helps out a forgetful orator; it so finely finishes a windy paragraph; it so exquisitely furnishes what one dislikes to enumerate, and it gives such a pledge without an obligation, that, were all the lexicographers in the world to agree to set it aside, it could no more be done than to quench the light of day.

There must be stops, windings-up of passages, a time when eloquence becomes weary, when the man of letters concludes, and, "with sentiments of heartfelt esteem, &c.," breaks off abruptly, and yet satisfies the most fastidious critic. And yet there are times when this much-quoted word is never applied. It never finishes a prayer, nor affords a close to a sermon; it is not inserted in a note of hand, nor in a will; and if by chance it enters into a long, undischarged bill of goods, there is much careful research to interpret its meaning. So, like many good things which we both use and abuse, it has its place, and when used aright helps finish up a long array of wearisome details. Therefore, we commend *and so forth* to all sweeping paragraph-writers, all elaborate sentence-makers, all hurried correspondents, all disconsolate lovers, all advertisers of real estate, personal property, and whatever is wearisome in the whole catalogue of minute enumerations.

A FINE MORNING.

A FINE flow of spirits, like fine weather, will not always abide with us. There are cloudy days and stormy days, as well as those of sunshine, and there are moody days and sad days and troubled ones, all of which make up the diversity of human condition. In despite of quack medicine advertisements, notwithstanding "the balm of a thousand flowers" is concentrated, there are people still with bloated faces and freckled skins. There are carrot-colored hair, and pepper-and-salt colored, and pure milk-white, and gray heads, although every newspaper is heralding the recipe that can change them "to a permanent black, or a soft and silky brown." And there are chapped hands, and burned fingers, and excrescences, which "Russia Salve" purports to heal and mollify; and there is a long catalogue of unmitigated suffering, notwithstanding thousands of pamphlets are thrown into every vestibule, counting-room, shop and dwelling, where poor humanity sits on stilts, or is prostrate on beds, or reclines on sofas, or stretches out in recumbent chairs.

So, a fine day is not always a guaranty of fine feelings. There is a poor, wasted skeleton of a man; and as the wind flows balmily from the south-west, he concludes to venture a few paces from his home. He puts on his

heavy overcoat, and stout boots, and thick muffler, and draws his hat pretty snugly over his forehead, and, at a snail's pace, assisted by the use of a large cane, he approaches you. You kindly inquire for his health, and congratulate him upon being visible on the sidewalk; but, alas! he coughs before he articulates a reply, tells you he is almost afraid he is overdoing; that he has not ate the value of a biscuit for a week, and thinks of trying the effect of the water-cure treatment. Well, he needs the rubbing, and dousing, and chafing, and exercising of that kind treatment. Awhile hence, leafy June sends you to his place of sojourn, and you will see a man with a brisk trot, unbandaged, sucking in all the aromatic fragrance he can inhale from the blossoms of trees and the scent of perfumed flowers, and he wonders why you stare so long in his face; tells you he has advanced fifty per cent.; that his life can now be insured at a far less premium than formerly; that he eats mush and milk, dines on baked potatoes, and sups on tea and Graham bread; that he walks fourteen miles a day, always feels cheerful, and yet calculates on a return to the city a well man!

That invalid, too, over the way, who has been wrecked all winter, swollen with the rheumatism, diseased in the liver, lame, weak-visioned, a victim to poultices and pills, whose physician has made him a daily visit for three months past, has sallied out this fine morning. He tells you, he feels encouraged; that his lameness is better; that he is trying a new cure for the liver complaint, and, as warm weather approaches, he has full confidence his bodily ailments will be mitigated, perhaps

entirely leave him. A fire kindles in his eye as he anticipates his future well-being; and if the hope but continues buoyant, he will soon dismiss his physician, ride into the country, live on dandelions, snuff the breeze, and bid defiance to disease.

But invalids alone are not on the promenade. Canvass the streets where dry-goods' establishments have advertised "Spring fashions opened this morning," and witness the rush! There is the glitter of silks, satins, and brocades; the fresh sunshade just mounted for the season, which overshadows the last unique pattern hat, made so flaringly open that the rich, ponderous ear-rings are distinctly visible, creating a kind of thrill lest their weight shall slit down the ear and cause an advertisement of "lost," in to-morrow's newspaper.

Verily, says the perambulator, this is an age of gold. Our bachelor friend walked in behind the show at one of these immense windows which exhibited the "very last styles." "What is the price of this mantilla?" inquired a young, economical miss. "Only forty dollars," replied the shopman; "decidedly cheap, a great bargain." It was taken! "And of this wrought handkerchief?" "Only twenty-five." What! thought he, as a heavy roll was disgorged from her port monnaie. As he went out he jostled against velvets, blonde lace, gaudy jewelry, pointed remarks as well as collars, and, in a fit of desperation, concluded he would stand the "landlady's rise on board" some time longer, rather than venture into the sea of extravagance which this fine morning had revealed to him.

SOILED GARMENTS.

WITH what care we bedeck our persons, and, if about to enter the presence of a distinguished individual, how shocked we should be to appear with soiled garments! And, then, with what nice discrimination we put on the apparel suited to the occasion!

But, while we are so studious about the *outer* man, how is it with the *inner* temple? Are we careful about the soil or spots *here*? How happened we to wink at that fraud to evade justice and secure wealth? Why did we yield to that resentment, and thus cause a brother to sin, and ourself to be the subject of recrimination? How came we to speak unkindly of that man, about whom we ought to have been silent? Why that hasty word in the family? I fear we are not clean *within*, however we practise outward ablutions.

If but half the time and attention we bestow upon the *body* was given to correcting, purifying, and regenerating the *soul*, one-half of our bodily maladies would be obviated. A pure soul never exists in an impure body; but we dare not reverse the rule,—it will not hold. The physician gives the recipe for the earthly malady. Christ came to give the specific that would heal the soul of its internal diseases.

THE BROKEN PROMISES.

"BUT physical ailments, Mr. Tompkins, admonish me that I am not long for this world, and I do wish, husband, you would make me one promise. I know I shall not be here long, my dear." Her voice grew very plaintive, and Mr. Tompkins was obliged to hear her.

"Well, what is it that I must promise, to make you happy, wife; anything reasonable?"

"Now, that is the way you always answer me. So cavalierly, so unfeelingly, and in such a coarse way. I tell you again, I shall not be here long. You are a rugged man, Mr. Tompkins, and know but little of my physical ails, I tell you."

"Pho, nonsense! You are nervous, wife. Go out, take the air, brace up a little, and the vapors will quit their hold."

"But, that promise, husband?"

"Well, now for it."

"Will you promise me, sincerely, as God spares your life, if I should die, that you *will never marry again*? You know how many girls would be glad to step in my shoes; how many widows would like the privilege of sitting in *my* drawing-rooms,—those beautiful rooms, all hung in tapestry, and those bright chandeliers sus-

pended, looking just as good as new, if they were bought at auction. *My* worsted work, too. O, I could not bear to know that anybody should own it after me! But I am going to a better place, I trust. Heaven, they say, *is paved with gold!* It will be hard to leave you, husband; but I know you will soon follow. Now, promise me faithfully that you will never marry again, but keep everything just as I leave it, which shall be in good order. Will you?"

"On condition, wife, that, if I should die, you will observe the same injunction. You know how many young men are dancing attendance on rich widows; how many who have lost their wives would like to wear my coats, and pants, and satin vests. Now, you will keep them always hanging in the closets, just as I left them, and never let my wrought slippers be put upon another man's foot."

"Certainly, Mr. Tompkins; but *that event* will never happen in *my* day. You will live long after me."

The promises being thus mutually exchanged, Mrs. Tompkins seemed to revive. She procured a bottle or two of specifics for hypochondriacs, and really grew so much better as to propose a journey. The autumn following, she broke out in a European fever, and Mr. and Mrs. Tompkins were registered as having taken passage for Liverpool.

New sights so engrossed her attention, new faces so won her heart, new cookery so improved her appetite, that Mrs. Tompkins emerged from a pale, thin, sharp-featured woman, to a healthful, plump English lady; and, after a two years' residence, when she returned,

how her neighbors stared, as they accosted her with, "Can this be *you*, Mrs. Tompkins?"

But Providence and man are not alike in their designs. Mr. Tompkins had grown thin, had a cough, a pain through the shoulders, little appetite, and great debility. He was consumptively inclined, but remarkably resigned to his situation. And now gossip abounded; some affirmed he had lived a wearisome life with his wife; some said they "could tell things," but would not; others, who were in her confidence, shook their heads, and said they "never criminated church members;" for Mrs. Tompkins was a very pious woman. But, at length, the man died, and the bereaved widow lamented loudly, and begged the sexton to see that all things were done in good order, and insisted to know if he really believed the body could be kept *two* days. She sent for an artist, had his picture taken, bought the finest bombazine dress, had a mantilla trimmed with the deepest folds of crape, wore a blinding veil, and cried as if her heart would break. She went to Probate, administered herself on the estate, lived in her own drawing-rooms, kept her servants, but complained bitterly of loneliness. She was always at church meetings, always wept, or held up her handkerchief, when the good man prayed that "afflictions might be sanctified," and, in short, the widow Tompkins, with her fortune of two hundred thousand, without "chick or child" to share it, was quite a prominent character in the mouths of sundry widowers and forlorn stricken bachelors. For two full months she wore the veil *down*. It was said she was observed to draw it aside very slightly; then a little further, till, finally, she threw it over the crown of her

bonnet, just as parson Boneset repeated the text, "For our light afflictions, which are but for a moment," &c.

That night Deacon Sears called. But how excusable was his visit! *His* wife died suddenly, "but full of hope;" and how natural that his sympathies should be drawn towards the widow, *full of hope* likewise! Mrs. Tompkins was always at the prayer-meetings, and Deacon Sears always exhorted; and how natural it was he should see the widow home; and, when he got to the door, how natural that he should step *in*; and, when fairly *in*, how natural to *stay*, disliking to leave good company! Depend on it, then, matters were talked over between the members, and some inferences were drawn; but, curious enough, the deacon had promised Mrs. Sears, in the event of her death, *he would never marry again*! This promise was extorted before sundry witnesses, and they were all living, and ready to testify to the fact. The deacon was a man of truth, and the parish generally thought him to be relied on. One person went so far as to say to the widow Tompkins, aside from this promise, she did believe he had *serious intentions*; whereupon the widow grew faint, and was revived only by sal-volatile. Here were two pledges made to dead people; could they violate them? Was there any validity in them? Grave questions were discussed in the public meetings, whether certain promises were obligatory; whether the dead took cognizance of the actions of the living; and whether the spirits of our departed friends were hovering over us mortals? These topics led to much metaphysical discussion; but the deacon always opposed the doctrine of personal recognition hereafter.

We shall all be blessed in the mass, was his favorite theory. Still it wore upon him. The widow grew more and more attractive. Just so far as repelling forces diverged from the centre, the power of gravitation increased, and Mr. Boneset was requested to deliver a lecture upon moral obligations.

The divine took the ground that all promises made in good faith were strictly binding; that death rather sealed than annulled them; that the accusing spirit might so torment a man who wilfully broke such an engagement, as to be his perpetual misery in a future state, besides the disquietude incident to existence here. This was a poser. Matters grew worse and worse; but, finally, taking shelter under the old maxim, "that a bad promise is better broken than kept," Deacon Sears and widow Tompkins took advantage of our new law, and were married.

MODERN TALK.

"I NEVER will marry Mr. Sinclair, ma,—so you may as well drop the subject as not. Do you suppose I'll have a *mechanic* for a beau, when Sophia Marshall, and Sally Edes, and all my associates, have young *gentlemen* to wait on them? Look at his coarse hands; they are too big for a kid glove—there is not a pair imported of sufficient size for him. I never *will* marry him, and you may tell father so."

"But, my dear, Tom Emery has only a small salary, and you never need think your father will countenance him. Why, child, should you slight a mechanic? Your father was a journeyman carpenter once."

"Mother, I'll hold my ears if you tell me that again. I've been mortified enough to hear father tell every young gentleman that comes herè, about his beginnings, and being bound to old Mr. Gragg as an apprentice. I really left the room the other evening, it was so painful. Certainly he was a master-builder before he retired, and never worked any; he only rode round in his chaise, and superintended his workmen."

"But, my dear, he first earned his horse and chaise by hard labor and prudent living."

"And what good will all his money do, if he hoards it

up, and we girls cannot dress like other people? I'm sure, I'm tired to death with hearing about how you *used* to live. I want to live well *now*, and keep up with the fashions."

"If you should accept Mr. Sinclair, Hitty, I have no doubt but your father would give you a handsome house, and furnish it beautifully, and do everything you wish; but if you disobey him and marry a worthless rake, you alone must bear the consequences; but I enjoin it upon you, child, 'to look before you leap.'"

Sinclair was the son of a worthy mechanic, and chose his father's occupation; but he was well educated, and had just offered himself to Hitty, the retired master-builder's daughter, and many people thought he had made a great mistake.

Tom Emery was a clerk at two hundred and fifty dollars' salary,—wore white kid gloves, attended "operaws," threw bouquets at Signorina Teresa Parodi, carried a gold opera-glass, a perfumed handkerchief and gold-headed cane, was cultivating a moustache, whiskers and an imperial, and, above all, did not *work for a living*; he *only sold goods*, and changed places about once a month. Yet Hitty thought "he was divine!"

"I should feel pretty, ma," said she, one day, "to be seated in my velvet chair, or be in the street with my velvet cloak, and meet Sinclair with his working-dress on. I'm sure I would not bow to him. What would Effie Grieves think of me?"

"You talk very foolishly, child. Sinclair has a mind and purse as far above your dandy beaux as the dome is above the steps of the state-house."

"But look at his hands, ma,—those awful big hands,—and his smooth face! O, dear! say no more to me about Sinclair. Mr. Emery, ma, is a beauty, and pa had better not oppose me too much—there are more ways than one to get married."

The mother wiped her eyes, and secretly wished "girls had not such silly notions."

The mother said to her husband that evening—"If our Hitty, pa, should marry Tom Emery, I hope you will make the best of it."

The old man rattled his paper, and pretended not to hear a word.

A few days after this the dear child was missing. The morning journal told the cause of her disappearance, and there was a very afflicted household, where she had been the pet and pride of maternal love.

Formal intelligence has, however, been transmitted to her parents that "*Mr. and Mrs. Emery* have secured board at one of our first hotels on their return," and the fond mother is pondering whether it will do to hint to "father" about the expediency of taking them home!

"BUBBLEISM."

MR. CEPHAS BUBBLE is undeniably the "fastest" young man in the market; for he is not only ashamed of his parentage and birth-place, but he is actually ashamed that *he was ever a boy!* You never heard *him* quote "what he did when a child;" indeed, we have no very authentic record that he ever *was* a child!

He was a young man when we first knew him, which was some twenty years ago, and he styles himself such, now. When we first made his acquaintance he was about exchanging a clerkship for "one of the firm." It was more manly to work for one's self, and so the poor fellow rushed headlong into business without capital, and, as is usual, experienced the disagreeable dose of not being able to face his creditors; but, having passed through the ordeal of bankruptcy, he was prepared to be a "shrewd speculator," and some days could count his thousands, and some days only his coppers!

But he somehow always continued to keep in the fashion. He was the "nice young man," in the estimation of all the fairest of creation; and no concert, party or lecture, was accounted quite so pleasant "as those which Mr. Bubble attended;" for he had a most prodigious fund of small talk.

The fact that Mr. Bubble remained a single man undoubtedly increased his acquaintances, and made him a more popular man. And yet parents used to caution their daughters about being "engaged to such fellows as Bubble," and, at the same time, they never failed to invite him to partake of their hospitalities! Although often unsuccessful in his financial operations, he was called "shrewd," "well posted," &c., because he always dashed headlong *into and through* everything.

True he had been in all sorts of society, and had a smattering of all kinds of phraseology, which adapted him to all varieties of company. He knew the phrases on change and in the drawing-room, in the lecture and at the opera; and, by the right application of terms, it was astonishing how often sound was taken for sense.

He was always at home in a "panic" gotten up by brokers; could be a "bull" or a "bear," as best fitted his position; could put on his nice white kids and call on the Misses Flambeaus, and converse about the "enchanted belle of last evening's party," and tell "how divinely Miss Popinjay looked, at the opera;" could bow and twirl his gloves, and pat down his huge moustache after a hearty laugh with the ladies; and at the lecture-room he could sit with his rolling eyes upon the fair assembly, and ogle, and give a pleasant simper and a graceful recognition to many of the upper-ten; while not a few exclaimed, as they sought him in the crowd:

"There's Mr. Bubble, Nelly;" "There's that pleasant fellow, Bubble, Hatty;" all showing how popular he was becoming.

And then Mr. Bubble was the pink of fashion. Very early in the season you might see him promenading, dressed *a la mode*. If "adder-skin pantaloons" were in vogue, you might be sure Mr. Bubble had been seen with them; if they were flowing or tightly compressed to the skin, long or short, why, look at Bubble,—*that* determined how they ought to be worn. If the dress-coat was short, or the frock or sack were only a round-about; if the vest were open and long, or close and short; and if Congress half-boots or French red-tops were the fashion, Mr. Bubble had been out.

But who was his tailor? Nobody knew, because, if they had, the precise article might have been "common,"—as it was, only an imitation could be selected. He always spoke of his clothes being made in London; and it was remarked that nobody ever wore a dickey that sat so perfectly as did Bubble's. There did not seem to be anything difficult in attaining to the perfection of cutting out one bit of linen like another—but how many hundreds failed in the experiment to do so! The difference was, Bubble's never wrinkled, never confined his neck to a straight-ahead look, never broke down when suddenly called to look on one side, never failed to be graduated to the neck it enclosed. And, whose shirt-bosom ever sat like Cephas Bubble's? Did you ever see it ballooning out, or so tightly drawn down as to make him round-shouldered for its accommodation? I think not. Yet who made these articles nobody knew, and he would never sell the recipe any more than the one by which he had gained his reputation for being a "shrewd fellow!"

Mr. Bubble is generally placed upon "lecture committees," "associations for the moral improvement of young men," upon "fancy grounds," "laying out circular paths," "widening and bordering walks;" and it is supposed, by some, he was the architect of many of our public buildings, where the finances were not commensurate to the undertakings, for many unique models of *churches* have been found in his old portfolio. Perhaps this attempt at designing may have originated in his constant effort to promote the progress of the age, having, as he does, a profound contempt for the old, prudent characters who caught the spirit of those who landed in the "Mayflower."

But Mr. Bubble meets with serious opposition. He desires an alteration in our constitution, so that younger men may be eligible to office, and an "amendment" that a retracy to private life may be enforced at the age of *fifty*, for he has been but thirty-two for the last ten years. He has "thought about being married" ever since we knew him; but probably fearing it might lessen him in the esteem of the frequenters at fashionable resorts, he has concluded not to pay the penalty.

It may seem too personal a matter to point directly to him where he is sure to be seen—but ask any inveterate attendant upon operas or popular lectures, to point him out, and it can be done. He purposes, however, to leave the city as soon as he ascertains which will be the most fashionable summer resort, and if he finds it is decidedly "vulgar" to stay in America (as some anticipate), he holds himself in readiness to "go abroad."

CURIOSITY.

Do we not every day see people far more interested in the concerns of others than their own affairs? What care I how my neighbor lives, provided he be a good citizen? Why this trouble to ascertain how much are his expenditures, what he is worth, and why he dines on mutton when he might afford poultry?

Suppose Mrs. Grundy *does* employ a homœopathic physician, and I prefer an allopathic one? Why should I meddle? What if she is straitlaced in her theology, and I cannot embrace the same truths as she, in the same way? We both live in a free country; let us live independently. Paul Pry left a vast progeny — his brothers are in every village and street, and his "cousins" occupy more space than is generally known. The remote connections hang about market-places and counting-rooms; they can tell you how much a man's business is worth, and how much tax he pays; whether he is an epicure, and how much he has invested in good securities and bad stocks; and where the *certainty* is not known, the *guess* always supplies the want. No wonder the man out west felt he must move when a neighbor twenty-five miles off built a saw-mill. "That man," said he, "will know all about my affairs, for he is a curious fellow."

LIFE IN THE COUNTRY.

LET no one imagine he *has been in the country*, who has taken a drive around the suburbs of a city. All such places are but so many miniature cities, where the same fashions, works of art and decorations of nature, are everywhere visible. To go into the country means to sit in the cars three or four hours, and then find yourself landed at a depot where the woods rise before and behind you; where the people stare at every stranger who alights, and where curiosity is excited to know your whereabouts and your business. Then take a steady family horse, and drive to some farm-house, where primitive rocks surround the premises, and all the hedges are the growth of uncultivated nature. Step into the interior, where divans and luxurious couches never stood, but, instead thereof, a yellow-painted, hard floor, with a bed upturned in the corner, an antiquated fireplace, and relics of other days in thick profusion strew the way — and here you may gain a taste for rural pleasures. The gay routine of city life enters not here; the morning call is never made; the brocade is never needed; all you have to do is simply to yield yourself to the sweet influences about you. For fragrance, you can lay aside the elegant perfume, and substitute the refreshing incense

of the clover-bed and honeysuckle; for a concert you have the thousand songsters which flit from branch to branch—and the “bird song” of our famed Jenny is but an imitation of these real amateurs of the grove; for a walk you have no need of the soft and delicate kid slippers, but the coarser-made boot, which bids defiance to heavy dews and scratching sand beds; and thus equipped you may safely calculate on healthful pastime and enjoyment.

Shall I carry you to yonder plat, red with strawberries which have never been cultivated for a horticultural exhibition, and which can lay no claim in size to a Hovey’s seedling? Nevertheless, in the quality of *sweetness* they have no superior. In yonder dairy are floods of cream—not such as poor city people pour from milkmen’s bottles, but thick, sweet and new, from the glossy pan of the morning’s gathering. And then you may cool your heated brow under the shade of a wide-spreading maple or elm; and what epicure could desire a richer treat than you have just gathered?

And, after the dry and parched earth has all day been burned by the scorching rays of the sun, a dark and heavy cloud gathers in the west—the distant sound of thunder in low mutterings is fully confirmed as the chain lightning darts from yonder yellow-edged clouds. Anon, the rain pours in torrents, and the tender plants lie drooping under their homœopathic dressing, like the invalid who first feels the *douche* upon his uncovered body; but, as with him, this is only the renovating process, and, by and by, the drenched heads of animal and

plant rise with a firmer, statelier mien, to buffet the future adverse gales.

But the most enchanting rainbow appears, in a graceful bend arching the sky, and bidding the first promise rise to our remembrance—not the rainbow of the city, where its varied colors are only visible between columns of brick, but the glorious arch we have described. And now for a stroll by the river-side. See the rushing, foaming, tumbling current—here with a gentle flow, and there like a dashing cataract. You wonder at the imagination of the friend by your side, who speaks of the fine *mill privilege* here presented, and tells you how a dam could be constructed and a fall obtained to carry so many thousand spindles! Just so with yonder grassy valley,—it is so verdant and peaceful, the birds carol so sweetly, and the fire-flies flit so numerously at evening’s dewy coming, that it seems a cold calculation that talks only about a *warm, fertile soil*, which is capable of producing so *many bushels of grain!*

You feel that rural pleasures have not deadened all love of gain, nor made plodders of the soil insensible to the value of the land they till. The same specimens of humanity are found the world over, and it is best it should be so. We, too, with all our enthusiasm, should soon see the sun rise without much emotion, and the birds sing without heeding whether it be a golden robin or a tiny sparrow. The fragrance of the fields would be inhaled by degrees with insensibility, and the supply of our animal wants would gain the ascendancy, and the glowing rapture which the change from a city to a country life awakened, would lose its fresh delight,

and we, too, should sink into apathy amidst the glorious manifestations of nature's curious workmanship. So we will hie back again to our busy metropolis, ere the charm has faded from our hearts.

As we were sketching the life of the old-fashioned farmer, we were struck with the dissimilar position of him who ranks under the same title in the neighborhood of our city. Our suburban farmer cannot often boast of his hundred acres, nor yet of his heavy wood lot; he has no "sheep pastures," nor land unfit for productive labor; if so, his prolific imagination riots over the expediency of "lotting" it, and causing a village to spring up in a day. His vegetables are carefully tended, not to minister to his own palate, but to adorn with their dewy freshness some showy stall in yonder market. That cultivated bed of strawberries is scarcely tasted at home; but children are employed to pick for "boxing." Alas, for the rich cream in his dairy!—that, too, must be bottled, and made to swell the amount of his yearly gains; the asparagus-bed, the early potato-patch, the corn so early ripened, the long catalogue we class as "kitchen vegetables," all are fostered and protected, and hastened to ripen, to administer to other palates.

We were lately consulting with a friend, who lives on such a farm as we have described, respecting board for the summer. He was a frank man, and assured us, if we were calculating upon enjoying or feasting upon the product of his vines, that we should soon become dissatisfied. "All I raise," continued he, "is promised to a particular stall; that man has his city customers, who depend upon my forced hot-house productions; and many

a time have I carried my own vegetables to market, and purchased others less fresh for my family's use. In this way only, I have attained to my present possessions; it is literally by the sweat of my brow, and what many would call the most parsimonious economy. The rich pass by my fertile grounds, and stop in their carriages to admire the size of enclosures devoted to one particular species of vegetable, namely, my asparagus-bed, and its neighbor, the plat of radishes. They apparently envy the profusion; but suppose they were told we who cultivated rigidly refrained from gathering for our own use until *they* were fully satiated? This is the life of a farmer who begins to clear his way, and sees independence in the foreground.

"Well, the rich man who so much admired my grounds becomes possessed of them himself. He knows they must be profitable, as I relate the minute account of what I have realized. But how does he find it? He does not labor himself; his wife and daughters know nothing of the wearing drudgery of a toiling farmer's life, and he erects a small farm-house on his grounds, hires a gardener and his wife to conduct the whole labor, himself nominally ranking as superintendent. Friends from the city in large parties come to enjoy his fruitful acres; the home consumption very much abridges his marketable produce; his hired appendages are fed upon the dainties they pick, and it requires no close arithmetical calculation to find the result of farming like a *gentleman*, and farming like a *working man*.

"Hence it comes that so many are 'humbled,' as they call it, in experimenting. In fact, there is no

cheat about it. The difference has been clearly shown, — what is consumed at home cannot be paid for abroad; what is expended for hire is seldom as productive as the work of one's own hands."

We pity the man whose experience teaches him such practical lessons. Let such an one watch the unceasing toil of the thrifty farmer, who has secured his independence by the sweat of his brow, and he will readily perceive that employing others is a very different affair from working himself; and nowhere will its results be more keenly felt than in the "*pocket nerve*."

COMMUTATION.

THE word *commutation* has been much in vogue of late. We have applied it to the fate of our fellow-men convicted of crime, and whom we would save from the ignominy of the gallows. We are not prepared to discuss the vexed question and consequences of capital punishment, nor yet of imprisonment for life. We are only speaking of *commutation*. We were fancying ourselves sinners under sentence of death, and with the weight of heavy transgressions upon *us*. We know we shall soon be tried and found guilty, not in an earthly court, but at a heavenly bar. We were thinking upon what we could base a plea that would there avail in proof of our innocence. We cannot offer any false claim, nor set up any personal merit, because we are in the presence of the Searcher of hearts, who knows the end from the beginning. There is a ground of hope and fear in this assurance. We can rejoice that our cause is in the hands of such a judge, who knows what is in man, and will not be misled by any prejudice or false view. We can, therefore, throw ourselves into the arms of mercy.

But I apprehend we lose sight of our need of commutation in the day of *our* trial, when we mete out the sentence to our erring brother man. He may have committed

the greater transgression; he may have slain his brother, and his doom by earthly tribunals is death. There was, probably, a dark chapter which led the way for this step in his history. He is accountable for the indulgence of unbridled passion, of deadly revenge, of a blood-thirsty aim. His offence cries to Heaven for redress. And does it not cry likewise for commutation *there*, if not here? To lose a soul, what is it? Does it live in intense anguish and remorse until it consumes itself by preying upon its own powers? Or do those sufferings gain new intensity when earthly clogs are removed, and burn on forever? Or is there a portion, terrible though it be, meted out to transgressors; and, having suffered the full measure for our iniquities, is the soul permitted to retrace its tedious way back to the Father's throne of mercy, and there receive an expiation for its sins while in the body? These are fearful questionings, but they will come; and the uncertainty with which we feel they are attended in the final issue, should warn us against the indulgence of all iniquity *here*. Certain we may be, we shall all stand in need of commutation.

THE OPPRESSED SEAMSTRESS.

SOME people seem to have an idea that they pay too much for everything, and it is a positive duty to employ those who will work the cheapest.

Mrs. Ellsworth lived sumptuously, and her daughters dressed elegantly. We won't call them extravagant; because people who have plenty of money are not obliged to give an account to their neighbors of their expenditures. They were, however, discussing this very subject themselves upon their damask lounges, when the servant man entered and presented the seamstress's bill. Such a nicely-folded paper always attracted the family's attention, and having looked at the bottom and seen the amount, and exclaimed, "Dear me! how high!" they proceeded to examine the contents of the bundle which accompanied the bill.

"The work is done beautifully," said Miss Henrietta. "How superbly this lace is set on! How splendidly this is hemstitched! I declare, mother, I never mean to do any work myself, again, it is so much better than I can make it look."

"But you forget," said the mother, "it costs a great deal to hire all our sewing for a large family, if it be

done ever so cheap ;" yet she felt herself that it was very pleasant to have garments so made.

"I wonder," said Sophia, a tall, graceful girl of sixteen, to the little waiting seamstress in the entry, "what you would charge to make papa ten shirts? I have engaged to have them done by the first day of May; and it is so long a job, and so vexatious, I wish I could transfer them to you to finish."

The child was sent home to inquire of "her mother what she should charge to make ten shirts, with full bosoms, hemstitched each side, and ruffled, of the nicest fabric, and workmanship to correspond."

The little girl returned and artlessly replied:

"Mother says as how she shall charge a dollar; but if the young folks said they would n't give it, rather than lose the job, she would say seventy-five cents apiece."

Amused with a simplicity which ought to have excited sympathy rather than merriment, Sophia pretended that seventy-five cents was all she expected to give; she had hoped to get them done for fifty cents. Mrs. Fuller gave only that; but she did not add Mrs. F.'s shirts were unbleached, and very common work was put in them. After some hesitancy she brought them down, and, doing up a large bundle, despatched it to the seamstress, adding:

"Now my poor head and my eyes are relieved."

But let us see to whom this burden was transferred. The same seamstress once had a husband who was a prosperous merchant; but he speculated unwisely, died suddenly, and left a widow, with two small children, to grapple with the hard fate of poverty, and the remembrance of "better days." They occupied but one room,

and, as her only employment was sewing, it was difficult to make both ends meet, with the most untiring industry.

"Don't you think, mother," said the little Ellen, who brought home the work, "the young lady thought she ought to get the shirts made for fifty cents apiece. But, mother, she surely could not have known what a slow process it is to gather, and hemstitch, and ruffle, and do all the sewing, just for half a week's rent, or she never would have said so."

The mother brushed a tear away. "No, child, she never sewed for a living!"

"And, mother, she told her sister that she was so glad to get rid of the tiring work, and she said that her father would never know but she did it all, and she should have fifty cents clear, on every shirt. What could she mean?"

Mrs. A. had heard of such deception before, but she cared not to inform her daughter that the young lady was, probably, to receive one dollar and a quarter for each shirt. She felt that *her* business was only to finish the whole number as soon as possible.

She immediately set about the task of cutting them by the pattern, assorting them into piles, and getting the plainer parts ready for Ellen to hem, as she was very nice in needle-work, as far as she had learned the art; but it was always near "school-time," and the poor child but little relieved her mother.

It was at the season, too, when storms succeed each other rapidly, and the heavens are often overcast; and, as the tenement of the widow was badly lighted, it began to make sad havoc with her vision. Her eyes were weary

from continued use; and when the long job was patiently accomplished, who could tell the aches and pains by which it was all the way attended? Miss Landon, speaking of *such* poor, has well said:

“We little think how wearily
The aching head lies down.”

Long before the promised time Ellen carried home the ponderous bundle of ten shirts. Miss Sophia severely scrutinized them, pulled upon the ruffles, next looked at the gathers, then the stitching, and, finally, tossing them in a heap, added:

“Tell your mother they are worth no more than fifty cents, and I will give her that if she will receipt the bill.”

The child returned with a heavy heart and imparted the information.

The seamstress wept; she looked at the portrait upon the wall.

“If *he* were but alive,” said she, “I should have some protector from wrong usage.” She could not but exclaim, “How my head does ache!” as she untied another budget of work; “five dollars for ten shirts! I ought,” thought she, “to better vindicate my rights; but they who oppress the poor have the worst of it. Here, Ellen dear, take this bill for making the shirts, and bring me back just what Sophia pleases to give; but say, mother has toiled very hard, early and late, upon them.”

Ellen did so, and Sophia took her five dollars from her purse, adding:

“This is a great deal of money for poor people to spend; it will buy you a number of calico dresses.”

“But mother’s rent is due,” said the child

“Pho! — rent is nothing — make your landlord trust you!” and, so saying, she darted from the room.

The seamstress never closed her eyes that night. Think you no unseen Eye will vindicate her true claim?

“Sophia Ellsworth,” said Grace Eaton, “where did you get that splendid fan? It is really elegant!”

“I saved it,” replied Sophia, “from money father gave me to make his shirts; but I hired them done at *half price*, and he never knows it to this day.”

Poor girl! Your fan should be used as a screen to hide the hard spot in your heart. Prosperity never long follows in the footsteps of oppression.

11*

OUR BEL.

"OUR Bel," writes a fond mother, "has become crazed since she has been at a watering-place. I don't know what to make of the giddy creature. Her father insists that she ought to be returned home, but the dear little pet is so happy and wild with enthusiasm, I do dread to break the charm which now binds her to lovely N——. I transmit to you, my dear friend, the identical letter we received this morning, that you may be the better able to reply to my question, namely, 'What ought I to do in this case?'"

"N ——, Aug. 23, 1853.

"MY DEAR PARENTS: — I begin to realize more and more what a blessed thing it is to be brought out in society. I am all the time in a whirl of delight; there is something new at every turn. Truly, this is an earthly paradise. Our old humdrum friends at home talk about poor human nature, and its degradation! O faugh! I never desire to see better specimens than we have here.

"Dear mother, I have not time to tell you of half the conquests I have made since I came here. We have a lovely southern gentleman, who sings exquisitely with me every evening, and a decidedly brilliant young Englishman, who performs duets with me to gathered crowds in

our public parlors. I seem to be fast losing the foolish timidity I once felt. The blushes which used to mantle my cheeks, when you bade me perform any little piece at home before the grave old squire and his lady, do not torment me now. I am not afraid of any one here, and this *confidence* which I have acquired is alone worth the price you pay for me to remain here.

"I danced every time at the last 'hop,' and wore my cherry-colored tissue over the white satin. It was thought the most decidedly elegant costume that appeared on the occasion. I only wish papa would afford me a set of diamonds. He is so rich he might do it as well as not. I should be willing he should take it out of my marriage portion, if ever I should settle down as a staid old matron, and bind myself to one lover; but that is a thing I can never bring my mind to conceive of doing. There is a great charm in listening to varied specimens of making love. For example, one little coxcomb, who regulates his stomach upon 'Sarsaparilla bitters,' when he cannot get a stronger tonic, came up to me in our crowded drawing-room, and, said he, in a lisping tone, 'I am sure, whoever is fortunate to gain your affections, Miss Edgerly, has his fortune made for this world. Aw — I understand your papa, miss, is a millionaire. I should like right well to call upon you in your city home.' As I turned my head away disdainfully, Mr. Moxon caught my arm, and in the most gallant manner asked me 'how my heart stood affected since yesterday's conversation' (for we talked over love matters then).

"And there is a squeaking little fellow here, who sings celestially, and he has an abundance of hair of the most

exquisite auburn shade. His face is some 'pitted' with the relics of small-pox and yellow fever; for he is fresh from New Orleans, and even he stroked his moustache, until he coaxed it into a lovely curl, he was so embarrassed before he asked me if he should attend me to a favorite walk we have here, called the 'Lover's Precipice,' from the fact that last summer a most romantic event happened there. A gentleman, being disappointed in the object of his attachment, threw himself headlong down this height, and was taken up so mangled that he survived but a few days. I have seen the lady who caused his destruction; she is indeed fascinating enough to make any man lose his senses.

"But I never could run through the detail of thrilling and ludicrous matters to which I every day listen. It makes me so animated to be so constantly excited, that I cannot bear to think of returning to our old systematic way of living. Now, as my time is nearly expired, do, dear mother, persuade papa to let me finish the fashionable season here, and then I will return, and, after I have procured an entire new wardrobe, we will take up our autumnal travelling. That will be nice, won't it, mother?"

"I have only to add, that I would like you to send me, by express, two richly-embroidered handkerchiefs, for I am so unfortunate as to have lost one, and my washer-woman says the one I gave her last week blew away. My dresses I will try and make last during the season. I have torn my tissue one horribly; it being necessary to wear them so that they drag all round; and the gen-

tlemen are continually asking my pardon for having stepped on my robe.

"Heigh-ho! this is life; and may every year make me as happy as the last. I should not value being considered *an invalid*, so long as it makes papa so generous and solicitous about my health. Please tell him I was never in better health; that sea-bathing agrees with me admirably, and likewise please make my compliments to our kind physician, and thank him, from me, for recommending me to such a delightful watering-place. I shall look to have my order fulfilled by to-morrow's express, as a 'hop' comes off in the evening. Please send a letter saying I may stay until this merry season breaks up. Kiss papa, and tell him a compliance with my wishes will gain for him my warmest love.

"Truly yours,

ISABELLA."

When the friend to whom Mrs. Edgerly sent the above letter, opened and read it, we may be sure she very soon decided upon the advice which she should bestow. It was scarcely a year since Isabella visited this lady. She had then just graduated from a four years' residence at a celebrated boarding-school. She was not, of course, then "brought out;" but talked of wondrous things she should do when that time arrived.

She was a giddy, impulsive creature, just like an unbroken colt, ready to break the harness and neck of the rider, if occasion required. The young lady was profoundly ignorant of all domestic affairs, although she graduated with high honors, and showed a diploma a

yard long, which attested great proficiency in scholarship.

"While she was with me," writes the same lady with whom Mrs. Edgerly conferred, "Isabella was far from being industrious. She would eat fruit until her appetite was completely satiated, and I could not induce her to eat any solid food. She had little regard for the laws upon which our health depends, and would sit in a current of air one day, and be confined to her bed the next with an ear-ache. Her needle, when she used one, was occupied in worsted work. She had some patterns of *elaborate finish* (a boarding-school expression), but she never executed much during her visit. She was forever building air-castles in dreamland; wondering whom she should marry, and always applying the phrase, 'an exquisite fellow,' to the most consummate coxcombs.

"My dear Mrs. Edgerly, by all means take your daughter home. She needs incessant watching, and how you could have thus perilled her in the care of only a young lady like herself, I cannot tell.

"What if she has the neuralgia, and sea-bathing and change of air are recommended? Certainly, the recipe did not add to the list those questionable acts which she writes about. Almost any disease is preferable to being made a heartless coquette, and such Isabella is fast becoming. I would not only take her home, but I would furnish her with useful employment when she gets there. What if she does sigh and pine after such excitement? Show to her what, as a rational being, she was created for; give her household labors to perform, and make her feel that to know how to prepare a dinner is quite as requisite

to her comfort, as to be able to read Virgil or French authors. Do not err, as most mothers are apt to do, in supposing her physical health will be endangered by domestic labors. Those have the least pains and aches, who labor most; at least, a refreshing sleep will remove such infirmities; whereas a listless young lady fancies herself ill until she becomes so.

"If I have been too diffuse in my advice, it is because I every day see the evils which flow from a fashionable education, to the exclusion of the practical knowledge of which every female should be possessed. I do not, however, feel I am too exact in my requirements, for my conversation with well-principled, rational young men, assures me that such do not wish for a wife like a waxen doll, that will break to pieces if exposed to the least trial.

"But occasionally one gets sadly deceived in the object of attachment. You may remember cousin Abijah, who sought a country lass, because he thought he should find in her the sterling qualities he desired for a wife; and you may recollect, too, how it proved with him; forever after the engagement she forsook her old employments, and, in attempting to fit herself for a *city lady*, by keeping herself constantly within doors, and practising only upon 'tent stitch,' a pain in her side was induced, the bloom on her cheek was exchanged for a lily white, and her closets, to this day, look like an apothecary's shop. Yet poor Abijah, of course, is doomed to bear what he cannot help, but always hoped to avoid. Many a man becomes thus cheated.

"My parting advice, therefore, I reiterate. Let your

daughter be occupied every day with some useful labor, and if you cannot enforce it you may send her to me.

"I would never hear my child detail her progressive steps in a flirtation, — rather change the current of her thoughts by leading her to feel the responsibility of her conduct, and the effect of her example upon character. 'Bel' certainly is endowed with good natural talents, which ought not to be perverted at the shrine of vanity."

* * * * *

Not long since two gentlemen were expatiating upon the excellent housekeeping of a friend of theirs, who was recently married. "But they say," remarked one of them, "she was a terrible flirt once." And would you believe it, the now systematic model of a good wife, was no less than *our Bel*, who, previous to her marriage, spent two years under the guardianship of her faithful aunt.

A WIDOW'S EXPERIENCE.

WHY is sleep forever banished from the wretched? Why is night so fearful and its gloom so appalling? Why does the brain seem to rack its secret store-house, to bring forth vividly all our buried hopes, and show us the true aspect of life, when we are the least prepared to receive it?

I had laid upon my restless, uneasy pillow, the live-long night. Weary and sad, mourning in bitter anguish that he to whom I had unburdened all my sorrows was in the distant tomb; his shroud, with its snowy foldings, appeared distinctly before me; his form, icy and stiffened, and countenance beaming with no light but the strange expression which death gives to the compressed lips, which are sealed forever! Good God! I exclaimed in my agony of loneliness, is this widowhood? I looked out upon the heavens, — all was peaceful there; the stars seemed to shine with an unusual brilliancy; why was this darkness in my soul? Again I sought my bed; I clasped my pillow to stop the throbbing of my fevered brain. I felt my pulse, — they were low, feeble and intermittent. I had no hope, no strength, no love, no faith! All was one eternal darkness. *Life*, why was it given thus to mock our fancy? *Hope*, why implanted

to make us feel our impotence, bereft of its power? "*Faith* in the future," what idle words were those whisperings, to my solitary heart. A widow! Can it be, that I, who have sported so happily and sung so merrily along the floating stream of time, am now by the merciless waves to be engulfed in darkness?

Once more I am at my window. Dimly in the eastern horizon there appears a faint streak of light. Is it not the illusion of my weak vision, dimmed by my tears? Again I look; its tinge is a little deepened; a dim twilight seems to gather about my room, rendering more distinct surrounding objects. A thrill, shall I call it joy? O, no! that word defines not the emotion;—a sensation, a thought, comes over me,—there may be light in the distance; the night heralds another day; the faint rays of morning increase in light, until the sun rises in all its splendor. Can this scene prefigure what may be my coming fate? Alas! this conscious agony of utter loneliness comes in, to chill me again. Yet, with the brightness of the morning, my soul instinctively turns to the light, and thanks God that the night has passed! A momentary calm comes over my throbbing heart; its wild tumults are partially checked. Worn and heavy, I am composed to realize a troubled dream. Now, I have peace; my companion again journeys on with me, and we are under the same protecting care as ever. But hark! A summons to leave. I am again awake; but still in my deep sorrow a comforter has entered my soul. He bids me look upward; he has assurances of love, and tells me I am not forsaken. He speaks of earthly darkness to which heavenly light suc-

ceeds. I turn my eyes above,—the tomb has no tenant, why should I linger there? My friend is above, I will be there also.

Thus lamented the bereaved widow. It is truly said, such severe sufferings are of short duration; their very intensity wears out the subject of them.

* * * * *

We will transfer our glance to the future. A year has passed, and there is a gay assembly. The priest is there, and the bridegroom and the bride, who is the *same widow* whose overflowing heart was bursting with grief. Who laughs so joyously as she? Who looks more confidently into a future of domestic bliss?

Let us take another leap; for, strange as it may appear, the sudden changes of life are made up of leaps. In yonder steamboat sits a man, and wife, and child. The husband is feeble; he has a slow, irregular step, breathes short, and is easily fatigued. He is the prey of consumption, and is now on his way to a more genial climate, attended by all the loved ones of earth. Mark his wife, my friend. She is watchful of his every step; and even the tiny boy, "Johnny," the mother's first idol, seems to know that noise and roguery have no charms for "dear sick papa."

The captain is interrogated, "How long will it probably be before we reach Havana?" Adverse breezes delay their steady progress, and the consumptive patient fails rapidly. When they reach their destined port, he is carried from the ship to the nearest accommodations, looks out upon the face of nature so verdant and beautiful, and only murmurs, "Had I but arrived sooner,

Susan"—a choking succeeds; he is dead! A second time is the subject of my sketch a widow, in a land of strangers.

She contrasts her present with her former situation. *Then* she was surrounded by loving friends, and yet she refused to be comforted. *Now* she is among those who heed not her sorrows; for it is no uncommon occurrence thus to die, as the invalid first breathes these spicy gales; and all that remains is to commit to foreign dust the relics of a second love, and mournfully return to tell the tale of blighted hopes, twice sundered by death!

* * * * *

A period of twenty years has now elapsed since this history was first chronicled. Yet, so often has the sad drama been again and again realized, that every soul exclaims, "I have read this tale before." But did you know, my friend, that "Johnny" is married, and the widow is now betrothed to her third husband? That husband in prospect is the father of the bride of the widow's son!

"Time will work wonders," quote it as often as we will. In his hurrying track he has left a deep impress upon that household. There are flaxened-haired boys, whom want of paternal control has made ungovernable and unlovely children. The father and son make but one household; and the step-daughter is no companion for her step-mother. Why is it thus? It began in a *trifle*. She did something her mother conceived was wrong; she did not speak of it to *her*, but to the *neighbors*. *They* recommended the older member to bear no

offence; and she brooded over the *first* source of discord, till every act at length became odious. Ill-fated Ellen! A sad doom is thine; the children must never be corrected before the grand-parents; the discordant elements of strife are working, and life is very dreary to the step-mother! Why not separate? Because the property has been given to the children during the lifetime of the parents, and no home remains for them but according to the "contract!"

That woman reviewed her life. Thrice was she married, and two husbands had she laid in the grave. We have heard her lamentations and grief; but she assures us no hour of desolation in widowhood was half so trying as the daily friction which now attended her declining years. She had erred, but it was too late to retrace her steps; and her sad closing history can only operate as a warning to others, lest they fall into such condemnation.

The instruction we may gather is this: Never surrender, unadvisedly, your own comfort and means of subsistence into another's power. Never conceal the heart-burnings which rise on the commission or omission of acts, which, if laid open, might be forever rectified: in this way domestic disturbances first arise. Never make a third person the depository of your own private history, when their advice is not needed. And last, though not least, in the chapter of "considerations and hints," *do not marry too often*; but we are touching upon a delicate subject, which everybody feels competent to decide for himself.

DISCOURAGED GENIUS.

SOME people account poverty the greatest of calamities. For many certainly it has proved the greatest of blessings. How many geniuses would have laid dormant; how many beautiful works of art, poetry, fiction, sculpture and oratory, would have been lost, or only have been brain cogitations, had not the bitter need of necessity spurred on half-slumbering genius with the hope of reward! The hope of gain, profit, gold, has stimulated more minds than all other incentives put together. The finest sonnets have been composed in attics; the most splendid works of art have been produced in dark, obscure rooms, where the light of day hardly penetrated. The first encouragement given to alleviate poverty has forthwith sent an impetus to the brain, which has led to the creation of the sublimest conceptions, and the rarest specimens of elegant and refined literature. Yet what is more pitiable than the confessions of men of the most brilliant parts; than the detail of the small appreciation of their labors in their lifetime? After death, posterity may laud them to the skies; but their heart-aches are over, and the anguish of "hope deferred," or "promise blighted," no more stings like an adder! The encouragement bestowed in one's life would have enriched the world with many more and yet loftier specimens!

SUMMER BOARDING.

"BUT I should prefer to board where at least there was an air of gentility about the place," remarked Mrs. Peters to her husband, in a somewhat irritated tone. "Do look at my neighbors; every one has gone to some fashionable watering-place, or to some noted hotel, while you are quite content to set yourself and me down in an obscure farm-house, where the broom is handled by the hostess, and the butter churned by her daughter; and of what use is such a life? I know nothing of the world; I see no amusing flirtations, have no reason for dressing for dinner in any different style, and for my evening entertainment I am obliged to listen to you and Uncle Jerry, who talk only about mixing soils, or the best mode of destroying caterpillars, or assigning perhaps half a dozen theories to aid you in solving the mystery of the decay of the button-wood trees in the front garden. Now just think what interest, Mr. Peters, can I be expected to take in such conversation?"

"But you forget the cheerful endeavors to serve and please you which Aunt Kizzy makes, and her daughter Hitty, who offers to read to you after their work is done, and the nice griddle cakes, and the rich cream she so generously mingles with the berries; and, above all, there

is Mount Carmel, where the high-bushed blackberries grow in such clusters, of which I am sure you are equally fond as myself. And all this, too, is furnished for so reasonable a compensation; the trifling sum of five dollars a week defraying all our expenses, including washing, all the time we stayed in this farm-house."

"Ah! there's the secret," continued Mrs. Peters; "the everlasting scarcity of money makes this place so desirable to you. Why don't you make this excuse when you are besieged to give for political purposes? For my part, I should prefer to stay half as long, and be able to tell, when I returned, that I had seen somebody. I don't care so much about the salubrious air, nor the fine scenery, nor the rich cream of which Mrs. Hobbs is so liberal; I should prefer to be where I could see distinguished people—genteel women, who manage to get at their husbands' purses and make a figure in the world. Farm-house rusticity does not suit my taste, and I won't conceal the fact any longer."

"But I have already written Uncle Jerry, to know if they would be pleased to receive us another summer upon the same terms as the last."

"I hope you mentioned that to re-carpet our chamber would be indispensable; and instead of those old braided mats there must be a nice rug; and, for my part, I shall insist upon a thicker mattress. There is no use in paying one's money for nothing."

And now we will leave Mrs. Peters to do battle with a vexatious mosquito, and her husband to reconcile her to rustic simplicity, while we take a peep into the summer quarters among the green hills of Vermont. It is

a charming location. The farm-house is at the top of the hill, and overlooks one of the most commanding views, dotted with neighboring farm-houses, long fields of waving corn, and now and then patches of heavy red and white clover, which imparts a fragrantcy to the air and is enough to fill the heart of a city recluse with ecstatic joy, notwithstanding Mrs. Peters's dissatisfaction.

But there is a discussion going on. Hitty is the amanuensis, and sits biting her pen, awaiting orders what to transfer to paper. It appears that a day or two before Mr. Peters sent his request, Judge Conley was travelling through this part of the country, and feeling the need of the refreshing mountain breezes, he had inquired whether he could be received into any farm-house in the immediate vicinity, and an application was made to Mr. Hobbs, the very person with whom Mr. and Mrs. Peters had boarded.

The judge was a widower; a man of wealth, but an admirer of nature. He sketched some; he wished for retirement; was liberal in his offers to remunerate our friends, offering the same amount for himself as both Mr. and Mrs. Peters paid; and as he desired no change of style, Mr. Hobbs was disposed to receive him. And now came the question whether the Peters would be satisfied with smaller accommodations, and whether, moreover, they really wanted them on any consideration; for it was apparent to people of such good common sense, that Mrs. Peters' element lay in more fashionable society; so after a full discussion it was concluded that they could not receive the above couple, and Hitty was designated to put

it in proper phraseology; which, with her good education, was no difficult task.

Upon receiving the reply, it was indeed a wonder to the superficial Mrs. Peters how a farmer's daughter could dictate such a delightful note. "I am sure," said she, "I never saw Hitty use a pen, but I always knew she had studied grammar, and I have often wished, Mr. Peters, we had treated the girl with more civility when she came to the city last autumn; but my heart is so estranged from country cousins, I acted naturally."

"And so, wife, after all, we cannot board in our Green Mountain State — now where shall we go?"

Mrs. Peters immediately suggested advertising in the evening papers. It was late in the season; all the fashionable quarters were occupied; but in a few days she received a statement of terms from the landlord of a celebrated hotel, that a small, unoccupied chamber was vacant, with a privilege in the common parlor, which could be improved at the rate of twenty dollars per week; and Mr. Peters determined to try the experiment of "genteel boarding."

Mrs. Peters was in ecstasy; her satins, silks and bareges were refitted by the last fashion-plate, and she was soon in free and easy conversation with the Joneses, the Hills, and the Gills; but she always scrupulously concealed the fact that she had passed her two last summers at the farm-house. She was careful never to introduce her daughter Clarinda, who was at a boarding-school, to Hitty Hobbs; and so the daughter had formed an idea of Miss Hobbs, as some awkward Green Mountain hoyden,

who knew only how to do rough work, and would shame a city maiden by contact.

Mrs. Peters, however, in her new home, did not find "genteel society" so comfortable as she expected. There were cliques and parties; there were jealousies, and envy, and distrust. Mr. Peters was known as the tried husband, and sundry wives despised in others just what they were guilty of being themselves. The small chamber they occupied was filled with uncomfortable occupants; the buzzing of flies, the whizzing of mosquitoes, and the glaring blaze of the sun, compelled her to draw a comparison between that large, neat room she occupied in the farm-house, where the eight-day clock ticked in the corner, and fresh bouquets appeared on the mantel shelf. Yet a month's board there cost no more than a week here — but *gentility* made the difference.

At the close of a sultry day towards autumn, the busy rumor run the rounds that a newly-married couple, of distinguished notoriety, had arrived, and would appear at table. Expectation was on tiptoe, and the greatest preparations were made for sight-seeing, when, lo, at the head of the table appeared Judge Conley and "she that was Hitty Hobbs!"

Mrs. Peters could not control herself. She ran and saluted the bride as her most intimate friend; she welcomed her; she expressed so much regret at not passing the present summer at her father's house; she should have been so delighted with Judge Conley's society; and that same evening it was proposed they should ride over to the seminary to be introduced to her daughter Clarinda.

Mrs. Conley did not, however, accept such attentions at this time, when she did not need them. She plainly added, with the refusal, "Mrs. Peters, my marriage has not deprived me of my original identity. When I visited you as Hitty Hobbs, I was only a green country girl; my present position has added nothing to my worth of character; if I can ever oblige you I shall be happy to do so, but I cannot accept your present civilities."

Mrs. Peters was so chagrined that she left her boarding-house the next day; but she was never after ashamed to acknowledge that her most agreeable summer residence was at the mansion of Uncle Jerry Hobbs.

Mr. Peters had no difficulty in inducing her to take any room she might obtain with her Green Mountain friends the next summer. And although Mrs. Conley spent her summers still at her father's, yet she taught Mrs. Peters such a salutary lesson in her daily courteous conduct, that she was never after heard to complain of rustic simplicity, nor did she again envy those who were cooped up in genteel boarding-houses. By degrees she learned to draw the distinction between the artificial and the real, and though often led to feel the effects of a superficial education and misdirected taste, yet she never again manifested the foolish airs which an ill-bred lady is sure to assume when she departs from her true position. Mrs. Peters *did* improve, and is now known as a quiet and interesting woman, showing how good sense can triumph over a vain mind.

A "GENUINE WIDOWER."

THE first deep shadow that ever rested upon Henry Herbert's home was cast over it by the loss of his affectionate and devoted wife. It was indeed to him one of those mysterious dispensations, the meaning of which we know not now; for there she stood at the domestic fireside, idolized by her husband, and seemingly perfectly indispensable to her two children, who were just at the ages to demand her constant solicitude. Such a loss seems always doubly painful to be borne by the father when the children are quite insensible of their heavy bereavement; and Herbert never felt it more intensely than when contemplating the little volatile movements of his daughter Grace, who stood arranging a bunch of natural flowers to make a garland for her mother's grave. True, the child wept, and called to her dear mother, as if invoking an ascending spirit in its upward flight; but then she dried her tears, and stood before her mirror half an hour after, parting her auburn locks, and rolling over her curls, so as to produce a pleasing effect — for girls at ten years of age are not altogether insensible to the budding charms which belong to that period; and young Arthur Herbert, who was two years older than Grace, had learned to put on his cap quite jauntily, and

to exhibit some marks of precocity, which only made it more apparent to others than himself how much he needed the moulding influences of a judicious mother to control his too-ripened propensities to manhood. It was a dark day, therefore, when that wife and mother was borne forever from those loved objects for whom she had lived, and prayed, and sacrificed so much, and to whom her husband still turned as if she were even now a ministering angel, hoping by her unseen and gentle influences to be still directed. If it were a mere fancy, who would wish to dislodge it from such a troubled breast? But what was to be done with this dependent household?

Mrs. Herbert was most unexpectedly taken from a scene of labor and care over which her supervision was supreme. If her husband was perplexed, she was his comforter; if he was sick, she was his nurse; if he was dejected, she was his sun; in fine, one who smoothed all the thorny experience of man's troubled life, and upon whom he always leaned and sought counsel, assured that only words of wisdom would direct him. Of course, the faithful discharge of the maternal relation was not wanting; and while the feeling of desolation bore so sadly upon Henry Herbert's heart, let us hear the first letter he dictated to a very dear friend after his severe affliction.

"MY DEAR ANNA:—I can never express to you in language the painful sense of loss which everywhere meets me since my beloved Lizzie has gone from my side. Never was it more intensely realized than the first

morning our little family group ranged ourselves around the breakfast-table. She who was ever the presiding genius at that board, whose smile always made the most lowering day open propitiously and hopefully, was not there; but, instead, a pert young housekeeper occupied her chair, and by her attempts at affability and affected good-humor strove to dissipate the sadness of our countenances. Perhaps it was a kind act, well intended, but I could not bear it; my coffee remained untasted, my roll lay untouched on my plate. The children, of course, partook of my emotion, and the housekeeper, being not of any too sympathetic turn of mind, began to chide us. 'Why,' said she, 'Mr. Herbert, do you think nobody ever buried a friend but yourself? Young as I am, I have lost a husband; but I was led by the grace of God to feel it was all right. If I had yielded to the pressure of the calamity, what would have become of my children? No, sir, I immediately summoned my energies, broke up housekeeping, put out my children to board, secured a situation for myself, and determined to look beyond the cloudy aspect. I at length succeeded, and you see the cheerful acquiescence I have attained. Mr. Herbert, you still have plenty of means to supply their wants, and yet seem repining and unhappy.'

"There was a truth here which Mrs. Agnew presented, but it did not take hold of me as if uttered in a sympathizing spirit. I wondered she dared express herself so freely. I felt her husband was never to her what my wife had been to me. It was too much; and when Maggy, our old trusty domestic, entered my room soon after, with a deep sigh and said, 'O, Mr. Herbert,

we have indeed met with a sad loss, and I do not feel as if I can stay with you under this new mistress,' it woke up a tide of feeling, perfectly irresistible, and servant and master wept together. Mrs. Agnew is not a prepossessing woman in her manners. Maggy says she has already dictated very unwisely to her, and as they have had some slight altercation she is about to leave."

"And now, if we will follow the journal of this distressed widower, we shall have before us an exact picture of human nature in its frequent manifestations.

"June 7th. It is now a month since dear Lizzie left me. I begin to regain my composure, but I am terribly oppressed with a sense of loneliness. A thousand objects of interest, upon which she daily looked, tend to keep her continually in my thoughts. There is her writing-desk; the unfinished manuscripts lay upon the table; a note addressed to a friend, but owing to some circumstance never sent to her; an unfinished piece of fancy-work kept for a stray hour's amusement; her books, her pictures—indeed, everywhere the mute objects which her eyes or fingers rested upon. And where is she now? comes to me with appalling force. Shall we meet again?

"July 9th. It is recommended by my friends that I shall surrender housekeeping. Mrs. Agnew is constantly troubled with her servants, the children have grown very restless under her management, and Arthur refuses to obey her at all. It is thought I had better send the children to some good boarding-school, and find

some home for myself where I shall be subject to less perplexity, and sooner regain my former cheerfulness.

"July 20th. The decision is made, and I have been gathering all the relics of dear Lizzie's handiwork for her daughter Grace to preserve as a precious legacy. The dear children are at a well-recommended school, and I take lodgings to-morrow in a public house. It is thought I shall be more in society in such a place, and wear off the effects of my great loss. But the idea of quitting a home where I have enjoyed the most exquisite pleasures, where a holy charm seems to pervade even the apartments through which she so often glided, and adorned, is indeed painful. But then, with such a housekeeper, what is left for me but to pursue this course? I cannot find one half the nice materials upon which Lizzie expended so much time. Mrs. Agnew says the servants must have carried them away. What was in drawers is mostly abstracted; but, as I never gave attention to the minutiae of what was contained in trunks and private receptacles, but gave all the keys to my housekeeper, I have no means of knowing what was purloined. But whoever is the aggressor must suffer more by the gain than I can by the loss.

"Aug. 8th. I do not exactly enjoy this bustling whirl in which I live. I sometimes picture to myself a re-gathered family, where we can again garner up our wasted hopes, and sit by our cheerful fireside. If there were another Lizzie in this wide world who could but supply the place of her who was gone—but what have I said? It is—it is scarcely five months since she left

me, and I have every week since watered her grave with my tears.

"Sept. 20th. Have not visited my dear wife's grave for three weeks. At first I had a misgiving, as if she were conscious of the neglect; but it is only the material form which is entombed—her gentle spirit would gladly spare me from all unnatural grief. How much the children need a home and a mother's care!

"Oct. 17th. When I was first introduced to Amelia Blond, she at once reminded me of my dear wife. True, she is a mere girl compared with her—some fifteen years younger—but still all the graces of womanhood are fully developed. If—heavens! I blush to enter it upon my journal! How Mrs. Agnew, my old house-keeper, would glory in the fulfilment of her prophecy made in my deepest bereavement! 'Mr. Herbert,' said she, 'your feelings will be materially changed in a few months, and in less than a year I predict your marriage! Such violent grief never survives more than one season.' I could have turned her from my threshold for such an intimation; but, alas! how little we know ourselves! Lizzie, your image is still enshrined in my heart; but must I go weeping through the remainder of my journey because you were taken from my side?—I met Dr. Frost yesterday; he first ventured to joke me upon being married again. This led to a serious conversation upon the subject. The doctor has been through the depths of affliction three successive times, and now is in the full enjoyment of domestic bliss. He urged no objection to Miss Blond but her age; but some girls at twenty are as fit to rule a household as others at fifty. I do not myself

think her age an insuperable objection; she will be more companionable to Grace. But how do I know that she would marry a man so much her senior? The doctor says, 'how will you know unless you ask her?'

"Nov. 4th. Since my last entry in my journal, I have taken a great step. The proposal to marry Amelia was accepted, and I find myself in a new world; the old, restless, disconsolate feeling I have endured seems leaving me. My weed is horribly rusty upon my hat, and outward marks of mourning are superfluous. I have thought I would not use any more crape surroundings. I must express my feelings to my dear friend to whom I so recently communicated my deep sorrow, well assured that she will reply, 'Henry, I tremble for you.'"

And let us hear the confession thus confidentially made. It belongs to our humanity, that the sunshine should succeed the storm, as much in the physical as the material universe.

"MY DEAR ANNA:—As you have been the faithful depository of my sorrows, it is but justice due to you to be made acquainted with my joys. Know then, my good friend, that having been crushed by the weight of sorrow, and feeling the desolation of a heart that turns to another for support, I met, by the merest accident, a lovely girl, who so strikingly reminded me of my early love, that I sought an introduction to her. She was stopping here with her father for a few days. She is well connected; her father is cashier in a bank in Western New York. I have been there, made my proposals, and have been accepted!—Thus, dear Anna, you have been made ac-

quainted with this new feature in my history. Do not ask me if I am demented;—far from it. Amelia Blond is just about twenty years of age, lively, fascinating, perfectly charming in conversation; the idol in her home, being the eldest child; handsome, sweet-tempered, and just such a being as would make Grace and Arthur one of the most accomplished of companions, and the best of mothers. I cannot, for I dare not, attempt to tell you how I conceived of this beautiful being who has been raised up to me to pour new life and happiness into my once bruised heart. In personal beauty, she far exceeds my departed wife; besides, she has had all the modern advantages of a fashionable education, which eminently qualifies her to impart her gifts and graces to my children. I shall not be married until January—have rented a fine house; and the very prospect of being once again reinstated as a happy family quite elevates my feelings, and makes me enthusiastic in the contemplation. The children, too, are delighted with the prospect. Do not chide my prompt action; life is so brief we must gather all the sunshine we can between its parted clouds.

“Yours, truly, H. H.”

And thus the “dear Anna” playfully replied:

“Have I not the evidence before me, Henry, that you are a genuine widower? Inconsolable the first month of your bereavement; not much relieved the second; quite convalescent the third; beginning to look round you the fourth; find a lovely piece of human perfection the fifth; engage to marry her the sixth; live on the ecstatic prospect the seventh; and enter upon the glorious realization the eighth! Were you the first of your species who has

acted over the drama, I could joke you, or chide you, or gravely caution you. But I always fear for those devoted husbands with overpowering griefs at the loss of their earthly idols. At the present period of your ecstasy I shall therefore intrude no remonstrances, for I am well assured you are in a dreamy state of bliss that nothing but the reality will equalize. Let me, therefore, wish you as much enjoyment as you anticipate; and to ask more would be superfluous. Truly, ANNA.”

On the first of January, seven months from the death of his idolized wife, Henry Herbert and Amelia Blond were united in marriage. The new home was an attractive place. Grace and Arthur were delighted with their new mother; the father did not think her a day too young for his wife, and the manifest pride with which he introduced his wife, and the smile-lighted expression which irradiated his features, bespoke the perfect satisfaction which pervaded his inner being. When we took leave of Mr. Herbert, he seemed fully persuaded that it was a wise dispensation which removed his first idol. And although her memory was still fragrant, yet he presented a living memorial that the crushed affections may be reawakened, and that there is no heart, however desolate, if it beats beneath a manly bosom, but may repair its loss. And too often the truth is self-evident that the newly-repaired affections seem to flow out more spontaneously and with deeper fervor than did the old; for, as an ancient writer quaintly remarks, “the old heart, rejuvenated by the fires of new passion, becomes juvenile in its exhibitions of tenderness.”

THAT VACANCY.

DEATH does not make all our vacancies. There was a nice little miss who lived over the way, and she conceived a most unfortunate attachment for his clerkship, Mr. Anthony Dobbs, a youth of nineteen. It was a sad event, — worse than death. We are reconciled (or ought to be) to what Providence sends; but who would give away a beautiful girl to a fellow who owned three or four bottles of hair-oil, some nicely-perfumed handkerchiefs, sundry parti-colored neck-stocks, the wearing apparel he had on, and two pairs of white kids, — one soiled, the other fresh? Was it not lamentable to see the affections, forgetful of such an inventory of worldly goods, march up to Hymen's altar and make solemn vows to "love, protect, and cherish," so much that was shadowy and unsubstantial? But, then, poets talk about love as "ethereal," needing no substantial soups, only a few highly-spiced condiments, to support the interior life. Certain gross people, not understanding this definition, have been foolish enough to accumulate means whereby the larder and cellar can be supplied; but they are the beef-eaters of this lower world, who imagine a house, a table, and worldly goods, are quite essential! How wonderful that such a theory should ever have taken so deep a root in this pleasure-taking world!

Then there is another vacancy of a different kind. Do you remember the bachelor, with a high dickey and stiff gait, who was always advocating the laws of health, and took so much exercise that he used to be facetiously called "the walking-ticket"? He boarded, ever since our grandmother's day in Pelham-street, at the "crack house" of Mrs. Wines. Well, he has been caught, and there is a vacancy. Poor fellow! how he hated music; but his dulcinea drags him to every concert in town. As to parties, he abominated everything of the kind but a game of whist with gentlemen. Now, the carriage is ordered at ten to attend a fancy ball, and he dresses in pumps, and says, "Coachman, call, at one o'clock, at No. —" How long think you it will be before some malady seizes him and lays him on the sick-bed? And, then, that young wife, will she sit by a dull lamp and drop medicines, and warm flannels, and act like a faithful nurse in his declining years? How fortunate it is we are not made of glass, and transparent all the way through! How well it is that half our dissatisfactions we can throw off upon some "pain" or "an affection of the liver"! The doctor cannot tell where the twinge comes from which causes us to make a wry face. You tell him it is in the *toe*; he discerns a *slight inflammation* there. Poh, nonsense; it is in the *heart*.

But we were on vacancies. *Weariness of the same place* makes many decamp. This disease comes on with depression, proceeds to a cough, and thence to a southern latitude, to escape easterly winds. A whole family are thus scattered.

Fashion, too, makes many vacancies. The house is

too small; the street is too narrow; the children have no play-room; the acquaintances maintain more style; and so removals must ensue. And, then, comes a weariness of one's country. People have been west, have seen Niagara, lived summers at the Springs, been to Virginia cotton-fields, ascended Mt. Washington, looked at the jumping-off place down-east, and what can excite them here? Plainly they must take the steamship and go abroad. They would travel through High Holborn, peep into Westminster Abbey, pass through Switzerland, spend a winter in Rome, see the crater of Mt. Vesuvius, come back to Paris, get a smattering of all things, fashions and people, and return home by the way of New York!

Having seen all this world, we sometimes wonder they don't turn their attention to another; but few seem to do this, and any premonition, in the form of gout or consumption, draws the "faculty" in earnest consultation upon their case, and every conceivable thing is done lest they should leave this world, which is so trying. And, when they *must* die, how they grasp still at fleeting shadows! — sometimes undetermined where to bestow what they cannot carry with them, distrustful of everybody, altering last wills, subjoining codicils, making strange bequests, passing away with great parade through public streets, and leaving places vacant!

All this we daily witness, and never once think of expressing our profound gratitude that we are corruptible rather than transparent, for those we leave behind to criticize our real characters.

"SELLING OFF AT COST."

"WHERE did you get that splendid lace upon your cape?" inquired Mrs. Eager of her neighbor, Mrs. Higgins.

"Why, I purchased it at Fonday's; did you know they were selling off at cost?" Mrs. Higgins then unrolled an elegant striped silk, she had just purchased for a dress, only fifty cents a yard! a nice de laine, *only* ninepence! lots of prints *only* fourpence! and a splendid pocket handkerchief at six dollars, the original price of which was twelve!

Poor Mrs. Eager took fire at such a display at once: she never saw such bargains in her life. True, she was not in want of any of these articles just now, but what of that? A good thing in the wearing apparel line neither eats nor drinks anything. She would have a silk dress, that was so cheap; and there was some lace, just such as she wanted, at half price. The de laine would make a beautiful morning-dress. What matter was it if she had half a dozen already? It was so cheap! At all events she must have a pocket handkerchief to carry to Mrs. Milnor's ball. And with these thoughts dancing through her brain, she immediately equipped herself and started to Fonday's, where a flaming placard,

with "No humbug—selling less than cost," announced to her that this was *the* place, although sundry neighbors purported to be selling the same.

Sure enough there was a most tempting display. Heaps of silk, glittering and changing in hue; elegant laces, varying in prices, but all decidedly *cheap*; prints, patches, linens, cambrics, satins and velvets, all by turns attracted our friend's attention. And then the clerks were so attentive, so ready to accommodate, and even Mr. Fonday himself stepped forward and inquired:

"Mrs. Eager, let me sell you a bill of goods to-day?" to which Mrs. Eager replied:

"Money is so scarce, Mr. Fonday, I am quite limited in my purchases this season."

"That need not make the slightest difference," remarked the good-natured shopman; "take just what you please, have the goods booked, and pay just when it best suits you."

Was ever any one so accommodating? Well, thought Mrs. Eager, this is the first bill I ever ran up in a dry-goods store; but where's the harm? Mr. Eager, I know, would not approve of it; he always says, "Pay as you go, wife;" but I know he is short just now, and I do want these things. She hesitated a moment, and then all was over. Her decision was made to take all she wanted, it was such a good chance. One silk was so beautiful, she thought she would take fifteen yards of that piece. Then there was another less elegant, but still very useful for some occasions,—she would have a dress from that. As to laces, she was surprised to hear she had selected fifteen dollars' worth, and, having completed her

trading, the footing of her bill amounted to a trifle over seventy-five dollars! Not one of these things was to be used now; but then she remembered they were all so *cheap*. She was truly glad to obtain so many things to lay away. She thought it would be better to withhold the fact of her purchases from her husband, until money grew easier, and the banks discounted more freely.

Mr. Eager came home to dinner sick and dispirited. He protested he could not get on much longer unless there came a change for the better; and upon Mrs. Eager expressing much sympathy for him, he bade her keep up good cheer, *be economical as possible*, and perhaps by and by things would change for the better. For the first time, Mrs. Eager wished all her goods back again in the shop whence they were taken. But what was to be done? They harassed her mind, and she stowed them all away in a back closet, putting them out of sight, hoping to get them out of mind. We will leave them there for the present, and return to Fonday's.

"I will look at your choice laces," said a little miss of some eighteen years. She selected of the prettiest patterns, and "How much do you ask for this?" she inquired.

"Two dollars a yard, miss,—just such as we have been selling for three dollars."

"I can't think of giving that. Mrs. Higgins bought one here for four and sixpence, which looked equally as well."

"You are mistaken, I think," replied the clerk; "this is real Mechlin, a most superb article," and he compared the two. "They looked *just alike*, but they

were entirely different!" So, after coaxing and praising, our little miss took the lace at the clerk's price. The difference was so unimportant, that when Mrs. Higgins and Miss B. met, a lady present remarked:

"So, ladies, I perceive you have both been to Fonday's." *The price made the difference!*

"Let me see some of your nicest black silks," said one of some dozen who were pulling over goods and troubling the clerks. It was shown her. "What is the price?"

"One dollar per yard, madam, and the best article ever sold in the market for that price;" and he twitched, and folded, and rumbled it together to test its various qualities.

"One dollar! Why, I saw just as good a little below here for eighty-seven and a half cents per yard. I thought you were selling at cost." So saying, the lady twirled it over her finger, and held it up to the light; "It's decidedly rusty," said she; "it looks dull; let me see some with a better lustre."

"We have none," said the clerk, "of any richer quality." The silk was replaced upon the shelf.

"Let me look at your merinos."

They were handed down, and our fashionable shopper declared they were much higher than any she had seen. She thus went, pricing and decrying the goods, through the whole length of the shop, and at last returned where she started from, to look once more at that piece of *rusty silk*. "I don't know," said she, "but I would take this at four and sixpence a yard." But the clerk was inflexible, and the lady left. She returned, however, that same afternoon, and took the whole piece at one dollar

per yard! "*I'm an old shopper,*" she remarked, as the silk was measured, "and generally know what I am about, before I purchase." Who doubted that part of her story?

Mrs. Green's carriage is at the door. She has read the advertisement, and although she has been laid up with the influenza for some weeks, yet she thought she would venture out and look at some cap laces. Swiss muslins, tartan muslins, book muslins, &c., were all exhibited, but nothing suits; she has seen richer and better for far less money. Mrs. Green, however, thought a fourpenny print "was pretty," and actually bought one to give her waiting-maid for a new-year's present!

This is a specimen of some people who make "the rush" at those stores which advertise selling off at cost. They literally demand the goods to be given away. But, thank fortune, there are exceptions. There is Mrs. Tibbs, she knows what she wants, inquires for it, and, if it suits, takes it. There is Mrs. Bond, and a host of others, who generously patronize dry goods establishments, and are willing to pay for what they buy. Were this class extinct, where would be the shop-keepers?

"I declare," said Fonday, one night to his partner, "this 'selling off at cost' is a ruinous business, after all." He looked at the list of notes payable and those receivable. He estimated the store expenses. Twenty clerks to be paid, a book-keeper at a large salary, and three families, all living in genteel style, with the goods marked down and selling off at cost. It was a difficult problem to make both ends meet, and were it not that in previous years there had been an accumulation, it never

could have been done. "I have taken during two weeks since my goods were marked down," pursued Fonday, "cash to the amount of twenty thousand dollars; we have booked about ten thousand, and have sold our most desirable articles, and upon the remainder there must be a further reduction, or we shall never get them off."

"No," replied the partner, "get in some new ones, advertise again, and by degrees we shall clear them all out."

They did so; but here were new liabilities assumed, and if no profit, how much loss think you, accrues? And upon whom is that to fall? If the firm are able to stand it, of course they are impoverished; if not, it falls upon those who first sold the goods; and so the evil consequences are traceable far back, and we hear of much derangement in trade, unexpected failures, great scarcity of money, banks that won't discount, and a train of evils. If "selling off at cost" is really what it purports to be, how can it be but a ruinous affair?

There is another evil; goods are put at prices which, unless afterward adhered to, will not be purchased. Other traders, who are pursuing the old way of fair profits, are neglected; for people will flock where goods can be purchased cheapest. I remember an anecdote in point. A short time since a small, insignificant-looking back store stood full a mile from any thoroughfare, in a little dirty street. But the man advertised "goods from auction at unprecedented low prices." In the course of a week, so great was the rush, that the passage-way leading to the store was literally blocked up all hours in the day. He sold laces for one cent, which were held at

three cents everywhere; and gloves for four cents, actually worth eight; and women will find out such things!

But we will turn to Mrs. Eager. She was invited to a large party, and she could not resist the temptation to show that elegant silk she had laid away in the dark closet. Her mantua-maker advised her by all means to have it made up; it would show off splendidly by gas light. But then if Mr. Eager should find it out, as disappointed and tried as he was already, what would be the consequence? Vanity will make us risk consequences, and the silk was carried to a shop and made in elegant style. Mr. Eager always knew when his wife looked well, but could never tell what she wore. So they started for the party with the unpaid dress, and Mrs. Eager seemed to forget the past, and enjoy only the present.

Soon after they entered the gay assembly, a volatile young lady thus addressed Mr. Eager:

"So your wife has come out in Fonday's richest silk. I saw it there, and meant to have purchased it, but Mrs. Eager had got the start of me. Fonday told me he sold her a nice bill of goods."

Mr. Eager was thunderstruck, and said nothing, but gave an assumed laugh, and passed on. His enjoyment for that evening was at an end. He seemed abstracted, dull and cheerless, and no one could divine the cause—not even his wife. They returned home, and she began to chide her husband for inattention. This elicited the whole matter, and Mr. and Mrs. Eager were changed in tone. For the *second* time, Mrs. Eager wished all her purchases in the store whence they were taken.

A few days after, while sitting at dinner (having made up the disagreement), the bell rang violently, and the bill was handed to Mr. Eager, which his wife had run up at Fonday's. For the *third* time, Mrs. E. wished those goods back again in the store.

"If I had ever deprived you of money when you had asked it; if you had not known my wishes respecting bills being left unpaid; if you had not deceived me —" but why pursue his conversation? The bill was paid, and Mrs. Eager never again bought what she had not cash to pay for at the time.

"But I have bills at a number of stores," says one.

"And so do I," replies another.

Let me ask you one question, ladies; do you never purchase many articles in this way which with cash in hand you would feel that you did not need? The answer to this question tells whether it is expedient or not to purchase on trust. It may be convenient, it may be agreeable to your husband that you should do so; then very well, but never, never deceive a man, — never let a long account be passed to him, if he disapproves the practice. Such little breaks in the domestic threads of love should be carefully avoided by every good wife.

THE UNFINISHED PICTURE.

HAVING recently called upon a family, consisting of three daughters and one son, who had just returned from a fashionable watering-place, their fertile imaginations were busy in the future, as a great event was about to take place. "Hattie," one of the young ladies, had recently become engaged, and that most fruitful topic of "Who is he?" having been disposed of (not exactly as some of the friends would have desired), the subject of bridal fashions formed the chit-chat of the whole call. We will premise that the lady's father was only in moderate circumstances, and leave the reader to judge of the wants, and their reasonableness, by a simple description.

"Hattie is to be married," said the mother, "in splendid white brocade. The article is of recent importation, and cost five dollars per yard. Is n't it a beautiful article? Her pocket-handkerchief cost twenty-five dollars, and she is now teasing her father for a diamond bracelet. Dear child! it is an event that seldom happens more than once in a lifetime, and I do not wonder the child feels a little particular in the style of her dress," continued her fond mother. "The bridal hat must be of corn-color. That is decidedly, girls, the most genteel, the most expensive, and the most tasteful."

"And where will they live?" inquired a friend.

"O, that is undecided! Probably *board* for the present. My child is a perfect novice in domestic affairs. She cannot assume the cares of housekeeping, at any rate."

"But, ma," drawled out the engaged Hattie, "I can get a cookery-book, and that will teach me everything. I can, then, make ices and cream-cakes, and all those splendid fixings we have had for desserts all the past summer." And the girl was on tiptoe at the very thought of her luxurious living. Poor thing! we pitied her. We could not, however, forbear to ask who was most in fault, that mother or the daughter.

There was a rumor, a few days after this interview, of a heavy failure; the father of Hattie was interested in the same concern, and he, too, was declared a bankrupt! And once more the attention of people was directed to the young man to whom she was about to be married. Nobody knew who he was, excepting that he had passed an idle summer at the Springs, and had a love of sketching from nature for his own amusement; but here was a sketch in real life, and the picture lay in a very unfinished state. Can any one write the description of such a family? We gladly turn over the canvas, for we can anticipate the sombre shade which filled it.

MARRYING TOO LATE.

"THERE is no season," said my Uncle Richard, "I dread like the approach of spring. It is not that I have not a taste for opening buds and blossoms; it is not that I am not a lover of rural pleasures; but it is because your Aunt Hannah seems to have so many newly-blown ideas and wants, that I find it hard to steer clear of the breakers. I don't know the peculiarities of other women, for I never studied the female sex much. You know I lived a bachelor until I was eight-and-forty, and what the deuce I ever married for, sometimes proves a vexing question to me. But still I *do* know the reason. I felt lonely sometimes. I used to get irritated with landladies, and mad at house-servants, and provoked with washer-women; and whenever I spoke of my troubles to my friend Squire, he used to say, 'All this, Dick, comes from single blessedness;' and I was fool enough to believe him. Then I had a terrible tussle with myself to know whom I had better marry! I hired a pew in the broad aisle of Dr. Brodwell's church; for they said this was a good place to look out for a wife; so I opened the window of my heart, lifted my embossed prayer-book, and repeated, 'Good Lord, deliver us;' but I am afraid now it was not an acceptable prayer.

"Well, Judith Dunn, the widow, sat right before me. She had three little daughters, all arrayed in black for their 'dear papa;' and Mrs. Dunn wore so thick a veil I never could penetrate beneath it to see her face, until about the fourth Sunday after I took the pew. Then she brushed by me, and, hitting the flap of my coat just as she was turning the corner, 'Excuse me, Mr. Guy,' said she. It was enough. Squire saw her, said she had money, told what well-behaved children the little Dunns were, what a nice wife she made, what an amiable disposition she had, how she mourned her husband's death, and the uncertainty of her ever marrying again.

"'Find out that last fact for me,' said I to Squire. So, having committed myself, I must stand the racket.

"Squire made an errand to Mrs. Dunn's house, feigning a kind of inquiry about a man indebted to her late husband and himself. The widow appeared terribly downcast, and Squire awkwardly said, 'I hope your days of mourning will not last forever. Time assuages grief, and it may be your duty to yet form another connection.'

"'O, heavens!' exclaimed the widow, 'never, never, Mr. Squire. My heart is broken — I can never love another man. My husband, sir, was one of a thousand.'

"'I left her,' said Squire, 'but just as my hand was on the latch to go, she inquired, "Do you know, sir, who that gentleman is who has taken the pew adjoining mine in our church?"'

"'O, yes; he is my friend Guy, an old bachelor, but a sterling man, worth his thousands, full of good-humor, and on the look-out for a wife, as we say.'

"Mrs. Dunn evidently looked brighter, and remarked, 'He is very fine-looking — what is his business?'

"'A commission merchant,' I replied, 'and a law-and-order man — always on the right side. Shall I bring him in and introduce him to you, madam? You seem so lonely a little society must cheer you.'

"'Do as you please, Mr. Squire; but you know all gentlemen are alike to me *now*,' and she wiped her eyes.

"Squire told me all this," pursued Uncle Richard, "and the widow Dunn was forever after before me. I went again to my pew, but ere I started I remember twitching off half a dozen dickeys before I could get one of becoming height. I ordered a new coat from my tailor, and for the first time in my life actually stood upon a stool in my chamber, against a looking-glass, to ascertain whether it was a complete fit. I bought perfumery, carried real lawn handkerchiefs instead of bandannas; and all for what? Why, the widow Dunn, to be sure! And who would believe a man of eight-and-forty could have been such a fool? *I*, too, who had condemned all the striplings for such folly, who was so indifferent all my previous life to women, how could *I* be so altered a man? *I*, who used to go to bed to dream of advances or falls in cotton; who used to write long articles on free trade and the tariff; who studied the state of mercantile affairs far more than my Bible — *I*, Richard Guy, entrapped by a green widow! I could scarcely believe in my identity, for all my thoughts were turned upon this subject: Will she marry me? How can I best insinuate myself in her good graces?

"I made my call with Squire, all forearmed to admire;

but when the tall, graceful woman entered the room, and put on such a sweet smile, and added, 'I am happy to see you, gentlemen,' I was what Squire called 'smashed — all done for — gone.'

"I had no peace then, nor have I since; for before I obtained her consent, I worried myself to death about her reply — and after I got the affirmative, golden dreams of bliss made a new world for me. And then my married friends were forever congratulating me, for there is no truer saying than 'misery loves company.' There was but one incorrigible old widower, and whenever I spoke to him of marrying again, he would tartly reply, 'A burnt child dreads the fire.' I thought he was a pest to the race. I think better of him now.

"But Mrs. Dunn, after a short courtship, became Mrs. Guy. She was not a woman of truth, for did she not declare, again and again, she never should marry? Now, if a person deceives one way, they are very apt to in another. And then again, there were some embarrassing circumstances attendant upon our union. The children were forever calling me 'Pa' before my old comrades, and I felt kind of sensitive to such a word, especially when I saw an unmistakable smile playing about the corners of their mouths.

"But it always appeared to me Mrs. Guy was a singular woman. She did not appear half as captivating after her marriage as before. She had so many wants, there was never any satisfying them. And then the worst part of all were her allusions. 'Mr. Guy, you know my thirds would have made me independent without *you*' — and this was a terrible cross, since I knew nothing of her

thirds. Certainly the other two-thirds were quite enough for me to be acquainted with.

"And now, as I began, I repeat it, there was no season I so much dreaded as the spring. About the middle of April she always commenced talking about going out of town. I inveighed against it, but she would forever add, 'Do you not wish to avoid taxation, Mr. Guy? My poor husband used to say he saved all his summer's rent at Oakland, and more besides, by these early removals.' So, to keep peace the first year, I did so, and had the pleasure of being publicly recorded as one who escaped taxation — never charging it upon my wife, where it belonged. The second year we let our house and furniture standing, to my wife's cousins, a newly-married couple, because they could do no harm without children to wear and tear. I wish you could have seen the house in the autumn — the yard — the back passage — the drains. You would write an essay upon filthy, dirty housekeepers, I am confident. Suffice it to say, we paid one hundred dollars for repairs, beyond what we received, besides reckoning the cost of the new carpets for our drawing-rooms. Jupiter! how I wanted to vent my ire. If it had only been in a boarding-house, or a deception any one else had practised, I could have found some relief in *words*. But who ever thought well of a man who exclaimed against his wife's movements? I remember how it struck me when I was a bachelor, and any of the men spoke disrespectfully of their wives. I thought they ought to be blown up.

"A thousand times, as I reviewed my life, I have been perplexed to find the solution of my marrying a

widow — and with three daughters! What if they had money enough to support them? Was it not a great care I assumed? Might I not have known the miseries of so much clear-starching? Then was it not natural that Mrs. Guy should always be in a worry about her children? Some people tried to comfort me, saying that I ought to be thankful there was only one set of them. But when a man begins to feel a little weather-beaten, and somewhat rheumatic, he wants a snug little corner in his large house, where he may grunt and groan just as much as he pleases. He don't want to be forever pestered about Clara's beau, and Judith's offer, and Susy's walking with a Carolinian. Besides, who wants to see a rocking-chair always in motion, or a young man talking in an undertone?

"And then, too, what harassing work the spring makes about journeys! Why, I used to take my carpet-bag and umbrella, and say to my landlady, 'Shall not probably be back for ten days.' All my cares were left behind with my old slippers; but now it is — 'Father, I have left my India rubbers — Susy has forgotten her sunshade — that shawl is missing — where's the basket of oranges, and your thick shoes, and my sack, father?' O, it wears the life out of a man of any age! Then, of all things, who wants a house filled with dress-makers, seamstresses and cousins, who come in to sew a few days? I tell you, I should rather double Cape Horn and be landed among the Fejee islanders."

"Why, Uncle Richard, you grow frantic. Your wife calls."

"I merely wish to say, Mr. Guy, that you may order

the carriage at twelve, and I wish you would help me pack the travelling-trunk, and just go over to the grocer's and fill the hand-basket with oranges, figs, and the like, for our Susy. She's a great dyspeptic, you know, and loaths the sight of meat."

I felt for Uncle Richard, and the more because I could not help him. There is a project yet on foot for him to visit England. Mrs. Guy says, "The best educations are completed *abroad*."

"But we must take things as they are," I repeated, "when we cannot make them as we wish." It was a dry moral, and, as the good man crushed a fresh-blown dandelion under his foot, I saw there was but cold comfort in the words I uttered.

Then I returned home and soliloquized upon a bachelor. Take a man who has lived eight-and-forty years, and he is a strange animal. Look at his independence. He can smoke, drink, chew, sit with his legs upon the mantel shelf, have a mountain of newspapers by his side, a hearth all covered with dust and ashes, a lounge with a rickety foot, and a closet door with the lock torn off. What does he care? There are choice baskets of champagne in the cellar, no dishonored drafts, no unpaid bills, no tuition fees, no band-boxes in his way, no laces or ribbons on his bureau, no teetotums belonging to "Tommy," nor grace-hoops to "Clara." Sundry old coats hang in the closet, unmended shirts are in the old hair trunk, a chambermaid, all obliging, in the kitchen, to obey his commands, a landlady who admires single gentlemen boarders; and what fastidious worshipper of worldly conveniences could wish for more? Why, then, should such

specimens of humanity trouble their heads about *women*? Yet you may listen to all their private intercourse with the fraternity, and never will you find them ready to separate, but some joke about *women* will be perpetrated. They may ridicule, boast of their independence, of their freedom from the trammels of the sex, but still they will talk about *women*; and, as all this seems a natural propensity, we must come to the conclusion, after all, that men and women were made to live together. Only the mistake lies in marrying too late in life, as did my Uncle Richard:

THE HENPECKED HUSBAND.

WELL, I suppose Mrs. PIPPS *did* suffer with "nervous headaches" and "spasms;" but was that any reason why she should keep all her family in a pucker? Why could she not let the wind alone, if it blew from the east? Why not let it rain as hard as ever it did? Why not let the sun shine so hot as to blister, and the dews fall so heavy as to wet her through? Surely, *Mr.* PIPPS could not help these things, and she was not exposed to bear them, and it only made others unhappy to be forever in a fuss about them.

And then Mrs. PIPPS was *never* well. This was a great source of unhappiness; but why need one ugly pain put everybody else in a state of torture? And the poor woman kept up such ceaseless complaints. "There never was a worse cook than Bridget; she never made anything fit to be eaten; the cakes for breakfast were overdone, and the mutton for dinner was burnt up, and who wanted burnt mutton chops and watery potatoes for a meal"? And then the chimney smoked when she felt very nervous, and it ought to have been swept long ago; besides, the kitchen was always in a hubbub, and there must be a change of servants. One day she desired her husband to get her a new kind of pills; the next some

liniment, and the third day a patent medicine that was invigorating in the spring. Sometimes she believed herself going into a deep consumption, and then, again, her liver was affected.

Yet, Mr. PIPPS was a pattern man. He never told his wife she was "fidgety;" that exercise and air would strengthen her nerves; because he knew such imaginary diseases were to be differently treated from real ones. Whatever she wanted, he helped her to procure. Still, he looked the sicker of the two; he was sallow, and the crowsfeet settled about his eyes, and his hair was sprinkled quite too early for his years. He was, moreover, a patient man — always told the children to mind what their mother said to them, and never to cross her in her wishes.

And yet Mrs. PIPPS was solicitous about others as well as herself. She would send Sammy a mile out of his way after school to inquire how old Captain Bodwell did; and she sent with the message an "infallible recipe" for his gout, which she cut out of an almanac, and a recipe for nice bread, for his cook to try. To Mrs. Budd she ordered a nice jelly, after she had fretted about its being slightly acid; and there was not a case of scarletina, cough, or asthma, among her acquaintances, but she could recommend a cure; — so she was not a *selfish* woman, and Mrs. PIPPS, although a great trial at home, was quite popular abroad. As to visiting, she never did more than make a call, and that must be some delightful morning, in a close carriage, with the strict injunction if the wind veered easterly to be driven back immediately.

Some people wondered this woman did not read more, and divert her attention from self. But, suppose she took a newspaper. Why, the first thing her eye would rest upon would be a "late awful tragedy," or somebody was "robbed;" and such a fermentation ensued, one might fancy her almost deranged. And then, the fear that Mr. PIPPS was assassinated, if he chanced to stay out an hour later than usual, drove her into hysterics, and hartshorn, and cold water, and valerian, all lost their power. Sometimes sudden sickness seized her, and then she fancied her flannels were not well aired, or too much wind blew into the chamber through the key-hole, and the windows and doors must henceforth be air-proof. Another severe trial to her was living near an engine-house. She never slept soundly (such people never do), and her fear lest the fire was in her husband's store, or down at Netty's house (her married daughter's), knew no bounds until Mr. PIPPS was up and dressed, and interrogated the firemen; thus knowing, for a certainty, where the great smoke came from. There never was a watchman's rattle sprung from midsummer to midwinter but she heard it; and then she knew there were thieves, or some foul play, and she would sit up wrapped in flannels and dressing-gown and shawls, until she had ascertained the cause. Finally, her disposition was so excitable that both husband and daughters kept much concealed from her; but, if by chance it ever got reported, a heavy woe rested on the household. And she was such a prey to superstitious fears that her mind was never at ease. She saw letters with black seals in burning candles, and heard death-watches behind her bed, and

dreamed about certain events which just as clearly foretold that something was going to happen, that, had it not been so for years, a whole family might have been filled with gloomy forebodings.

Things grew worse and worse. Mr. Pipp's had no rest day nor night, and such self-denying men will wear out after a while. Indeed, nobody thought his life desirable, and old Aunt Esther said she thought "he would have a dry funeral." The "general debility," which had followed him for years, took a more decided form, and after a night of unusual fatigue to procure his wife a bottle of "Nervous Anodyne" he lay down quietly, and went into that sleep from which there is no waking.

CLUB-HOUSES.

THERE are few places more outwardly attractive than club-houses. To be sure, they have no high steeples, no large gilded signs, no advertisements describing the fascinations of the resorts, no placards to decoy the unwary; still, they are so inviting because there are no domestic annoyances,—no fretful wives, no crying babies, no disturbing influences; and, by the payment of a few hundreds annually, a man can recline on a most luxurious couch, or play "billiards," "chess," or "whist," whenever and with (almost) whomsoever he desires a game, women excepted!

Now, what if one *does* keep late hours with such *choice spirits*? Has "Mrs. Caudle" nothing to reflect upon? Has she never seriously interposed about having *her own will and way*, and teased the "dear man" until he has become almost frantic? Did n't he forewarn her that such treatment would prove the death of him? And when he was actually upon the brink of self-destruction, meditating between a pistol and drowning, and discussing with a friend which he considered the easier death,—I say, just then did n't Mr. Merryman take him by the arm, and show him the brilliancy of a club-

house, so that he concluded it was not best "to shuffle off this mortal coil" quite yet?

What if some gentlemen *do* have a resort, where only their own sex do congregate, and there smoke, and chew, and loll, and — feel a little bewildered about the time the small hours are counted? They pay for such luxuries, and what law takes cognizance of their doings? They are able to support such establishments, and whose business is it to find fault, if Mrs. Caudle does not?

Besides, a club-house never goes begging for funds to support it — O, no! — and it never wants for well-qualified superintendents, nor is there any outside talk about people and things; for every member keeps his own secret, and not one wife in a hundred ever heard her husband complain of his inability to pay his assessment, although he may sometimes think "philanthropic societies make rather heavy demands upon his purse."

But, Mrs. Twist, you must not be too inquisitive about these matters. The curiosity so natural to your sex must be repressed. Mr. Twist will, undoubtedly, tell you all you ought to know. He will show you the *outside* of the building, and, one of these days, when there is a general brushing and cleaning of the establishment, perchance you can get a peep *inside*, and, if so, you will see some of the most splendid furniture, while an air of quiet and decorum will so charm you, that, were it not for your vexatious cares at home, you would propose just such an establishment for your own sex. But, again I caution you, don't be too minute in your inquiries to ascertain *the names of "the members"*!

THE TRAITOR'S END.

"MORE than half a century ago, a terrible storm swept over the city of London. It was the hour of midnight, when the blast was beating most piteously, that an aged clergyman was aroused by a piercing cry for help. He rose, threw aside his curtain, and beheld the form of a rude man, who appeared as a common street-sweeper. The rain poured in torrents, but the imploring accents of the call induced the preacher to take the arm of his guide; and, threading his way through narrow streets and rude thoroughfares, he arrived at a rude dwelling wherein lay a dying man.

"A strange tale was his. That very day a stranger, advanced in life, had fallen speechless at the scavenger's door. The kind-hearted scavenger had lifted him from the pavement, opened for him his bed, warmed his feet, administered a cordial to his lips, — and now he was dying!"

The apartment was indeed a dreary one. Up a long flight of rickety stairs, inside a door half-hingeless, on a narrow pallet of straw, lay this same stranger. The lamp burnt dimly on a broken chair; a few fading embers were on yonder hearth; a teapot without a handle stood upon it. The rain was beating at the window, and

in sundry panes were stuffed coarse pieces of clothing. A valise stood by the bedside — it was the only property which the stranger brought with him. The man was only half-dressed; his coat was thrown aside, his neck was loosely encased within a low shirt-collar, but upon his legs there were a pair of huge *military boots*!

That face! There was an expression there which, once looked upon, would haunt your memory forever! That forehead, bold and manly; hair slightly changed by age; lips compressed, but yet moving, as if life were loth to quit its hold, and large, rolling eyes that beamed with an unearthly glare.

What a spectacle! Those arms are brandished in the air; that fist seems clenching a sword, or holding a rifle; a damp, cold sweat starts from that hand, and wildly does he toss himself from side to side on his uneasy couch. Throb and beat, throb and beat, alternately, went that poor man's heart, — for he was dying. The clergyman took hold of that clenched hand, and gently bending his head, inquired, "My friend, hast thou a Christian faith?"

"Christian?" he echoed, in a loud voice, for the first time, and in a deep tone, which made the preacher tremble. "Will Christianity give me back my honor? Go with me over the blue waters. Listen! We have arrived. There is my native village, there is the green door-yard in which my boyhood played, there is the roof of my paternal mansion, there is the graveyard, — but where is the flag that used to wave? Another ensign is floating, my infamy is uttered by the mouths of children, parents are taught to loathe my memory. O, my God!

the sting of remorse is throbbing in these very temples; judgments are imprecated by dark demons; a tarnished name, a nation's dishonor, and the curse of unborn infants, even now ring through my soul!"

The minister had watched beside many impenitent sinners, many rebels, whose hands were stained with blood, but never had he been called to such a death-bed.

Suddenly the man arose. With a mighty energy he paced that creaking floor. If the storm was without, so was it within in a most terrific form. Those white, bony fingers laid hold of the valise, which stood by the bedside, and drew from thence a faded military coat lined with silver, and an old parchment, in a piece of damp cloth, that looked like the wreck of a battle-flag.

"Look," said the stranger, "this coat is spotted with blood," — bygone days seemed to rise before him, — "this coat covered me when I heard of the battle of Lexington, when I planted the flag of triumph on Ticonderoga; that bullet-hole was driven through at the siege of Quebec — and now look at me! I — am — let me whisper softly in your ear — ha! they will hear —" One burning word was said — only one. "Now help me," continued he, "to put on this coat, for I have no wife, no child to wipe the cold sweat from my brow. I must die alone; let me die as on the battle-field, without a fear."

And while he sat arrayed in that tarnished coat, the preacher spoke to him comforting words of faith in Christ, of hope for dying penitents, of mercy pleading with justice, of that faith which lifts off the frown, and shows us a compassionate Redeemer.

"Faith!" again reëchoed the dying man, "faith!" — the death-chill was on his frame, — death-light, too, was in his eye. — "List! Is there not George Washington over the blue waters, relating pleasant stories of his sieges? Is there not George of England wailing over lost colonies? And here am I, — I — the first that struck the note of freedom, the first that gave the blow to that king, — here am I, dying like a dog, howling over treachery, lost in pangs of remorse."

The preacher stepped back awe-struck. Who was before him? Again the heart throbbed, the death-watch was heard in the wall, the death-rattle seemed hardly suppressed in the throat.

"Silence along the lines there!" murmured the dying stranger; "not a whisper; not one, for your lives are at stake. Montgomery, we will meet in the centre of the town. We will have victory or death! There are steep rocks, — silence, every man, as we move up the heights. Boys, come on, on! Hoist the flag of freedom! What care we for darkness and storm? Hurra! Now, now, one blow more and Quebec is gone, — it is ours!"

A ghastly look is there. The pale cheek, the glassy eye, the heaving bosom, the wild stare, the death-rattle, the tottering step, — and lo! he has fallen on the floor!

Who is this strange man dying in a garret? — this mark of nobility crushed like a moth? — this wretched maniac, still clinging to his faded flag and his rusty uniform?

Whence come these fires of remorse? — this faint hope

of heaven? — this more than fear of hell? Where the parchment — where the flag?

Let us unroll the flag. It is a blue banner, with only thirteen stars upon it. But what of the parchment? It is a colonel's commission in the continental army, addressed to *Benedict Arnold*.

Unhonored and unwept, there lay the traitor! His corpse was in a rude house; he was unknown and unpitied, save by strangers. Yet that right arm had struck many a blow for freedom; but, for one act of base perfidy, he has fallen forever. Quenched is the light of his former glory; remorse hangs like a thunder-bolt over his soul, and his last agonies are those of a disgraced man, who might have been a victorious and successful hero.

Now, in dimly-lighted rooms, when children beg of aged grandsires to tell them tales of the Revolution, Arnold, the traitor, is foremost in their thoughts; and then the dreadful effects of treason are narrated. We are told that he left the great metropolis, that he engaged in commerce, that his warehouses were in Nova Scotia, that his ships were in many ports; but in one night his stately warehouses were laid in ashes — the owner was suspected as the incendiary. The entire population of the British provinces assembled in a mass, and in sight of his wife they hung an effigy, whereon was inscribed, "Arnold, the traitor!" When he stood beside kings, when in the house of lords, all faces were turned, and all fingers raised. One venerable lord arose, and declared that he could not speak to his sovereign in the presence of a traitor.

"One day," says an historian, from whom we have gathered the leading fact of this history, "in a shadowy room, sat a mother and her two daughters, all attired in the weeds of mourning, grouped in a sad circle, gazing upon a picture shrouded in crape. A visitor now advanced; the mother took his card from the hands of the servant, and her daughters heard his name. 'Go,' said that mother, rising with a flushed face, while a daughter took each hand, 'go and tell that man that my threshold can never be crossed by the murderer of my son, Arnold the traitor!'"

This was the individual who is said to have uttered, "I am the only man born in the New World that can raise his hand to God and say, I have not one friend—not one in all America!"

Seldom does guilt meet such a retribution. The stings of conscience ever goaded him; and has not the despicable wretch who can thus turn traitor made his own pandemonium while on earth? Can a severer doom await him?

LITTLE PITCHERS WITH GREAT EARS.

"MOTHER," said little Agnes, "what made you marry father? You told Aunt Charlotte you had all the money."

"Hush, child! what *are* you talking about? I did not say so."

"Why, yes, mother,—you said he was poor, and had you thought of being burdened with so many 'country cousins,' as you call them, you never would have had him. Don't you like Aunt Phoebe, and Aunt Polly, and Aunt Judy? I'm sure I do."

"Why, Agnes, you are crazy, I believe! When did you ever hear your mother talk so? Tell me instantly."

"Yesterday, ma, when I sat in the back parlor, and you and aunt were in the front one. I'm sure you said so, dear mother, and I pity you very much,—for you told aunt there was a time, before I was born, when father drank too much,—and then, you know, you spoke of the 'pledge,' and said how glad you were that the temperance reform saved him."

"My dear, I was talking of somebody else, I think. We were speaking of Uncle Jethro and his family."

"But they have no Agnes, mother, and you know you told about father's failure in business,—Uncle Jethro

never failed. And you said, too, when you moved in this house *your* money paid for everything, but the world did not know it, and —”

“You’ve told quite enough, my child. What do you stay listening in my back parlor for, when I send you up stairs to study? It has come to a pitiful pass, if your aunt and I must have all our privacy retailed in this way. I suppose you have already told your father all you heard?”

“No, mother, I have n’t, because I thought it would hurt his feelings. I love my father, and I never tell him anything to make him unhappy.”

Agnes sat looking in the fire, and asked, “Mother, if people really love others, do they ever talk against them? Did n’t you tell me never to speak of any home difficulty; and if Edward and I say wrong words, you tell me never to repeat them, and *I never do.*”

“Agnes,” said the rebuked mother, “listeners are despicable characters. Don’t you ever let me know of your doing the like again. *You don’t hear right*, and you make a great deal of mischief in this way.”

THE PASS-BOOK.

THE greatest accommodation to a young housekeeper, is a “little blue-covered book,” containing an “account.” For a time it puts her at ease in every particular. She never teases her husband for little wants; for, send this “book” to the grocer, the kind, accommodating man will put up anything you desire, and if he has not got it on hand, what is the difference?—he will get it for you. Some families have a large amount of wants. Not only eatables are included, but dry goods; and this is of great moment to a woman, to open an account with a large firm who literally keep everything.

We are presupposing one’s credit to be undoubted, and the smiles and urbanity of the shopkeeper will not be wanting. He knows your husband, and assures you he cares not how largely or long you are his debtor;—he never expects but semi-annual payments; and *six months ahead* seems, with some purchasers, a long period, during which time ten thousand chances of getting money float before their vision.

“Thank fortune!” exclaimed Thomas Carney, as he threw down some settled accounts; “this is the last bill I owe on earth, and I have five dollars left untouched,

wife. Let people say what they will, housekeeping is far cheaper than boarding."

Netty, the young wife, bit her lips, and wiped the perspiration from her brow. Alas, for the book at the dry goods establishment! It had now come to be the first of July, and the young housekeeper was in hourly expectancy of her bill. The book she had left some days before, that the account might be added.

This was an expected guest, moreover, which she knew would surely arrive. One might expect an aunt or cousin for months, a sister from the western country, a brother from the West Indies, and some unforeseen circumstance might prevent their arrival. But who ever heard of an account's being delayed long, or not being sent at all? If the creditor fails or dies, is there not a consignment of the books, or a final settlement of the "effects"? You cannot hope to evade such visitors as these.

Thomas and Netty sat on the sofa, at the close of the third day in July, contemplating who and what they should see on the morrow. They had been married seven months, and not a word of altercation had passed between them. She was all he desired; he was more than she expected,—a conclusion which young couples are very apt to come to at seven months, perhaps, more generally than at the end of seven *years*. In this consciousness of joy, and full of hope, Netty sat completing a splendid muslin frock for herself to wear on the morrow, when the bell rang loudly. She started to go to the door, but was driven back by Thomas, who rebuked

her mildly for interfering with his business when Dinah was out.

Netty listened,—she trembled,—it was "the account," for she heard the carrier ask, "If it would be convenient to give them an early call?"

Thomas, thinking it to be but a trifle, asked the lad to step in, and he would then settle it. Merciful Heaven! What is it? Did it belong to him? A long sheet of bill-paper literally filled, finely written, and a variety of items on many single lines.

"Is this your account?" said he to his wife, with a scowl, *the first scowl* that she had ever seen upon his brow.

"I have an account with Lombardie & Co.," said she; "but I was not aware of so many items, Thomas, truly. What is the sum total?"

"Two hundred and five dollars and six cents."

"Impossible!" said Netty, springing from her seat. "That is impossible. I did suppose I might be indebted some twenty-five dollars to the firm. It can't exceed thirty. This, sir," said she, to the young man who presented the bill, "is a mistake. I never had half the articles."

The young man happened to be the assistant book-keeper, and felt not a little nettled at this off-hand declaration.

But the young wife pretended to show the errors. "There is a silk dress; I never, surely, had such an article."

"Why," said Thomas, "what was the color of the dress you had made to attend Mrs. Wilkins' party?"

"O, I recollect now! That may be correct; but this spotted muslin, I, surely, never had."

"That blue-spotted, Netty, I disliked so much. I thought it a present from your father."

Netty colored. "Mechlin lace at a dollar per yard. I have no recollection of more than two yards, bought last February."

But lace, insertion, edgings, and fancy trimmings, swelled the amount most prodigiously; and, after making sundry dissenting protestations, it was concluded, if there were any mistakes, they should be rectified. And the presenter of this trying sheet very willingly made his exit.

"Thomas," said Netty, when they were alone, "I never had half these articles."

"Women are very apt to be forgetful, when the money is not paid, wife, at the time."

"Two hundred dollars! I never had such an amount in the world," was the constant reiteration. "Lombardie is a very pleasant and agreeable man—one of the kindest and most obliging shop-keepers in the world. He never had a *bargain* but he told me of it; and many a time has he let me have some desirable shade of silk, or a fashionable pattern of lace, much cheaper than I could have procured it, had I the money in my pocket."

"Poh, nonsense, Netty! if you had the money in your pocket, think you the amount would have been withdrawn for the same articles?"

"But I have always made good purchases, Thomas, and received my money's worth for what I have expended. All the trouble is, I have not *had* all the items here specified."

"I know nothing about *that*, Netty; but I *do* wonder, knowing my salary as you did, you should have ventured so largely upon credit, without consulting me. I know not how I shall procure the means to settle this bill; I have only five dollars towards it in the world. It will take a long time, and great economy, to make up so large an amount."

Netty felt greatly disturbed, and did not omit the first opportunity to examine the bill in the presence of the firm. In vain did she contend with this and that article she had no recollection about. One circumstance after another was presented to her mind, and a dim consciousness seemed to revive almost every particular.

"How many useless things!" said she, mentally, as she reviewed the bill. "There are ten yards of Brussels lace,—I have never used it, but bought it *so cheap*! There is a piece of ribbon,—I did not want so much. Belts, silk hosiery, wrought handkerchiefs and collars, cuffs, coverings for the shoulders,—very pretty and very cheap; but as the money was not immediately called for, all these articles were taken."

It was a bitter experience, and bitterly did she at one for it; but it did not originate in a bad heart,—it was a thoughtless expenditure, and her attention had not been fixed upon the issue.

"I am thinking," said she, to Thomas, as she knew he grew uneasy about the payment, "that I will do without Dinah; and the nine shillings per week I pay her shall be appropriated to the payment of my foolish debt. I need to *feel* the folly every day, and such an experience will entirely cure me."

The word was suited to the deed, and black Dinah was dismissed. Some of the useless trumpery has since been disposed of in an auction room, and Netty has no little blue-covered book now — but the New England Primer!

As the occurrence does not date far back, we cannot tell what will be the result; but at present the young wife is doing her own work, to the astonishment of her morning visitors, determined to be just, in future, to her husband's wishes.

The little "pass-book" is frequently of great service with experienced housekeepers; but the common propensity to take more than is necessary, because payment is delayed a few weeks, often swells the amount far beyond our expectation. In little trifles, large amounts will accumulate; and I once heard the wife of a poor attorney remark it was no trouble to her to have company, she had only to send to the provision store and grocery, to get all her wants supplied: but those bills are unsettled to this day! Honest tradesmen are thus cheated of their dues, and appetites are pampered with luxuries which should never be indulged in, unless there are means to pay for them. The credit system, honorably carried on, may be useful; but a box of berries for which we pay twenty-five cents, does not leave so disagreeable a flavor as that for which I am to pay two shillings when the account is rendered. Thus we live and learn.

POSTERITY.

"WHAT are you planting those trees for?" inquired a young stripling of a venerable man. "You will never live to eat the fruit, nor yet to see them blossom."

"If I do not," replied the old man, "you may; and if you do not, *somebody* will; and so I shall confer a benefit to posterity."

"I love my ease too well," remarked the young man, "to work for unknown beings."

"Poor fellow!" retorted the aged man; "I pity you, and if the fruit of my labor should come to maturity in my lifetime, you shall have a portion of it."

The youth was so struck at the picture of disinterestedness, that he ever after became a cheerful worker for posterity.

The old man lived, and age neither bowed his frame nor "abated his natural force," and the trees he planted flourished and brought forth fruit. True to his promise, when he first gathered the fruit he took a portion of the ripest and best to his friend, who lived at some distance from his dwelling, and when he arrived, thus addressed him:

"Young man, the first gatherings from the trees I planted for posterity I have brought to your table; and

with it I have brought, likewise, an old man's counsel. Never hesitate to work, at any period of life. It may be the benefit will not come to thyself; but always remember, the fruits of thy labor will be a blessing to posterity."

The young man thanked the sire for his gentle reproof, and heeded the lesson. What he spent before in luxury, he laid by as a sacred trust, either to benefit the present age, or to be a blessing to those who came after him. He died, and a large property was given to benevolent enterprises; so that to this day many bless his memory.

Is not this a rebuke to those who selfishly expend in personal gratification the wealth of which they are stewards? Let each ask himself, "What have I done to benefit my fellow-men?"

THE FARM NEAR THE DEPOT.

SOMEWHERE about the spring of 1849, the health of Mrs. Frink began to decline. She was yellow as the dandelion that sprung up in her pathway, and weak as the tender violet in its premature bloom. She consulted with her family physician what course of life would be most likely to result in a permanent benefit. He talked of a sea-voyage; but how could she leave her young family? Of a season at Havana; but how could her husband leave his business? We all know, likewise, that unless we can leave dull care behind us, or take it with us, no benefit can accrue to a weak stomach.

Finally, it was arranged that they should retire upon a *farm*, somewhere near the sea-shore, on account of the salubrity of the air, and the double benefit which would thus accrue to the little Frinks. But where was such a place to be found? It must be easily accessible from the city, for Mr. Frink by no means thought of relinquishing his business in the metropolis. Indeed, his means would not permit him to do so, had he desired it. Now, there were several indispensable things to be secured by this purchase of a farm. It must have a neat, substantial dwelling-house upon it, and out-houses to match; well divided "into pasturage, woodland and tillage;"

then an experienced farmer must be secured to take charge of it; and, above all, it must be *near the depot*. This was a prime consideration. Of course, after arriving at these conclusions, all the eyes of the family were turned to the public journals, and directed under the caption, "Farms to sell." Nearly a week passed before one offered having the requisite conveniences; and to show that such an one was now presented, we copy the advertisement, verbatim.

"BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY-SEAT FOR SALE.

"The well-known estate of Mr. Oliver Shaft, situated in Oakdale, eight miles from the city, is offered for sale. It is in the heart of the village, on a beautiful slope overlooking the sea, commanding an extensive view of the shipping and intervening agricultural scenery; the farm contains about thirty acres of prime land, all of the very best quality for cultivation, and can be improved by a gentleman of fortune, for a summer or permanent residence, as he may require. The terms of payment can be made easy, as a part of the purchase-money may remain on mortgage, or the whole would be exchanged for real estate in the city."

"Well," said Mrs. Frink, "I believe this is just the place for us, after all;" and again she read over the advertisement. "Stop," said she, "I have omitted one thing; it adds, 'within a few rods of the depot.' At any rate, we will see this place, and if arrangements can be made, I should have no sort of objection to disposing

of our city residence. It is not probable I shall ever desire to return."

"Women jump at conclusions," said Mr. Frink.

That afternoon passage was taken in the cars for Oakdale. Both father and mother, with Jamie and little Alva, and Hitty Frink, all alighted in a few moments at Oakdale. With an eager curiosity, they cast a look in every direction for their new home; but — could it be possible? — all the one which could any way answer the description, was on yonder hill, a dilapidated old castle of a house, with falling out-buildings, and this was the "Shaft place!" "How unlike the advertisement!" remarked Mrs. Frink.

"Nothing was said about the *buildings*, if I recollect rightly," replied Mr. Frink.

Mr. Oliver Shaft was seen, in his long dressing-gown, seated upon the piazza, reading his newspaper, for it was a mild spring day, as they proceeded towards the house.

"We wish to take a survey of your grounds," said Mr. Frink, "with the intention of becoming purchasers; but the dilapidated look of the buildings has rather put the veto upon my wife's intention." Mrs. Frink here coughed violently, and thought the sea-breeze too bracing.

"The fact is," said Squire Shaft, "our sons have all settled in the city, and their mother is anxious to follow them; none of them took a liking to farming, and, as we are getting a little advanced in life, I being turned of seventy, and my wife being not far from that corner, we thought we would dispose of our farm."

Mrs. Shaft, a large, fleshy old lady, with a rubicund face, now appeared. She curtsied, and remarked, "She

really hoped they were people who meant to purchase, for she was heartily tired of showing the house to people who came jist for curiosity."

They fully explained the object of their visit, and the old lady commenced her labors. "Here," said she, throwing open an old door, that the wet weather made swing very reluctantly, "here is a large, nice room, looking right out on the sea, ships and all — beautiful and airy. Our Dorcas was married here, and she has made out so poorly, it never seems so pleasant to me since;" and a deep sigh was heard. "And here is a room for yarbs and clutter — it was made for a china closet, I spose, but I never kept any in it. And this is our Thomas's bedroom when he comes out of a night or so; and this is my old man's and my room; there is the sitting-room, and here is a kind of back parlor. The next story has eight chambers, besides the ell, where the man sleeps; it's a monstrous house," she concluded, "and a sight of work to keep it clean." As it bore no marks of being kept so, how did the old lady know how to calculate? To be sure, it bore marks of former *grandeur*; but, scantily furnished, and with numberless signs of decay, it did look uninviting. But, thought Mr. Frink, if it can be bought for a bargain, I will take it; repairs can be made, and that pasture out back might be divided into house-lots, and sold at a grand speculation.

Mrs. Frink did not seem so much elated with her prospects. The house was old and dirty, and a great job it would be to make it look "genteel." "But, then," she kept repeating, "it is so near the depot!" "I've found that out, to *my sorrow*!" remarked old lady Shaft.

"Tut, tut, wife," replied the old man, "you are getting old and clumsy to wait on visitors; I dare say this lady delights to entertain them."

"So do I," continued the old dame; "but who wants Tom, Dick, and Harry, just for their own convenience, when there's not a mite of friendship in 'em?"

Mrs. Frink said, how forcibly that remark reminded her of her mother's sayings; she supposed all old people felt so about too much company; *for her own part, she hated to be alone.*

But the price; *that* was the desideratum. The old man asked ten thousand dollars. The depot-master said it could be bought for a great deal less money; and how much less he promised to ascertain and inform Mr. Frink the following week. But did they really want it at any price? Those large, open rooms rose before Mrs. Frink, and she imagined how the wind would whistle in a violent storm through the interstices; but then it *was* airy, and it could be made to do.

The following week Mr. Frink came home with the title deeds, and told his wife the purchase was secured, provided she signed her right of dower in their present home; for they had made an exchange nearly even, and he considered it a decided bargain.

In a month after they were at Oakdale; but Mr. Frink looked dissatisfied, and well he might, for, upon reëxamination of the deeds, he found that pasture he intended to divide into lots, was "to be kept forever open, subject to no buildings thereupon." Strange such a clause should have slipped his eye!

Previously, however, to Mrs. Frink's leaving the city,

she called upon all her acquaintances, and most cordially invited them to her residence at Oakdale, adding the great convenience she enjoyed of living near the depot, subjecting them to no extra inconveniences.

The mechanics, carpenters and masons, were all there. Mr. Frink thought it best his family should be on the spot to superintend the improvements; but, what with the dampness and exposure, little Alva was seized with the scarlatina, Jamie with a croup, and the little girl with the measles! Yet this movement was all made to benefit Mrs. Frink! And now she *must* have her city doctor; nobody else was acquainted with the constitutions of her children, and the old nurse and she did so long for the friendly attentions of her old neighborhood. She felt among strangers; and Nelly, the cook, had already announced her intention of leaving. A man and his wife had taken the farm upon shares, and very difficult people were they likely to prove. Mr. Frink's share of the butter was almost always expended in cream, for the visitors now began to find the way out. The loneliness that Mrs. Frink feared, she was not likely to realize; people whom she scarcely called upon now came for regular visits, and not a few maiden ladies were always on hand. And then Mr. Frink was away from the dinner-table, — he could not leave his business until five o'clock, — and what a care and additional burden thus fell upon the wife's shoulders! The children greatly took advantage of their father's absence, and Hitty and Alva required constant checks at the table. And then there were always some unexpected guests, and when sufficient provision was made for their own family, the

extra company must be civilly treated, and ten chances to one the provision-store was closed, and this threw Mrs. Frink into a complete panic. Indeed, before a single quarter had passed, she wished herself in the wilds of Vermont, rather than so *near the depot*.

"Who could have thought it," said she to a friend, confidentially, "that old Captain Beers and his daughter would have come here to stay a week; and Susan Rivers and her child, because it was teething and so troublesome, and Mrs. Snyders and her adopted nephew, just to smell the sea-breezes? And all these I have had at one time! Mr. Frink was in New York, and our man actually told me he could not raise vegetables enough to supply our table, leaving *his* share out of the question. Why, to tell you the plain truth, Mrs. Smith, I am worn to death. I have not had time to walk down by the shore since I came here; it's nothing but, 'Ma, somebody is coming with a travelling-bag and valise.' And then they are so very glad to see me, and admire the place so much — 'It is so roomy, and so airy, so delightful, why, Mrs. Frink, I think you must be perfectly happy.' What can I do?" inquired Mrs. Frink, with the deepest solicitude. "It's a thousand times worse than being bored to death with country cousins in the city."

This was "farming it," with a vengeance. The man brought in a bill in the autumn far exceeding the rent and cost of living in the city; taxes were nearly in proportion, fuel was at the same rate, and the freightage of all the groceries must be paid over the railroad. Mr. Frink had a season ticket for his family, dined at a restaurant, paid extra for doctor and nurse, they were

deprived of many privileges, and all this to own a *farm near the depot*.

And when he would sell or let it, what a drug it became! Nobody from the city wanted it; and the following year, as I passed, there was registered in flaming letters, "Retreat for Invalids."

Is not this a hint to city people who are on the look-out for *farms*? Uncle Richard's saying is just as true now as ever, "It's always best to *look* before you *leap*."

A TRYING CASE.

ARTHUR BRANCH, Esq., returned to the city from a fashionable watering-place to consult with his attorney respecting the laws of divorce. It is thought he finds them more stringent than he anticipated. He was driven to this expedient at the suggestion of a female friend, who has interposed her meddlesome propensities between Mr. Branch and wife. It appears Branch was married more than a year ago to a city aristocrat. She had been the pride of her wealthy parents upwards of twenty summers; had coquetted at New York, and danced the polka at Saratoga; had stood on Table Rock a few days before it submerged, and, at the time of her engagement with Arthur Branch, Esq., was undergoing a process of flirtation with one Don Jose, a Spaniard, now banished by the "foray" to the mines, for ten years of solitary life.

Mr. Branch can bring sufficient witnesses to prove that he has in all respects deported himself as a kind, loving, forgiving and forgetting married man. His purse has always hung outside his pocket, and its contents have been most freely expended. The main difficulty seems to lie in the discovery that Branch made a blunder in marrying. He supposed his wife to be an angel, and she proves to be a woman.

Soon after their marriage Mrs. Branch proposed a trip to Europe. Her husband assented; and after his adorable "sposa" had consulted with Parisian milliners and London dressmakers to her heart's content, she declared her willingness to return without a sight of St. Peter's, or a sail upon the Rhine; thus showing that her love of the frivolous overcame that of the sublime.

Mr. Branch had no sooner taken his American residence, and issued cards for his first levee, than Mrs. Branch complained of "confined quarters," and proposed taking her summer residence at some watering-place. Since then she has become a perfect belle. Her first conquest seemed to be the favor of a young sprig in the medical faculty, and, under pretence of a singular hang-nail on the little finger of her left hand, Mr. Branch has been obliged to pay for medical advice upwards of two hundred dollars!

All this he has borne with lamb-like resignation. He has never crossed his wife in a single particular. Just before the railroad jubilee, however, he *did* speak. Then he expressed the desire to open his metropolitan residence, and to invite a few of his select country friends, illuminate at evening, and end the festivities in a manner suited to the august occasion. The simple annunciation of this fact threw his wife off her guard. She raved like a lioness. "Did he suppose she was going to soil her best drawing-rooms to please the 'blue noses;' or that she was going to give the use of her best chambers to country cousins who were boorish enough to sleep in barns?"

Branch did not urge the matter. His Monongahela whiskey reposed in its cask, his pale Sherry lay still in

the quarter-cask, his Madeira and Hock were encircled with cobwebs, and Branch felt like one of the "invited guests." Worse than all, his wife kept the keys!

If Lopez had dreaded a contest as much as our friend Branch, he would never have thought of possessing Cuba. Somebody told him a divorce might be obtained; but this was a female friend who had an eye to becoming his housekeeper. Unquestionably enough has been done, but how can it be proved? Besides, who wants to tell what they *do* know?

The attorney advised Branch to return to his wife, conciliate her confidence, agree upon some terms amicably, and make the best of a bad job. Branch paid ten dollars for the advice, wiped his eyes with an embroidered handkerchief, and added, with a dolorous sigh, "but I am afraid she will pick my eyes out."

The last telegraphic account reports the matter "all settled." Branch holds the reins while his lady and a Spanish gentleman sit upon the back seat. She eats boiled custard with a silver fork, while Branch uses a spoon. The Spanish gentleman has heavy hair under his chin, and huge whiskers; Branch has a smooth face, and shaves clean. These are only outside differences; but things of weightier consequence we pass by. The moral of our story consists in this: Never marry a coquet for her beauty, nor an aristocrat for her money. Never believe in walking divinities, nor terrestrial angels. But should you be so unfortunate as to make such a mistake, pocket the knowledge, and never divulge the fact; for everybody laughs over the rehearsal of family jars, and nobody pities a married man.

THE EARLY SPRING FLOWERS.

THAT little bunch of crocuses! They shot up from the cold, damp earth which encased their roots, and, all delicately attired in their pure virgin whiteness, seemed to cast an upward glance, as if by instinct taught that Heaven provides for the defenceless. They were the admiration of every passer-by; little fairy children, who looked through the interstices which enclosed them, would fain have borne them away as the earliest of spring flowers; and more matured lovers of the beautiful paused and gazed with wonder, that beneath such an inclement sky, so courageous a little bunch of crocuses should open to the first balmy influences of spring! Yet there was an association of sadness which pervaded the thoughts of some beholders. They bloomed beneath a deserted mansion, whose owner was dead; and the gardener, who, years ago, had so enriched their bed of earth, he, too, had departed! In the window just above them, bright eyes had looked upon their early unfoldings, and carefully had the protecting shield been thrown around them when the hoar-frost and icy snow had bound them in their winter sluggishness. Yet early was that warm covering removed, and the earth stirred gently, and the sun then shot down some of those slanting, but warm rays, which

quicken their germination; and with what delight the fair maiden looked upon the little parterre of flowers which so early met her gaze! And now she, too, was gone, and the magnificent mansion was laid in ruins, and the hand of improvement had torn down its massy walls, and the sound of the hammer was heard demolishing its once fair proportions, and rough boards were protruded over our little flower-bed, and no kind glance from the owner ever recognized their beauty; yet still they bloomed on, and even added a new tinge to their petals, for the *purple dye* was now intermixed with the *soft white*, and their blended colors sweetly attested how true is nature to the laws which govern even the humblest of her productions! And do we see no simile in natural to spiritual beauty?

The proprietor of that mansion left a daughter. Her spirit was as guileless as the snow-drop she loved to tend; her voice sweetly harmonized with the lute she so enchantingly played, and the soft touches of nature and art seemed to ally her to the angelic rather than mortal elements of humanity. She was the admiration of all; yet there was no hauteur of demeanor, no arrogance of spirit, no supercilious scorn; but she gently moved in that upward path which knows no deviation from the dictates of duty and filial affection.

Scores of wealthy young men danced in the joyous sunbeams which her cheerful spirit threw around her; yet she refused them all for the high-toned, lofty worth of one born in obscurity, yet destined to be great, because he improved the matchless wealth which lay in his yet undeveloped resources. And now she was sneered at by

those who once bowed in adoration at her fireside ; cold glances of recognition came from those who once deemed her the fairest of maidens. Yet, possessed of the entire affection of him to whom she had plighted her vows of eternal constancy, what cared she for the glances of mere fashionable adoration ? Like the early spring flowers, she was unobtrusive, and felt defended by the strength of his affection, of whose fervor and unchanging confidence she had the deepest assurance. The world looked on and talked of the disparity between their earthly stations ; they spoke contemptuously of those *lowly born* being thus brought to mingle in palaces ; yet the lover was unmoved by such declamation, and slowly and steadily he pursued his way, climbing up the hill of science, and implanting such deep footsteps, that the imprints were not worn out by light feet that followed after him.

Years passed by, and the marriage day approached. The owner of the mansion " was gathered to his fathers ;" the wealth of the father had descended to that only child ; yet she chose not to keep up the ancestral palace, for the pomp and vain glare of heartless friends had sickened her of gorgeous splendors. She cared not for the prismatic colorings of the rich chandelier, nor yet for the frescoed walls, which an artist so elaborately executed. She chose simple nature in a suburban home ; and there, amidst the chirping of insects, and the songs of the birds, and the lovely summer-house, and the adjacent green-house of rare exotics, she loved to commune with nature. Her husband, too, with his early rural taste unvitiated, gently stole away from the cares of his office, and, at early twilight, the happy pair seemed entranced with the love of

the beautiful which surrounded them — never forgetting the Giver of such bounty, while overshadowed with his beneficence. But they lived not the lives of mere hermits, who selfishly enjoy, but do not bestow. Their home was the resort of the intelligent and inquiring ; the student was there aided and cheered ; the heavy-hearted was lightened beneath such genial quietude, and the pure in heart seemed to bask in one long sunshine of delight. Eminent in his profession, studious, unostentatious, freely dispensing, yet always drinking themselves from the fount of that happiness which never cloy, in a vine-clad dwelling, sheltered by overarching trees, lives she who tenanted the *mansion*, and he who was born in the *cottage* ; conclusively showing that, if true to the laws which alone can dignify our nature, there need be no disparity between our condition in society ; for he is only lowly born whose life and actions declare him such. The clump of spring flowers will rise as freshly from the cottage of her whose scanty pittance barely supplies her daily bread, as beneath the windows of the most opulent mansion ; therefore, take courage, ye of ambitious aim, since lofty worth inquires not concerning the height of the dwelling which was its birthplace.

LIGHT AND SHADE.

It was at the close of one of those delicious days in autumn, when the foliage of the overarching trees looks like pyramids of gold, when we tread lightly upon the sward where the rustling leaves have thickly fellow-shipped together, and our souls are given to memories of love, or dwell sadly, yet tenderly, upon some object of affection whom death or distance has separated; on the evening of such a day, that a mother and her two daughters sought a retreat amid the recesses of decaying nature, to enjoy a friendly conversation upon the son and brother, over whom so many sympathies had been expended since he had sought in a Californian home to procure for them the glittering dust which his inexperience had suggested to him was the panacea of all temporal ills.

Never was a fairer specimen of manly bearing, of courageous heart and high resolves, exiled from the home of his infancy. Full of promise, full of magnanimity, with an heroic soul, he plunged into the all-absorbing gulf of ambition and the attainment of a fortune. He had bidden farewell to the church where he was baptized, to the green where he sported when a boy, and in a huge ship, which contained innocence and iniquity, purity and crime, he had embarked for the Eldorado of his hopes.

Letters had been received since his departure, wherein the common phrase was inserted, he was "doing well;" miners had returned, who brought the report that he was iron-hearted and accumulative; pieces of the metal in its pristine state had been sent, too, as precious relics to that mother and sister; and now eighteen months had elapsed since the parting day, that sad and tearful day when silence reigned so profoundly through the household.

Now all the despairing fears had yielded to brighter hopes. The last intelligence announced that he should soon embark for home; that his bags of gold were filled, and that a happy meeting awaited them when he should recount strange tales of suffering, while he should be luxuriating upon the already gotten treasure.

At this still hour the mother and sister had stepped out to think on the son and brother.

Mary! she was a delicate, fragile creature, hardly ripened into womanhood; her hair of a chestnut brown waving in massive ringlets in the breeze, while her lily face, her deep blue eyes and broad forehead, combined in an expression of intellectual beauty, upon which an artist was now lavishing his skill as a present for an absent friend who had attended that brother.

Emma! she was fair, and more mature. Her face presented a picture of never-ending freshness; her dark eyes often gleamed with moisture; and these words came impetuously from her lips:

"We shall be so happy, mother, when Robert returns, having achieved the summit of his ambition. Our cottage will be deserted, I suppose, for a more imposing dwelling. What a specimen of architecture brother will

exhibit to wonder-gazing multitudes! And *my room* will look out upon my favorite friend, the sea. Yours, mother, will be filled with sunshine and flowers; moss-roses and evergreens will contrast strangely with our humble daisies in broken pots, and our leafless multiflora that is perishing in consequence of our cold room. All these events will surely come to pass, and (she started up) the fair-haired Mary shall realize a bright fulfilment of my dream.

"It was only last night I saw Robert in my sleep. I was sitting at a piece of embroidery. My brother was superintending the colors. He gave a singular laugh, and exclaimed, 'O, sister! life is just like your many-colored fancy piece; light and shade must alternate to give full effect to the picture, — and so is the reality of life.' I am sure I saw him, and yet I know it is all fancy." The young girl started, even then, as if she heard a footstep.

The widowed mother, we have said, was there. Her silver hair was parted back from a mild and beaming face, and her countenance plainly indicated she had her *fears*, and her daughters their *hopes*.

"How strange it is," said she, "that we have had no letters by the last arrivals — not a word from Robert, girls!"

"Perhaps the letters are intercepted, or delayed, or a thousand casualties may have befallen them," said the hopeful children.

They strolled along, full of gayety and cheerful prattle, when Mary suddenly turned and laid her hand upon her mother's shoulder.

The mother, alarmed, proposed returning back, thinking some chill in this autumnal evening had seized her daughter's delicate frame.

"But I am quite well, now, mother."

Yet the remembrance of that strange hallucination still troubled her. She never revealed with what force something checked her gayety; and, taught from childhood to be free from superstitious misgivings, she chased away the gloomy apprehension, and resumed her wonted cheerfulness.

It was in deep twilight when they returned home. Henry, who was Robert's friend, and accompanied him, was sitting in the back parlor. The sisters each laid hold of him, but his eyes were downcast. He seemed to avoid their gaze; his sea-burnt face seemed to have an unwonted flush.

"My son?" inquired the mother. "Our brother?" the sisters.

"Have you received no letters?" said Henry, in a quivering voice. He endeavored to speak, but there was a choking sensation in his throat.

Emma stood there; Mary leaned against her; the mother's face was white as a shroud. Robert was dead! The gold he had gathered had all been abstracted by ruthless savages; he had fallen a victim to disease on board the ship, as he was returning, and his body was consigned to the great deep.

Transformed in every nerve stood that late hopeful family. The sisters seemed on the very verge of madness; but the mother sank on her knees and uttered an inaudible prayer.

The light and shade of the picture now stood before them! But was the end all *shadow*? Touched with a sense of the perishing, with that feeling of utter insecurity, the mother looked above for comfort. She had felt the rough gales of adversity; and the serene expression which ere long pervaded her countenance, told the secret of *her faith* was triumphant.

And now a dreary aspect opened to those young hearts. The world looked cheerless; existence seemed an empty blank; hope a mockery. In silence they bewailed their sad fate; in the depths of their hearts they even questioned the intentions of a good God.

For more than a year no gleam of light illumined their dwelling. Henry, the lover of Mary, had returned so broken in health and so low in pecuniary matters, that a nearer union could not be contemplated for years; and a kind of secret sadness seemed to prey upon the hearts of the two who usually met every evening to bemoan the fate of the lost Robert.

It was now a year since the tidings were communicated to them. Again, toward the close of a bleak autumnal day, the three young friends were looking from a western window, when a form was seen dimly approaching in the distance. Not a word was uttered. Henry was lividly pale; the sisters shook like aspen leaves. The man approached yet nearer. Merciful heaven! What do I hear?

"Sisters, I have come at last."

An electric impulse throbbed through their hearts. Sobs, tears, incoherent ejaculations, followed. In the midst of this scene the mother entered. For a moment

she looked, and, raising her hands to heaven, she articulated, in a husky voice,

"Robert, my son! is it you I embrace?"

His lip quivered, but his manly form still gave evidence he was of human kind. And what was his explanation?

Henry and Robert had separated after crossing the Isthmus, and returned by different routes. While at Panama, Robert consigned all his gold to the care of an American captain. His ship was boarded by a race of outlaws, who pillaged it from stem to stern, and made off with the booty. Robert received the intelligence just as he was ready to sail for home, and, being chagrined, resolved to return to the mining region; and, being well acquainted with localities, established himself in a remote part, inaccessible to transmitting intelligence by mail. Here he assiduously labored, and realized a handsome return. Again he set his face homeward, and this time he was prospered to his journey's end.

From the crew of the pillaged ship Henry had acquired information of the death of a young man on board named Robert, and of course supposing it was his friend, as he believed he sailed in the same ship with his gold, no doubt remained but he was the dead man!

If there had been a shadow over this dwelling, think you there was no sunshine restored? It was a sight upon which angels might gaze, to see the grateful emotions which pervaded this household; for what affliction had failed to melt and subdue, a grateful joy made them acknowledge that God is ever the merciful dispenser of light and shade.

INQUISITIVE CHILDREN.

"I WAS always brought up to attend church, Fanny," said Mrs. Green, to her newly-hired domestic, "and I wish you to do the same. I shall require of you, however, to attend one of the *evangelical* order; for, while I pay you for *bodily* service, remember I have an interest for your *soul*."

Fanny thought she had, indeed, found a mother, and was truly thankful for her new place.

The next day was Sunday. "Ned" was called early to be washed and dressed for the Sunday school; Dan was to repeat his lesson before leaving home; and the eldest daughter, who was teacher, was to conduct both children to church. But things did not work well. The shoe-strings broke, the boys' collars were starched so badly that they purposely rumbled them together; the lessons were very poorly committed, and the breakfast was not ready till after the bell rang for the opening of the school. Mrs. Green was still in bed, for she was so wearied with weekly services, there must be some extra time to rest. Ned fretted at Dan, and Dan threw his pencil at Ned. It was a scene of great confusion for a family who professedly maintained such order. Mr. and Mrs. Green, by dint of hurry and bluster, equipped

themselves for church. Fanny was despatched, leaving her dishes unwashed, and her kitchen in confusion, because the essential duty of "attending meeting" demanded the sacrifice. Nothing was said, and, perhaps, not much thought, about carrying a right *spirit* into the sanctuary, if the *body* were only placed in the pew!

A cold dinner was served. Of course, Mrs. Green allowed no cooking on the Sabbath, and the children were allowed no natural freedom; their business was to keep still, and sit cross-legged, with their "primers" or "question-books" before their eyes; and, naturally, this was a dreaded day to them. Mr. and Mrs. Green read their prayer-book, and the chapter from which the text was taken; inquired of the children respecting the scholars present at the Sabbath school, and then took up the religious newspaper, and thus gradually prepared the way for worldly conversation. They had done all that duty demanded; had been to church all day, kept the time strictly, and now began to unbend their thoughts from things above to things beneath.

"Husband," said Mrs. Green, "that was a splendid shawl Mrs. Sawyer wore to-day. I wonder if Sawyer is rich? They are a family that seem to have everything. Susan wore an elegant bonnet. I saw just such a one, for which they charged me twelve dollars. And *did* you see Mrs. Draper's scarf? It was the most elegant one I ever saw. I don't see, for my part, how people contrive to get such things. I'm sure *we* could not afford to dress so."

Dan here spoke up: "Mother, Tom Spencer has got a beautiful plaid vest; won't you get me such a one?"

"I want a new sack," said Ned. "All the boys dress better than I do."

"Hush, hush, children!" said the mother; "do you know what *day* it is? Sabbath days were not made to talk about dress. Don't you know what the commandment says; six days shalt thou labor, but the seventh, &c.? What did grandpa tell you, boys, last summer, about keeping Sunday?"

"If he did talk so good," said Ned, "he got his hay in Sunday, for fear of a shower. How came he to do that?"

"Boys! boys! what are you talking about? Your grandpa is a *deacon*, and a very, very pious man. Never let me hear you question *his* doings."

"But, mother," said Ned, "*you* talk about dress on Sunday with father; what is the harm for Dan and me to do so?"

"Children, you are young. Your father and I are privileged to say what we please, provided we talk no evil. We merely comment upon the vanity of the world, and the little regard people pay to religious duties. Mind your books, and not listen to all we say." The boys winked at each other as if they had good understandings, and could see through a mill-stone.

That evening the conversation turned upon the subject of lying. Ned wished his mother to define to him the exact meaning of *falsehood*.

"Why," said the mother, "it means when we wilfully and intentionally deceive another. If, for instance, I tell you the medicine you take is very pleasant, when it is very offensive and nauseous, it would be a lie; if a

neighbor sends to me to lend an article, and I say I have not got it, when I have it, that, too, is a lie"—

"How came you, then," said Ned, "to tell Mrs. Moody you had no eggs, when there was a firkin full in the cellar?"

"Hush, Ned! don't interrupt me while I am explaining to your brother. Have n't I told you, again and again, how impolite such a habit is?"

"But, mother, *I* want an explanation, too."

"Order, order, Edmund!" said the father, very emphatically.

"Lying, Daniel, is the mark of a weak mind and a bad heart. I hope you never do it, my son; and, more than this, never teach your associates to do it, to screen you from justice."

But Dan began to reason. "Mother, when you direct the girl who tends the door, to say you are 'not at home,' when you are in the nursery, is not that a falsehood?"

"My child, there are certain conventional rules in society, which are allowable, because custom sanctions them. You are not old enough to reason upon such things now."

"And," said Ned, "when you say, 'O, dear! I wish such and such people were a hundred miles off,' and go straight into the parlor, and tell them 'how glad you are to see them, and how long you have been wishing they would call,' is not that a falsehood?"

"You are the most disposed to question, Ned, that I ever knew a boy. I tell you, boys, once for all, there are certain customs in society which *we* can adopt, with-

out feeling we have transgressed the bounds of truth. Everybody who has had experience knows what these things mean; but unsophisticated children do not understand, nor should they inquire into such matters. Do as I tell you, children; always speak the truth, and keep the Sabbath day holy, and you will be blessed."

This conclusion silenced the boys, but they looked very dissatisfied with the reasoning.

WHAT WILL PEOPLE SAY?

"Now, Mr. Gill, I want to go to Washington as much as anybody. Nobody would like to be introduced to the president and all the men in the cabinet more than myself. But, dear me, what will people say? Everybody will think you are off in search of an office, and how many comments will be made upon *my* accompanying you? I do wish I lived somewhere that people did n't talk about their neighbors."

"That would be a region, Mrs. Gill, that never came under my observation."

"Why, husband, they don't do so in country places; they live at a distance from each other, and nobody meddles with other people's affairs."

"How little you know of the country, wife! You can do nothing there but it is made the subject of conversation. So trifling are the matters, too, about which people vex themselves, that a worthy clergyman told me that in his parish the frequency with which he changed his linen made quite a topic in the sewing-circle; and then you can never wear a new dress, or buy a hood, or a cow, but everybody is interested to know all the particulars."

"You astonish me; then I'll never go into the country

to live. How singular it is that people have such a disposition to be inquisitive in matters which so little concern them!"

Mr. Gill made his newspaper rattle, but said nothing.

"Billy," said Mrs. Gill to her eldest boy, who sat studying at her work-table, "what was that Freddy Crawford told you about his mother changing her help?"

"Why," replied the boy, "he said that his mother told his father, yesterday morning, that she would change her domestic as often as she pleased, till she got a good one; and I believe, but I won't be positive, he said they had turned off ten cooks in three months."

"There, Mr. Gill, don't you think I'm patient with our old crone, who don't know when it is time to put on the potatoes to boil, only as I tell her? I wonder what people would say if I acted as other women do? Here I've wintered and summered our old Nancy, and done half the work myself rather than change, because people will talk so."

"Willy, dear, did you say Mr. Andrews is about moving into an elegant house?"

"Yes, mother, I went into it to-day; they are just furnishing it. There are great mirrors, reaching from the ceiling to the floor, and the room is all being hung in pictures, and one side of the library is all glass doors for books to be inserted, and it is very beautiful, mother, all over. Don't you wish we lived in such a house, mother?"

"Ask your father, child, if he wishes so." The boy obeyed.

"Yes, my son, I should enjoy the luxury of a well-selected library; and to regale myself with looking at

choice pictures would be a great feast; but, if I could not do it consistently with my means, *people would talk*, as your mother says."

"And who would care for what they said?" interrupted Mrs. Gill. "If I could only live in such a house, little should I heed what people would say of me."

"What! not you, surely, who make it such a daily study to do things to avoid observation. I really should have hesitated, even if my circumstances admitted, to have procured an elegant house, lest it should bring discomfort on you, wife."

"Never mind that, Mr. Gill. I tell you, when I feel I am doing right, I don't care what people say of me; but when I have misgivings, I am forever upbraided that everybody will talk about me. My conscience, Mr. Gill, is precisely like every other woman's. If their husbands or fathers can afford them all the luxuries they desire, not a straw do they care what is said about them; but let them feel they are not warranted in their indulgences, and, at no distant day, see want and failure staring them in the face, and then self-reproach added to these make unhappiness enough."

"But, wife, are you not a little prone to talk of others yourself?"

"That's always the way; criminating *me*, Mr. Gill. No, I never meddle nor interfere with anybody's business."

"William, go to bed," said the father.

MRS. BUTTERS' BABY.

MRS. BUTTERS' baby! There never was such a first-born child. It had little diamond eyes, a complexion of snowy whiteness, and its hair, why, it was so flaxy, soft and curly, that everybody begged a curl to remember it by. And then it was the pet of the house; all the treat its grandmother wanted was to spend a day with her daughter, and rock the cradle where the baby lay, and talk about its "knowing" propensities; for it did seem as if the child actually crowed before it was a week old. But, dear me, the baby was a boy! This was a sad disappointment, for its aunts Jerusha, and Patty, and Phila, all had prepared something as a namesake present, should it be of the gentler sex, and called after themselves. But it was so lovable, although a boy, that it was the complete idol of the house. Mrs. Butters was a fashionable woman, and, after the birth of the child, found herself largely indebted to many of her acquaintances in the business of making calls. Judy, the maid of all work, was delighted with the baby, and if of a Monday morning Mrs. Butters summoned her from the wash-tub to tend the little fellow while she went out to discharge some of her debts, Judy always smilingly observed, "the clothes will only wash the aisier for soaking." Sometimes, it is

true, her mistress would not return in season for her to do any justice in getting a dinner; but then Mrs. Butters never fretted if the *baby* was well attended.

Week after week,—nay, more, month after month,—this little idol seemed to steal away the affections of this household. It jumped and screamed, looked delightedly out of the window, and its fond mother confidently affirmed it knew its father before it was three months old. "There never *was* such a baby!" But remember, that babies indulged, like men and women of older growth, have changeful freaks, and evince strange propensities and strong dislikes. The day of its "christening" it was terribly out of sorts; it shrieked so loudly and grew so restive in the nurse's arms, that Mrs. Butters always declared a pin must have pricked it somewhere; so it only gained sympathy for this ebullition of temper. But I am a little in anticipation in thus arriving at the "christening."

It was the first grandchild on both the paternal and maternal side; and both grandparents were desirous of its bearing their cognomen. But, alas! it made no euphonious sound when the two names were coupled together. Timothy Horne was the grandparent by the mother's side, and Jeremiah Butters by the father's. When it was proposed they should be united, it was with a shudder its dear aunts exclaimed, "Timothy Jeremiah. Tim Jerry would surely be the nickname of that sweet baby." There was a family feeling of no very enviable stamp likely to be produced by this little affair of a name for the baby. Its mother could not bear the idea of her darling being forever nicknamed "Jerry Butters."

Timothy was far preferable. Its father thought just the contrary; and were it not that a stop was put to the disputed question, a serious quarrel might have ensued.

Old Uncle Jerry Butters deposited a thousand dollars in a city bank, the principal and interest of which were to remain till the baby should arrive at the age of fourteen, and then the proceeds were to be expended in its education, provided it were named after himself. Grandpa Tim had not money so plenty, and of course he of the larger means, in small as in great matters, carries the question. The only disagreeable thing in the affair was that not one of the Hornes was present at the baptizing.

Little "Jerry Butters" soon began to know his name, and quite soon began likewise to show his disposition. He was too old to be always excused by his mother with the plea that a pin sticking into his "dear little self" made him cry. His grandmother Horne gave the true version of the affair when she said it was a spice of old Adam—the child was depraved; for she was a sound orthodox professor, that never forgot

"In Adam's fall
We sinned all."

But it was the *first* baby, and it must be indulged. It was a proud day for its parents when it puckered up its little mouth and articulated "I won't." It always had a lump of sugar for every repetition of those two syllables. But by and by it did not sound so pretty. When it tipped over its full cup of milk on purpose, and threw its silver tumbler against the large looking-glass in the front parlor and shivered it to pieces, its father began

to feel there was some temper that ought to be corrected. Poor Judy, too, had long since declared she could do nothing with the child in its mother's absence; so a new girl on purpose to take care of it was provided. Mrs. Butters' *health* made it very necessary she should be much in the open air,—at least she often quoted, "her physician told her so."

But fresh troubles began to thicken, and this dear little baby, this pet and idol, was at the foundation of them. That he was the most self-willed little urchin, and a perfect torment, was the frequent affirmation of the attendant; and, after sundry kicks and scratches, she declared unless she were permitted to correct the darling she must leave her situation. This Mrs. Butters would not permit, affirming that all correction should be given by parents. It turned out that she was soon left in sole charge of her baby, to do as she pleased with him. It was a new and troublesome office. It was proposed at length to relieve her by giving her young gentleman a week's visit at Grandpa Butters'. The trial was made, but two days before its expiration, the "little treasure" was returned as too unmanageable for its aunts and cousins!

Its mother was in a sad dilemma. To keep peace every plan must be devised to amuse Master Butters. Neither cook, chambermaid nor nursery-woman, would stay, for the little rebel would contrive to make each one unhappy.

Mrs. Butters was completely worn out. In a fit of despair she protested to her husband she must adopt some new mode of living, and the only expedient seemed to be to break up housekeeping. Certainly this was

likely to be an easy matter, for everything was in a fair way soon to be broken by this incorrigible, uncorrected child. Mr. Butters sighed at the proposal. He felt this would be no antidote. But a woman must generally have her way, and Mrs. B. was not long in determining to select a place for a new home. She called at many of the first-class houses to ascertain the terms; but, alas! they did not take children. This strengthened her belief that *all* children were alike troublesome, and Jerry was no worse than others. The result of two days' perambulations ended in this,—at the west end of the city, in a genteel boarding-house, a family consisting of a man, his wife and child, had just vacated the premises she sought, and if the boy were not "over troublesome," the landlady thought they might be received. Mrs. Butters assured her he was not, and it was arranged, if it met her husband's approbation, that the place was secured. Besides, Mrs. Butters knew of a friend who would hire their house, furniture and all, and she would be saved a world of trouble by stepping into ready-furnished apartments, which she might do if she seized those already offered.

We will now introduce our friends to their new boarding-house. Master Jerry was a most refractory fellow, and did not at all appear to like his new home. The first day his fond parents dressed him in the most splendid manner, and brought him to the table, which circumstance so inflamed the landlady that they were glad soon to conduct him back to their own apartment. "No children are allowed at my table, Mrs. Butters," was

once said, so that its significant meaning was never forgotten.

At evening, Master Jerry took a freak in his head that he was not at home, and should not go to bed. His cries were loud and continued, and no entreaty, plaything, or earthly device, made the least impression to subdue his feelings. The strange sound in this hitherto quiet house made sad notes of discord, and nearly every boarder called to ascertain what could be the matter. Old Mrs. Bellamy declared it disturbed her so that she got no quiet sleep all night; and she intimated to the landlady that she should be forced to seek a place where there was less uproar, unless it ceased.

"I protest," said little Miss Chapman, "I could not hear myself play upon my piano last evening, and it was so annoying to the gentlemen who called on me"—and, taking her quizzing-glass and examining every one at the table, she felt at liberty to observe, "I do hope, my dear madam, you will free us from such an annoyance." Poor Mr. Butters was overlooked by her shrouded eyes, and his chagrin at this speech really prevented him from finishing his breakfast. He rose from the table, and, after he left, a general smile ensued at Miss Chapman's mistake.

There was still another difficulty. The help in this house were all *colored*, and Master Jerry was continually shrieking with fright as any specimen of ebony approached him. His mother declared he would have fits, and so it was decided he must be kept alone in his own room. Confinement was not his element, and his grandparents declared it must not be—some other plan must

be devised. Just as the landlady was about issuing her orders, Mrs. Butters informed her of their determination to leave. Grandpa had consented to make one more trial with his namesake. A married daughter should never stay too long with an ungoverned child under a father's roof, however urged to do so. Those maiden sisters, or that stray cousin, or that old domestic, will kindle a breeze when the weather seems most calm.

Scarcely had Mrs. Butters got settled at her father's, before Master Jerry began to train. "Let the little dear have this," or "He is not well to-day, and more refractory than usual," had ceased to appease the disturbed household; they began to see that some sort of discipline must be commenced. Here was a little fellow, just able to trot about, once the darling and idol of his friends, now their source of constant disquiet and unhappiness! In that little breast an ungoverned temper had made discord to a large family of peaceful inmates. Truly to such did a wise man say, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." After a faithful trial of patient endurance, Mrs. Butters found that a home of her own was the proper deposit for her child; that wholesome correction was absolutely necessary when the first display of temper appears, and that neither boarding-house nor grand-parents will continue long to bear a chastisement from which there is an escape.

Master Butters is still unmanageable. His parents think his irritability arises from *delicate nerves*, and his fond mother has actually applied to the homœopathic physician for some quieting powders. "Uncle Jerry" says the "*essence of birch*" is the only effectual remedy.

LIFE.

The mind, the mind, it gives the hue
To each material thing;
The vision, if obscured, is sure
A sombre light to fling.

A cup of care! how wearisome
The duties of a day;
How labors sadden as they press
Upon our cheerless way!

The cup of joy! how oft we seek,
And yet as often miss;
How phantom-like it flits us by,
With naught of real bliss!

The cup of grief! how often here
Tie after tie is broke;
While weak and impotent we fall
Beneath the sundering stroke!

The cup of faith! that blessed cup
Whose waters healing give;
How sparingly we sip that stream
Where we may drink and live!

The cup our Master took; could we
Unfalt'ring drink like Him,
Sorrows of earth! ye all would flee,
Nor clouds our pathway dim.

A DARK PHASE IN LIFE.

It is a wretched condition to be poor! Besides the wants and deprivations of daily life, there is the reserved bow or mere nod, the apology for being "near-sighted" when you are in company with a rich man, the contempt of countenance which says, "You have not done as well as you might," and the "I'm glad to get rid of you," which a sensitive person always feels most keenly, because poor.

I wonder so many steeped in vice and poverty have any moral courage left to seek a better fortune, rather than that so few do so. Few people take into account the hard rubs it costs them to rise. Suppose it is a man who has resolved to be *somebody*. He applies for assistance, and tells the humiliating story of his degradation; and that is no small cross when one is repentant to begin with. His friend shakes his head, and says, "I don't know of anything I can do just now; I commend your good efforts, hope you will be successful, and when I hear of a chance will let you know."

Back he goes to his counting-room, and never thinks of the fellow, till a hardy truckman stands before him, waiting for his change, who, years after, tells him *he* is the same person who applied to him years ago for help

to become a man! Then there is a class who never believe you are really in earnest to reform; and others who wonder how you ever became so poor; and yet others tell how many thoughtless vagabonds they have helped into employment. When a man has a feeling to rise, they depress him, instead of lifting him; and many a time this has sunk him in despair.

There is the poor woman asking for work; she says she is a stranger, and has a sick child or husband, but can do any kind of sewing.

She is sent to the slop-shop, and there she is examined, before she takes a sack worth fifty cents, as if she were about carrying Californian dollars away. She receives at the most a shilling a day for her work; her charge grows sicker, her courage less, and she sinks in utter hopelessness.

Thousands die for want of one cheering word, — one helping hand. We have all our charity so *systematized* that its very *essence* seems drawn out. We are so afraid of "imposition" that we would impose a fine upon a spontaneous freak of nature that would unburden some loose change from our pockets! We are so discriminate that we have apologies for all our miserly affections. This makes it a very hard world for a poor person to live in! If he is virtuous, he must bring such credentials as are "satisfactory." His honest countenance goes for nothing, because we have been so often "duped," and often one would rather starve than beg, because of the very manliness it takes out of him.

Then a poor man stands a poor chance in countless ways. He may have the talents of a Cicero, and the

perseverance of a Demosthenes; but he is objected to by the rich man as a son-in-law because *he is poor!* With great caution he obtains any business; for people are afraid to put their effects where a man has nothing but his talents! His tailor is afraid to trust him; his boot-maker points to his printed paper, "Terms Cash," just as he selects a fit; his landlord sends in a bill once a fortnight, — the man waits to take the amount back. Indeed, it is very difficult for a poor man to live any how, and it always *has been so*. Rich men by their very credit accumulate, letting their money lie at interest where the poor fellow has to pay his last cent. And all this is done for years before "better days" begin to dawn, and people look on, and wonder such and such people have no more *energy*. The truth is, they have expended energy enough to make up a dozen characters of greatness, *just to live*.

We are not half willing to give people a start. We ought to encourage struggling genius and self-sacrificing laborers. To make a man honest, show him that you believe him so; if "Sylvia" will marry him, bolster him up; give him a few hundreds, if you have your thousands; cultivate the manly part, and you will rarely find a knave!

It is singular how little props sustain one. A trust committed, business bestowed, a customer sent, a patronizing "club," or a little cash remitted, will make a cheerful face for days after.

Much poverty might be unfelt if the tender mercies of the world were less *cruel*.

A FACETIOUS SKETCH.

IN the progress of the age it is an incontrovertible fact that *working for a living* is decidedly "vulgar." The disadvantages attending employment are sufficiently obvious without any argument. Just think of a man always busy! No time for pains and aches, no inclination to be nervous, no disposition to look after "invigorating medicine," but brain, hands and heart all occupied! Why, such an individual is a perfect enemy to a doctor; he is rarely sick, and so neither homœopathist nor allopathist can claim him as a patient. And, then, what a foe to nurses is such an one! Never needing some old lady to watch by his bedside and drop out medicine, — never wanting a less substantial dish than a sirloin of beef or a haunch of venison, and never oppressed or depressed after a hearty meal!

And then the worker has no time to attend to other people's affairs. He never inquires into the scandal so fresh and racy, — never cares whether his neighbor's daughters' beaux are aristocrats or plebeians, — never knows what he carries home in his market-basket, nor whether he is living beyond his means!

He has no time to loiter about a court-house, and is never taken under an arrest, — never peered through

any grating to look at a "fugitive slave," — never attended a call to consider the constitutionality of certain proceedings, and never hazards a farthing on a bet who will finally sit in the congressional hall!

There can be no mistake but the working-man foregoes uncommon pleasures. Never to be able to stand against a post, nor to sit upon a seat on the Common. Never to be seen with a gold-headed walking-stick, and backing up a lady. Never to be caught napping after dinner, nor yet lounging in the rocking-chair, nor behind the folds of a damask curtain, with the last new novel. Why, is it not plain enough he sacrifices a great deal? And all for what? Why, to be an independent fellow, — to feel that he has plenty of money in the locker, and is in a fair way to gain a great deal more. And do you not see how the beautiful law of *dependence* is thus frustrated? Never obliged to ask the favor of a friend to lend him a small sum to meet contingencies, — never unable to meet an account for want of funds, and, consequently, under no necessity of uttering a lie, asserting he was disappointed in not receiving a remittance from abroad. And, as he is not forced to sin, of course the necessity of penitence is done away!

And, then, the man who "works" has such coarse, clumsy hands, if it be a handicraft he follows; or, his fingers are so contracted by writing as to be perfectly shapeless in the white kid glove; besides, he cannot aspire to be beau, general or particular, to those young ladies whose dresses drag in the streets, nor yet to those who ogle young gentlemen behind the counters in dry goods establishments. Not he! Think you one who

"works for a living" is fit to attend a fashionable lady to an *operaw*? Why, the very name of labor is odious. "If my father did work at shoe-making," says Miss Angelica, "it was long before I was born; and I do wish he would get over the silly habit of speaking about what he did when a boy, while Mr. Huckins is present. *Ma* was always a lady, so I have nothing to fear on her account."

And then comes the strange anomaly, a *working-woman*! One who is not ashamed to tell a daily street-walker that she has some domestic affairs which call for attention; who does not know, certainly as early as the month of March, what will be the prevailing spring fashions; who cannot tell whether she shall wear a visite or a mantilla this year! Why, such a woman is deservedly scouted out of all "genteel society." And, then, what exquisite thinks much of her daughters; good, plain, common-sensed girls, who know how to sweep, and mend hosiery, and make puddings, and direct Dinah when their mother is gone, but who never performed an "*Etalian* air, with all its trills," in their whole lives? They never could lisp out sentimental talk, — never were "nervously ill" from living in a heated house, and never had the "blues" for want of exercise! Who could value such acquaintances?

HAPPINESS EQUALIZED.

It is mighty discouraging — this drudging toil we are compelled to do to save us from starvation. Earning one's "bread by the sweat of the brow," is no foolish task; it's very homespun work, talk as we will about it. There's a set of poor fellows digging, digging, digging all day, just to earn a dollar. There's a poor woman stitching and sewing, and pressing, and button-holing, to earn her fifty or seventy-five cents; and at night, in the first case, the man with the clean, sleek, plaited-bosomed shirt walks up and says, "Mike, here's your money;" and the mistress, with flounces all the way up her skirt, holds out the pittance and says, "Here, Mrs. Saveall, is your money for your day's work;" and then the laborers go home to stow away in an ugly, ill-ventilated, old, crazy apartment, filled with children, and, it may be, a sick or scolding wife, who moans over her sad fate, and says she never expected to come to this — "cold potatoes and dry bread; no nursing, and little to live for."

Now, such a picture makes one side of human life; but it is only the shady one. We all have discouraging days — dark days — cloudy ones. By-and-by the sun shines. That man who earns his dollar goes home and tells his wife he has taken a job for higher pay; tosses

up the baby, and tells its mother about the quantity of groceries he is going to buy, and that she can have a new bonnet, and "little Mike" a new pair of shoes, and that they shall all fit out and go upon some visiting expedition awhile hence, to see some distant aunt, or cousin, or "very dear friend." And then, how she sings over her work! How little she minds about the baby's fretting, or Luther's mischievous ways! Her heart is all turned to that outfit, and the pleasant idea keeps running through her mind that if she is not as well off as somebody else, she, to say the least, is *happier*. She heard the man with a ruffled shirt say, in the morning when she took his clothes home, that his money did not bring him in any dividends; that he had notes to pay, and did not know how to meet them; and then he added, "You people who work for your daily bread are the happiest in the world." And she adds, "I know it is so; for Mr. Fry looked dejected and careworn. His face was sallow, and his eyes looked as if he had watched all night; while I feel as gay as a lark, and would not change situations with Mr. Fry, the merchant, to-day, if I could."

And there is the seamstress, and her employer in her flounced dress. "Madam," to be sure, sits on an elegant couch, and her eyes rest on tapestry carpets, and beneath folds of damask the light stealthily peeps in, all softened; but, ten chances to one, her husband was out all night at some gaming-table; or he is a veritable Candle, who gave her a curtain lecture about her extravagance; or some son has vexed her life out about going to California; and the seamstress, who is plying her needle away in the back nursery, has a thousand times as pleasant

thoughts coursing through her brain. She, perhaps, has a prospect of marriage, and the work is cheerfully performed, because she has her eye on some piece of furniture she means to purchase; and then, too, she has an idea how happy she shall be when she inhabits "a home of her own," and John goes to his work, and she sits and works for him. Would she change places with her employer, think you?

Thus it is, we are very apt to take things on the surface, and then come to a conclusion. We envy people in coaches when we are tired with walking; we desire more spacious dwellings when we are pinched for closet-room; we covet gold chains, and silk dresses, and outside finery, forgetting that away down in human hearts there are aches, and pains, and vexations, and petty trials, which corrode the peace and quiet of luxurious people, varying in kind, but not in degree, with the more humble, toiling, plodding, every-day sort of people.

The man who rides in the coach often has a gouty leg; and how he envies the nimble trip of the mechanic! The lady in diamonds and gold chains has a deep-seated cough, and she covets the rosy cheeks and merry heart of her washer-woman; or she has a little "pindling," weird-faced child, who has been heated to death in a nursery, and the ruddy countenance of her cook's little boy, who plays out of doors and takes care of himself, is to her a perfect enigma. She would give all the world if her puny boy was as robust. And so she feeds him on sweetmeats, and buys him a nice covered carriage, and hires a servant-girl to drag him to the Common, and hopes by these means he will recover; whereas, if she

would let him trot about alone, and pick dandelions, and fall into mud-puddles, and eat brown bread and new milk, no doubt the little fellow would be hale and hearty.

Thus we see the law of compensation is about equally divided. One has more money, and the other more activity; one has more luxuries, and the other more health; one frets over a thing another covets; and so, taking it in the aggregate, everything is about equally apportioned. And this should teach us perfect contentment with our lot, unless we are disposed to be idle; and a sluggard has no business to live in God's universe, where everything in nature is destined to progress. Therefore, clear away the wrinkles; stop fretting because your neighbor is better off than yourself; keep up a merry heart, and you will find this world a pretty comfortable place after all.

SWEET SIXTEEN;

OR, THE FIRST FLIRTATION.

"MAMMA, have you any objection to my receiving the attentions of that young gentleman who danced with me at last evening's hop?" inquired Edith Gray, as she looked out of the window at the Ocean House, whither, for the first time in her life, she had arrived.

"Objections, my dear! I know nothing about the person you speak of."

"Why, ma, don't you remember Mr. Rodolphus McGilvery, the gentleman with long, flowing black hair, and a bronze face? He wore those heavy whiskers that were just tucked in at the corners of his mouth, and his hair curled gracefully over his upper lip, and disclosed a set of the most beautiful teeth I ever beheld. There he is now, sitting on yonder piazza, smoking, with Eugene Fitzroy."

"You seem wonderfully posted, child, in the names of the gentlemen about here. It is but six days since we arrived, and Edith, dear, you must not make too free with those whose characters you know nothing about. What, then, of this Mr. Rodolphus what d'ye call him?"

"Do call him Mr. McGilvery, mother. He is a splendid young man; and now I will tell you what I *do* know

about him. The very first day I came here, just before papa went away, he asked to be introduced to me. He is of Scottish descent, and is making the tour of the United States. Well, in a very familiar manner he said to me, 'Miss Edith' (for he heard 'pa' call me so), 'I shall wish to monopolize your society while I am here. I am fond of young ladies. I had a sister once who strongly resembled you. That weed on my hat betokens her decease.' And he wiped his eyes and looked so affectionately towards me, ma, I began to love him at once."

"Why, Edith, you should not indulge in such strong expressions. Remember, you are a very young lady, and know but little of the world. You must be cautious, dear, about accepting attentions from strangers. Many a young girl has been duped by their duplicity."

"O, I know all about that, mother!" replied the sanguine sweet sixteen; "but they who deceive foolish girls are not of the stamp of Mr. McGilvery. He is altogether above such mean conduct. Besides, did n't I just explain to you why he feels attached to me? — on account of my resemblance to his dear sister."

"And it may be that he never had a sister, after all, Edith. How do we know the fact?"

"Ma, I never saw such a doubting person as you are! What earthly motive could have induced him to have asserted such a thing, unless it were true? Now, please tell me, *have you any objection* to my accepting his attentions? He told me to ask you, and I am sure this argues that he is not desirous of inveigling me against your will."

"Still, I should have thought better of the man, had he sought my acquaintance, and asked the question himself. You may tell him so, as your reply, Edith, to his question."

"But he was too modest, mother, to venture conversing with you. There he is, rising from his seat. I will run and ask him to come to our room."

"No, Edith; you must not be too familiar, I tell you." But Edith waved her little hand for his approach, and he came into the hall, and there stood, waiting for her to join him.

Artless and thoughtless, she ran to him, and began narrating all her late conversation, and, after pressing Mr. Rodolphus McGilvery to go and see her mother, he reluctantly consented to do so.

Upon entering the room, he was the picture of smiles and the graces personified; so bland in conversation, so delicate in remarks, so apparently diffident, yet resolute, that Mrs. Blithe did not wonder her daughter was fascinated.

The interview was a long one, and ended in a full disclosure of the object for which he came to this country; indirectly keeping in view, all the while, that *money* was no consideration with him, his father having just died and left him sole heir to a princely fortune; that he only pined for sympathy and companionship; and, as Edith so strongly reminded him of his deceased sister, he, perhaps, had ventured too far in endeavoring to gain the friendly regard of one young and innocent heart, in a strange land.

These thoughts being uttered in a most winning accent,

suiting by inflexions and cadences to the major or minor key, as best suited the pathetic or more lively part of his history, all counted with Mrs. Blithe, and she ventured so far as to add, that "if, during their sojourn, they could do anything to minister to his comfort, they would most cheerfully perform it." And Edith was in ecstasy that she had thus won over her mother to become interested in Mr. Rodolphus McGilvery.

What did she care for that staid young man, Mr. Lester, from New York; or Mr. Fry, the rich bachelor, who had promised Mr. Blithe to attend his wife and daughter in his absence? It was certainly very ill-timed and impertinent in the latter to inquire what they knew of the character of the gentleman with whom they were so intimately connected, after he had told them so minutely his personal history. Truly, Mrs. Blithe, you are as easily satisfied and as credulous as your daughter.

Mr. Fry, however, took it upon himself to ascertain authentically whether the statements made by Mr. Rodolphus were strictly true. He addressed a letter to a mercantile house in New York, upon whom he professed to draw for money, and found they were ignorant of the existence of such a man. He addressed another to Count Zolvani, whom he said he knew intimately, and was answered that "he never heard of the gentleman in question." So that, when convinced of the falsity of two asseverations, he began to distrust all others, which sorely puzzled and vexed Mrs. Blithe and her daughter.

While in the heyday of apparent triumph, having secured the affections of an artless girl, having flirted and danced in the sunbeams of fashionable life, suddenly

Mr. Rodolphus McGilvery disappeared, leaving the landlord with his unpaid board-bill, and at the livery-stable a large undischarged account "for sundry drives about the suburbs," in which Mrs. Blithe and Edith had participated; and, worse than all, leaving a young and guileless heart to feel the chagrin which always attends an unsuccessful flirtation.

But the present mortification wore away when they felt the escape which the continued attentions of the Scotch gentleman would, ere long, have made very doubtful; and our young friend now was convinced that a sterling character, generally, can furnish testimonials to establish its own assertions. So the mortifying lesson proved a salutary one.

Mrs. Blithe and her daughter now willingly accepted the protection of that estimable gentleman (Mr. Fry), whose inquiries undoubtedly gave the walking-ticket to the Scotch gentleman; and feeling, as they did, that his professions of regard were sincere, Edith was never questioned by her mother how far nor how fast *Mr. Fry had proceeded*. Still, after their return in the autumn, she one day inquired concerning the age of Mr. Fry.

"Your father says, Edith, that Mr. Fry cannot be more than thirty-three."

Edith reckoned. "Twice seventeen is thirty-four; that is not so very great a disparity, after all," said she, thoughtfully.

"Remember, daughter, the old adage, 'Better be an old man's darling than a young fool's pet.'"

"*Old man!*" indignantly replied Edith, "I'm sure

Mr. Fry is anything but an old man. Here is a letter he has addressed to both you and father."

"NEW YORK, —, —."

"TO MY PARTICULAR FRIENDS, MR. AND MRS. BLITHE: — A very delicate subject will be presented for your consideration in this letter. It respects your approval of an intimate connection between myself and your daughter Edith. You have had a perfect knowledge of my character from boyhood. I know there is a disparity in our years, but only enough, I apprehend, to add the test of experience which neutralizes the folly of youth. Should you, therefore, accept my proposal to wed Miss Edith, may I hope the event will not long be delayed? I trust my pecuniary resources are adequate to common emergencies; so that we may commence, and with ordinary success continue, in a rational mode of living, in keeping with your daughter's former style. Please answer by return of mail. Yours, truly, J. FRY."

"Who is the reigning married belle of the season, at the Ocean House?" I inquired, upon my arrival the next season.

"A Mrs. Fry, from New York," was the reply. "She is truly lovely, and her countenance and manners are faultless. Besides, she has a most fascinating man for a husband."

I gazed at the belle as she entered the dining-hall. It was she who, one year ago, hung upon the arm of that disgraced McGilvery; and I thanked Heaven that so bright and beauteous a being had escaped the snares which attended her first and last flirtation.

THE MAY-DAY FESTIVAL.

THE flowers resolved upon holding a festival on May-day. They issued their invitations between the sunshine and showers which fickle April produced. But it was thought expedient to call a convention, and decide who among all the gay races would be present. No sooner had little Miss "Crocus" received her invitation, than she rose from her snowy embankment, arrayed in her vestal whiteness, and declared her willingness to be present, at the same time prefacing her remarks with the expectation that her robe might be somewhat soiled from its pure delicacy, by the frequent contact she expected to encounter with the rough blasts of the season.

The Misses "Jonquil and Daffodil" next rose, and signified their desire to grace the floral feast. They were from the sunny quarters against which defences and shields protected them from the rough usage of sister April, at whose concert they had for years annually appeared; and although they sometimes quailed at the inharmonious utterances with which she attuned her wind instruments, yet they had always basked in her gracious smiles, and appeared in full costume at her opening display. They, with pleasure accepted the call to appear in the convention.

A lowly, timid maiden, clothed in deep yellow, spoke despondingly, and doubted whether her tribe, as a whole, would venture into the gay assemblage. We at once recognized the look of our familiar friend, the "Dandelion." She remarked she had never been petted by her aristocratic neighbors in the *bouquet*, but that she had for centuries bloomed outside the garden wall and among common pathways; and that although she was of humble origin, and often passed by as worthless, yet she was highly prized by her jaundiced patients, and eagerly sought for at her first appearance as the harbinger of health; and although she was seldom present at evening parties, yet she had the honor of being conspicuous at many a rich man's *dinner table*! She could not, therefore, feel assured that she should appear at the May-day festival.

There was a bright little wild flower, clothed in a robe of delicate pink, who next took the speaker's stand. She remarked that her residence was in an uncongenial climate to most of the sisterhood, yet she delighted to live in damp soil, and among shady retreats; that she was on perfect terms of intimacy with the wild "Honeysuckle," and they were neighborly and content, ay, and far less likely to wither, than when ruthless hands transferred them to china vases in splendid drawing-rooms, thus introducing them into society from which they naturally shrank—often becoming sickly, and soon dropping from their elevated position, preferring the mossy rock upon which they originally grew, to all the heated splendor which surrounded them. Upon hearing these words, Miss "Violet," clothed in her delicate blue attire, came

forward most timidly, and was received with much applause. She spoke of a seeming delicate constitution, yet, having laid imprisoned beneath a snow-flake, or encased in a globule of ice, she had been permitted for some weeks to expand her roots, and make an early appearance, as one of the indicators that Spring had arrived. But she was exceedingly flexible, could bear no rough usage away from the clump to which she was attached, and remarked, unless attended by a train of her companions, she should prefer to diffuse her sweetness in the open field which nature had assigned her; she could not well bear transplanting.

A modest variegated "Daisy" next blushing came forward. She signified that it was quite too early for her to appear on May-day in the open air — that from her box of earth she had only looked through a glass case-ment, and, as she had been so delicately reared, she feared an outward exposure; besides, she was under a peremptory engagement to keep her stand within view of a sick sufferer, whose eyes always turned toward her with delight. Upon this remark, however, a confused number of voices were heard, all declaring that they were equally prized by the invalid, whereupon the gardener at the hot-house commanded silence, and, throwing over them a shower of moisture, they were soon seen bathed in a flood of tears!

Miss "Heliotrope" made a short speech, which was encored, and a sentiment was offered to the effect that "she was the sweetest of Miss Spring's daughters," which threw her into such a delirious fragrance that she was, more than ever, the admiration of all. The

"Bulbs," next came out in their glasses; but as they had not much depth, and were full of doubts whether they should be disengaged, it was concluded to dismiss them at pleasure.

There was a call at this time for the "Moss Rose" and "Tulip," the "Cactus" and "Japonica," the "Dahlia" and "Lily," when a delicate little flower, known as Miss "Clover," addressed the meeting. She spoke of making an earlier appearance than was her annual custom; but, being petted by Miss April amidst sunshine and showers, she had ventured too early she feared for a *public* appearance. She observed that she did not appear without a train of companions, and therefore a non-compliance with their invitation might be expected. There was a decided reluctance in the choicest exotics and the cultivated garden flowers, to grace the convention; they were preparing for a more public exhibition, in more showy quarters, under the scientific care of the "Horticultural Society."

Yet there were some excellent remarks made by the early Spring flowers. They observed that scores of maidens and lovers were continually seeking them. Indeed, their native charms were unadorned, and so they attracted unfeigned admiration. On the whole, the members of the convention acquitted themselves with credit, and concluded to appear in sufficient numbers and strength to grace the foreheads of the May Queens, and to be borne in admiration among select private groups, who promised to meet them at an early hour on May morning, and transfer them to the most eligible quarters.

MR. TANGLE'S EXPERIMENT.

MR. TANGLE, above all things, loved rural life; so he bought a cottage, and took up his residence "in the suburbs." His family were delighted with the arrangement; it would be so pleasant to sit under shady trees and eat fruit seasoned with the richest cream, and to sleep all night with such refreshing breezes to fan them. And so neighbor Tangle left the bricks and mortar of the city to tread upon velvet lawns. He purchased the "Major's place," where, for a long time, there had been a placard, "This Place for Sale or to Let," and entered upon his labors like an energetic man. He purchased a hoe, a spade, and a rake; a horse, a cow, and a cart. He hired a man and a woman to make things go on agreeably to all parties. His wife could drive the horse, and his children could all stow away in the carryall, and never did a family enjoy more in prospect.

"Weeds shall never grow in my grounds," was the motto of Mr. Tangle; but the ambitious little runners had displayed their roving habits before he entered upon his labors. The "hired man" was employed to subdue them, while his master wrought among the flower-beds.

How Mr. Tangle *did* work! How long he kept out in the hot sun, feeling like a delighted husbandman!

How short a respite intervened between his labors! At last came evening — cool, dewy evening, "so fragrant and refreshing;" but, alas! there came with it a strange sensation, and Mr. Tangle was not able to stand erect! How his back ached, and how stooping he went into his house, and what a suffering night followed! His limbs were all stiffened; there was a feverish action, a cramp, a rheumatic affection, a loss of appetite; and, finally, all the charms which so cheered him a week ago, had lost their power to do so.

He sent for his city physician, who pronounced his disease "the result of over-exertion." It took him a week to recover his upright position, and, ever after, the sight of "spade and hoe" was only suggestive of pain and misery. The weeds grew among the flowers, and the grass became entangled with the borders, and there was an air of neglect which crept over his half-acre lot. He came to the conclusion that he was not born to till the soil, and went back to his old counting-room, as soon as he had found and reposted the old placard, whereon was written, "This Place for Sale or to Let;" and there it stands, just where it was when it first met his eye. Amateur farmers will please observe it.

FASHIONABLE BOARDING.

"MICHAEL," says Mr. Benjamin Boody, "call me to-morrow morning at ten o'clock precisely. I will order my breakfast as my appetite stands at the time. And here, Mike, take this note to Gondey, the fashionable tailor,—say the bill must be rectified before it is paid. Here's a note to Miss Angeline Gray, at the West End — the daughter of Barrister Gray. You know their residence, and, on the way, just call for my white kids at Masury's, and purchase a bottle of cologne, and another of tricopherous. Tell them Mr. Boody sends, and my name is already booked for a few little sundries, for which I will call and settle."

The bell is pulled violently. "Margaret, will you ask the landlady to come to my room—Mr. Boody, No. 4?"

"What can that man want of me? I do hope it is to settle his bill; let me see the amount. 'To be paid monthly, as per agreement.' One, two, three, yes four months have passed, and I have received just nine dollars and fifty cents. Georgiana, here, make out this bill to B. Boody, for four months' board. He has sent for me probably to pay it. I'll just slip on my cap with flowers in it, and, Margaret, reach me my silk dress.

Boody, I believe, is—is an English gentleman — came over in the steamship — has a commission from Queen Vic. Well, dear, if the bill is done, I'll wait on him."

* * * * *

"Mr. Boody, good morning, sir."

"Good morning, landlady. I rang for your servant-maid to call her mistress. I merely wished to say, that my coffee is not genuine Mocha, that my steak was not juicy, besides being overdone, and that the rolls were perfectly stale; and merely summoned you to say that, unless better fare is provided, I shall be obliged to seek lodgings elsewhere. Your accommodations, madam, are not equal to your terms."

Michael enters, with a profound bow.

"The gentleman says he shall keep the gloves until old arrearages are paid. As to the hair- tonic, yer honor, they bid me say they had booked quite enough, and here's the bill for the past, sir." The landlady was taken aback.

"Mr. Boody, here is my bill."

"Keep it, madam. I make no payments till my drafts are accepted."

And the next morning the English gentleman was missing, and the poor landlady, who keeps "boarders for a living," was obliged to pocket the bill and the insult.

* * * * *

Mrs. Cornelius Flary wanted board. She would like Mr. Boody's apartments; had an only daughter and a waiting-maid; had kept a carriage, and could give the best of references. The landlady looked for a golden shower to succeed her late overcast sky. Miss Aminta,

the daughter, was engaged to Monsieur Ferrego, a gentleman of genuine moustache. Madam attended "*op-eraws*," occasionally morning-parties; had select friends for games of whist or chess; always ate in her own rooms; kept a little poodle-dog and a dressing-maid. Who could doubt her respectable standing in society?

Monsieur Ferrego received a sudden call to France. The mother and daughter departed with him, leaving a soiled white silk night-cap, an odd slipper, a dirty room, and the unpaid bill!

A WEEK AT THE FARM-HOUSE.

A LITTLE robin sat perched on the highest bough of a tall tree. There he sang, and warbled forth for hours his sweetest notes, making the evening air vocal with his rich tones. Day after day he continued this practice, with little interruption, and only at nightfall was he missed from his accustomed seat. Long, long before the tired laborers awoke, he was again carolling his morning matins, refreshing the restless, sleepless sufferer, who had counted the weary hours of night. And what was the office of this tiny songster? Was it to gladden *my* heart that he made himself so vocal? Ay, not *me* alone, for, underneath his seat, his companion had built her nest; and, while she sat at her weary task, her loving mate attempted to cheer her with his most tuneful notes. No doubt the phraseology, interpreted, meant, "I will inform thee of impending danger, and should the mighty eagle, or any of the feathered tribe, invade our premises, I will give thee 'note of preparation.' " And then the protecting songster would flit away a few paces, and return with a morsel of food, and, kindly dropping it in the nest, remount, and sing again a livelier strain.

What a lesson to a jarring household did this robin teach! How, when wearied with care, or worn down

with labor, do the accents of sympathy cheer and renerve the spirits! How does the feeling that a protecting hand is held out to support us, help us to bear *together* what would separately crush us! And just this kind of reliance we are invited to feel in our heavenly Parent's care.

The faithful hen. All day long, a hawk had been hovering at short intervals over a brood of chickens. Just as the parent hen saw him approaching, she gave a piercing shriek and gathered her brood under her wings. This summoned the cock, who raised his erect comb, and gave a note of defiance. We looked in vain for any abatement of these creatures' care. Their instinct seemed almost to approach the reasoning faculty; for, when the danger was past, the hen arose, and the brood commenced busily picking at every seed or tiny stone, as if anxious to improve the time till they should be again invaded.

What a moral we could have drawn of watchfulness against impending dangers! Were *we* alike careful and used *our* forecast aright, how many wrecks of fortune and reputation might be saved! The hawk still pursued, but the hen baffled his designs by her unceasing care. So might we escape many furious birds of prey, did our *reason* serve us as well as her *instinct*!

The weaned calf. Grazing by the door of the husbandman's cottage was the brindled calf. The mother was a singularly gentle creature, and overflowed with natural milk, beside that of "kindness." She was so cherished, that her progeny was reared to take her place; and the frisky little animal would eat bread from the hand, drink warm milk from the pail, and so readily

accommodate herself to her owner's wishes, that she never bellowed for her mother, but quietly took what was given her; and, when tired of grazing, as if fond of human sympathy, would stand in the door-way and thrust her nose within; and so the tender creature won the goodwill of all around the rural homestead. Early training effected all this; and might it not be so with a superior race, if they were early led to the cultivation of the heart? Might they not be reared by faithful mothers, and trained by after-influences, to become benefactors of our race?

The unruly cow. The farmer called her "breachy." She showed her skill one morning in removing from her enclosure. She was driven to the rich pasture, but had an unaccountable love of straying out of it. No sooner had the little driver deposited her safely, and whistled his way homeward, than the restless creature took her horns and raised every rail from its post, and made her way to the public road. A passer-by put up the fence, and travelled on, thinking he had done good service to a neighbor.

It so happened, at nightfall, that the owner of the cow went for her, and, finding her in the road grazing contentedly, he easily inferred that the faithful boy had not turned her into her pasture; for how, reasoned he, came the fence *up*? Surely, the creature that could tear down, could not replace the work! In vain did the boy protest that he put the animal where he was desired; and it was only when his master learned, from him who put up the bars, that it was so, that he was reinstated in his confidence.

What a lesson this should teach us to moderate our

opinion of acts, which, circumstantially viewed, seemed to present but one side, and that an unfavorable one! We might have added another additional argument, which proved that the cow had not been put in the pasture, viz., the neighbors had observed her all day feeding out of it. How frequently do our prejudices become strengthened by the superadded weight of trifling circumstances!

The worn-out horse. *He* fed in the door-yard. For many years he had done service in the heavy-laden team, and, pacing back and forth to the neighboring village, he had carried the heavy lumber. But now his joints grew stiff, his legs refused their office, and the poor creature was turned in the verdant lawn to graze at will. When he laid down, he could not rise without assistance; and the blanched eye of the poor animal told full well that he was a sufferer. Yet he meekly fed, and his master had a hope that he would again do service. Did you never see other worn-out specimens, those who had drudged and trudged life's dusty ways, that only laid by when a sense of helplessness forbade them to labor? They never enjoyed but in prospect, and the treasures of years' accumulation had little worth when the palsied limbs and dim visions of premature old age came upon them.

And there were other "summer sights." The ant was toiling upon her bed of sand, the hornet was building his clayey nest, the swallow was fluttering over the babbling brook, the caterpillar was preparing for her transformation, and all nature seemed obedient to the laws of its Creator. Truly, this seemed a good world,

a pleasant world, and why should we not call it a *happy* world? "Because," said Uncle Jethro, "we have sinned." "Well, then," I hopefully replied, "keep on *repenting*, and do not be the only exception that mars the original design of its Maker. By improving the present world, and acting wisely, who can doubt but one far more attractive will burst upon our vision when we exchange time for eternity?"

WORDS OF KINDNESS.

NELLY MCKIN was a child of Scottish descent. Her father died in her infancy; and her mother, being straitened in pecuniary circumstances, was advised to seek in America a home for herself and child, as offering better remuneration for the toilsome life of plain sewing, to which she now resorted for a livelihood. The poor woman lent a credulous ear to the story that money flowed plentifully in our streets, and embarked to assure herself of the fact.

Upon her arrival she found herself nearly penniless, exhausted by a long voyage, and landed upon an inclement shore, with none to raise the eye of pity or extend the hand of relief. She was a stranger, and knew not to whom to apply. Even her own countrymen seemed hardened by severity, and manifested no tenderness toward the new emigrant who appeared among them.

Little Nelly could only cling to the scanty skirts of her mother, and in wonder trudge through our streets, unable to divine why her mother sought such an inhospitable shore. Besides, she was the only surviving one of a family of eight children.

After many fruitless attempts to command labor, and a shelter which would wear a neat and comfortable air,

Mrs. McKin at length fell in with an honest, pitying heart of her own sex, from the Emerald isle, who offered to share her room and furniture with her till such time as she could recompense her for the kindness.

Mrs. McKin then followed the direction of some falsely-styled philanthropic people, who directed her to certain sloop-shops, where, by excessive toil, she could only manage to procure her daily bread, leaving scarcely a cent whereby she could help defray the rent of her tenement. The poverty and loneliness of her own heart she could better have endured, had she not been compelled to witness the inroads it made upon the tender susceptibilities of little Nelly. The child had always been accustomed to a plenty of common food, and she had hitherto ate it with a blithesome spirit,—and that always sweetens the coarsest fare. But now there was a stint; both her mother and herself could not enjoy their homely meal, and feel that their appetites were appeased; and so one coaxed the other to take the last spare morsel, each feeling the other had the most need of sustenance.

It may seem, to many outside observers of human condition, that to feel the cravings of hunger is an unnecessary thing. They think of their full larder, and of the over supply which they would gladly render to such. But how do the destitute know where to find such a supply? How gladly would the Scotchwoman have become the useful inmate of a family, or her little Nelly have lent her aid, could such a place have been assigned them! Yet they lived in a neighborhood where luxuries abounded, themselves inhabiting the only room over a livery stable, which was occupied as a "poor tenement."

Little Nelly at length became what we call a "shaving girl." She used to frequent the carpenters' shops and fill her basket; and then, going to the doors of the opulent, she sometimes obtained a few cents, with which she bought a loaf of bread, which, in her first efforts, so gladdened her heart that it really deprived her of her usual appetite. She had a winning voice, a sweet smile, and clear eye, which looked as if no taint of sin lurked beneath, and no hypocritical guise concealed the truth of her somewhat reluctant confession of poverty. Still, she met with a cold and forbidding reception at most of the places where she sought for aid, and not unfrequently was the door rudely shut in her face, with the coarse expression, "Begone, and never trouble me again!" Perhaps this grating language was not entirely chargeable upon those that uttered it; for are not our domestics so constantly admonished to beware of street beggary, that they only reiterate the language which their employers may have put in their mouths?

And so little Nelly trudged once more to a door she had often frequented without being severely repulsed. The domestics, at varied occupations, heeded not her gentle ringing of the gate-bell; but the lady of the house answered it. The soft, plaintive voice of the desolate child struck a vein of tender sympathy in the heart of that lady. She took her full basket of shavings, and kindly added, "Come in, my little girl, and warm yourself."

A tear stood in Nelly's eye. It was shed at the voice of kindness. So she followed her new friend, and answered her many inquiries as to her place of abode and

her destitution, in such a truthful and simple manner as completely won the heart of her benefactress. She immediately went to a receptacle of cast-off garments, and, taking therefrom a supply suited to her condition in mid-winter, most surprisingly gladdened the heart of the desolate child by fitting them on her person, and tying up a little package for her mother; which was followed by so many hearty thanks that no one, by the look and manner, could have doubted the sincerity.

This kind lady did not feel, as many do, that, before bestowing her alms, she must first make a formal call to become an eye-witness of absolute poverty; she saw before her a shivering, thinly-clad child, and she knew by substituting more comfortable garments she was doing no evil service; for sometimes we seem to read clearly in the eye and manner of a sufferer that destitution is not synonymous with imposition. So she bade little Nelly come again at a stated time, and she would furnish her with another supply.

The grateful child ran home in perfect delight. The world was all sunshine to her now. She was soon at her mother's door, and, having displayed a bright silver piece, a basketful of comfortable and neatly-assorted provisions, and a supply of clothing which exactly met the wants of the mother, they both fell on their knees and thanked their heavenly Father for raising up to them such an unknown friend. Few more fervent prayers were ever breathed; and the little girl seemed wild with delight at her unexpected success. She bought two candles at the neighboring grocer's, and, having secured a few sticks of drift-wood, that mother and child

were really more heartily glad than many in an opulent mansion.

At the time appointed, however, for Nelly to make her next call upon her benefactress, she did not appear. That evening a messenger came to say that the child was very sick, and could only beg that "the lady who spoke those kind words to her would come and see her." She spoke not of outward gifts, — it was only the *kind words* which seemed to linger in her heart. "They were the first," said she, "that were ever spoken to me;" and they were the last, save the accents of a mother's voice, whence nothing else could emanate.

Her benefactress called to see her; but Nelly's eyes were closed, and her little heart beat faintly. She could neither hear nor see, — yet there was one incoherent expression which she attempted to utter. It was of "the lady who spoke — the — kind words."

This simple narration is strictly true, and with it is embodied a touching meaning — the power of a kind word to the forsaken and friendless. It has a magic spell which often reconciles the distressed to any outward condition, far more than even the relief of present wants.

Those words were incorporated in the soul of little Nelly. She went to heaven's gates with the cheering accents; and if the spirits of the departed are permitted to welcome those who follow after them, may not she who spoke those words of kindness hope to be recognized by that grateful child, where all the artificial distinctions of society are done away, and the sweet charities and benevolent acts of this life are alone accounted worthy

of remembrance? Speak, then, O speak words of kindness to the suffering, if you can do nothing more!

Stands at thy gate no suffering child,
With sad, imploring air,
Who asks of thee her daily bread,
And would thy pity share?
Lean, shivering, wan, that haggard child
Solicits but in vain;
Thy door is closed with grating voice, —
"Begone! come not again."

Methinks, ere long, there is a gate
At which thou knockest too;
And, as it opes, that little child
Stands present to thy view.
Her guardian angel waits to hear,
How urgent thy request!
The door now closes with the voice, —
"I know thee not, thou stranger guest;
For, inasmuch as to *this* child
The voice of love thou didst deny,
So, now, to thy solicitings,
I must like thee reply."

The guest stood waiting, quite shut out,
From all expected bliss,
And felt how sad was the reverse
Between that world and this!

EVADING A DUN.

It is curious to notice how some people can evade a dun. There is the rich Mr. Skinner, who buys everything on credit. He gets his work, too, done by the best of mechanics; but they are not cash jobs. If, by way of accommodation, a person to whom he is indebted sends a messenger, stating, "it will greatly oblige him if he would cash his receipted bill," sometimes, if he feels in a pleasant mood, Mr. Skinner will do so, provided the fractional part over the amount is "given in;" but let a common workman present his bill for payment a few days after his work is done, and *he* will be told "to go about his business; that he only settles his accounts when he receives his dividends, which is semi-annually; and that if he wants any better treatment he may take a job of some one else the next time." Now, as every one knows Mr. Skinner is sure pay when the six months have expired, he is passed over as a "hard customer;" and, to keep in his favor, it is generally known that only semi-annually one must expect his payment.

Sometimes, Mr. Skinner boasts how much the interest amounts to which he derives from thus withholding a settlement; but he always forgets to mention how much inconvenience and extra interest those to whom he is indebted are obliged to pay to meet *their* liabilities.

Now, with our neighbor Tolman, the style of reasoning is very different. He affirms that Mr. Skinner inherited his wealth, and never knew the anxiety attendant upon not "quite enough;" whereas, he has been in strait places, and feels it is only due the laborer to be paid when his work is done. He therefore never has any running accounts, and it was never said to him, "Will it be convenient for you to settle our little bill to-day?" and yet he seldom gets a job done as cheaply as friend Skinner, for he has not the desire to beat those down with whom he contracts.

There is another class, who always have a frivolous excuse whereby they avoid a *dun*, and defer payment. The sight of a bill always finds them with an excuse for withholding payment. Either "they have not yet examined the one rendered," or "they have been absent, or disappointed in receiving some expected remittances," or "there appears to be a slight mistake which requires the supervision of the book-keeper;" all these are again and again urged merely to postpone a settlement. This is the delinquent creditor who generally settles arrearages in July that were due in January.

Then there is the man in moderate circumstances, who means to pay as soon as he possibly can, and who hates a dun tremendously; but he is constantly assailed by a dapper little collector, who says, "*We* are greatly inconvenienced by such small amounts as yours, sir, and when may we with certainty expect our bill liquidated?" This man is sure to be punctual to the time assigned; but he says to his family, "I don't know how it is that people contrive to evade duns, and postpone payments;

for my part, if I procure an article one week, I am sure to hear from it the next; while my neighbor has a six months' reprieve without having an item presented to him."

The fact is, nobody is afraid to dun the man who buys but a small amount. The reasoning is, "If he don't pay promptly, keep on dunning, and force him to do it; it will be no great loss to us if he withhold his patronage." Whereas Madam Bruno, who rides in her coach, and buys a thousand dollars' worth of silks and satins every six months, only has to bid her coachman stop a moment while she goes in to the book-keeper, and says, "My bill, sir, which you sent me last week, will not be settled for two or three months;" and the young man with the pen behind his ear bows very obsequiously, and replies, "Just as it suits your convenience, Madam Bruno;" and, as she walks out toward the door to her carriage, one of the firm meets her with a most complaisant air, and asks "if he shall not have the pleasure of showing her some choice fabrics he has just received?"

Now, who says there is no advantage in keeping a carriage? If any one, it must be he is profoundly ignorant of human nature, and the class of people who are *dunned*.

A PLEA FOR DOG-DAYS.

EVERYBODY vilifies dog-days; there is no damp, uncomfortable morning, — no day when the furniture is moist, and the flies light heavily, and bite voraciously, — no time when you feel debilitated and worn down with having had a sleepless night, when your disturbers have been a concert of cats, whose voices could not harmonize, or an army of mosquitos which, attacked you on every point, — but forthwith comes the exclamation, "We always have such trials in dog-days!" And so this portion of time has come to be voted as the meanest, most disagreeable, unendurable, of all days in the calendar.

Now, for one, I should like to know how we could dispense with *dog-days*? We might do without *dogs*, I admit, because we can dispense with hydrophobia, and that emanates from the canines; but I should like to know how we could live without the results which spring from *dog-days*. Suppose it is a time "when all Bedlam and Parnassus is let out," when flies do bite, and children scream, and serenaders are out till midnight, and the animals kick in the stable, and the house-dogs growl and howl as their peculiar prerogative, and women scold their husbands, and old bachelors clear off to new

boarding-houses; suppose the milk is sour, and the air is damp and foggy, with occasionally a flash of lightning and a roar of thunder; who cannot bear six weeks out of fifty-two, which are not altogether so pleasant, when the harvest days come along, and the earth yields her richest products, which were maturing all the time we were defaming the weather?

I should like to inquire what great achievements were ever carried forward without some drawbacks, some endurances, some days of despondency, when the head ached, and the heart grew sick? Dog-days, we admit, are peculiarly trying to strong as well as weak nerves; but for them, what woman could ever induce her husband to take a journey, and shut up the house, and leave his unpaid notes, and welcome every railroad train that carries him further and further from bank and counting-rooms, and old dingy associations?

If there were no dog-days, what would become of those delightful watering-places, where swarms do congregate, and cheerfully coop up in seven-by-nine bedrooms, and are most happy to pay exorbitantly for such accommodations, with all other annoyances thrown in.

If there were no dog-days, how could we test our endurance of physical evils? How should we learn to feel grateful for the difference between a morning when the starch is literally all wrung out of us, when our coffee tastes flat, and our newspaper items are insipid, and our family are all out of sorts, — one complaining that her hair will not keep in curl; another, that her newly-ironed frock is all tumbled; and a third, that the shine

has disappeared from dicky and boots; I say, if we had no such mornings, how little should we prize those cool autumnal days when we are all on the right key, and everybody looks smiling and feels happy!

And then there are the free-and-easy fashions which dog-days especially countenance. The prim gentleman can sit in his thin coat, and keep on his slippers, doff his neck-cloth, unbutton his vest if a fleshy man, swing a fan to keep off the flies in his afternoon lounge, condescending to remark on his wife's flounces, and the uncomfortable condition of gentlemen who are burdened with wigs; and the poor woman is all of a perspiration lest the false appendages when taken off should expose the fact of her husband's indebtedness to them for his youthful appearance; for *she* never appears with her natural charms, save in the privacy of her own room. The hottest morning finds the prim madam with her foretop smooth and glossy, her "stand-off" under-skirt, and her ruffled, iron-rusted, white morning-dress; for the prim lady maintains that "dress commands respect."

And then, besides all the above enumerations, dog-days have a tendency to cure envious people.

It was a hot morning some time in August, 1850, when, at early dawn, I looked across the way, and espied my neighbor, with his packed trunks ranged on the sidewalk, and other undeniable marks that they were fitting out for a regular campaign in the country. Presently he locked his outside door, and ran across the street with the key, to know if I would take charge of it during an absence of six weeks. Immediately my envy was excited. Why, reasoned I with myself, should the world

be so unequally divided? And then came the query, I wonder how he can afford such jaunts any better than I? Somebody said he was deep in "fancy stocks." I hope I did not wish they would depreciate; but strange thoughts run through envious brains. At any rate, when he wheeled round the corner in the carriage, with all his family, my impulse was to leave the window. Then it flashed across my mind, how came he to think *I* could take charge of his key for *six weeks*? Was it decreed by everybody that *I* was a permanent fixture? I had half a mind to travel off that instant. But, as the day wore away, my feelings became more quiet. In a day or two after, as I was looking over the items in the morning journal, what should I discover but that "certain burglars had entered Mr. S.'s dwelling, and abstracted many valuables, besides injuring the furniture and carrying off every article of plate!" I took the key and marched over to the premises. I felt no envy then; everything was in a state of "glorious confusion." Added to all this, we were telegraphed that one of my neighbor's children was taken sick on the route, and they were most uncomfortably situated at a poorly-conducted hotel! Did I wish myself in his place then, think you? This was the last time my envy was excited. I felt thankful I had a home, and a nice bed, and airy chamber, and a healthy family; and all this lesson I acquired in *dog-days*.

What if we do perspire freely? What if the feline race do hold concerts, and the canines howl, and the babies cry, and the sky lowers, and women fret? If we are but *at home* all these things can have an amicable

adjustment. There are no landlords' bills to settle, no "items" to quarrel over; and the effect of these debilitating dog-days results in heavy crops, plenty of produce, a purse which no watering-place has emptied, and a confirmation that the necessity of the *stay at home* principle is, after all, the most salutary. So, wipe the brow, and cheer up with the certain good *results* of dog-days. If the city is empty, then the air is purer, the streets less crowded, and one's home all the more agreeable.

IN A DILEMMA.

"THE child *will* die, Mr. Foote, unless we have some doctor,—and who shall we have? Do run and see neighbor Gray."

"Mrs. Gray says, have a homœopathist, by all means; but I met Mrs. Gill, and *she* says it is all a humbug to crack up this system. She knows two children who have died already under this treatment; she says, try no experiment, but doctor in the old-fashioned way, on the allopathic system. Then you will have nothing to *reflect upon*."

Mrs. Jones drops in to give *her* advice. "Now," says she, "as you are an inexperienced couple, I am going to advise you to try cold water and friction. I've literally rubbed diseases down, and washed them off. Nobody thought my little Peggy would live, but I kept on washing and rubbing till the dear creature opened her eyes, and seemed bright as ever."

A pail of water is furnished her, and a flesh-brush and hair mitten. The child squirms and cries, and the mother declares she must leave off.

Mrs. Jones is in the other room, insisting upon it the child must be treated with "energetic action," and rubs accordingly, to get up a perspiration. Mrs. Gill says she

looks upon such barbarous treatment as suicide; and Mrs. Gray says calomel is just as bad, but one of the homœopathist powders would relieve instantly.

Here Jim runs for *her* doctor, Mrs. Gill sends the father of the child for *hers*, and Mrs. Foote, in her excited state, remembering how "hot-drops" once relieved her, pours a quantity down the child's throat.

By this time, the two physicians have arrived. They exchange glances at each other, and inquire if they are mistaken in being directed to this house. They refuse to confer together, and, both feeling their dignity somewhat offended by the novelty of being sent for, as if the skill of each is called in question, refuse to administer, and both decamp. Mrs. Foote has offended Mrs. Jones, and the child is now left quiet, and seems relieved; nature has thrown off the alarming symptoms, and who shall have credit for the cure? The mother says it was the "hot-drops;" the father says it was the quiet after the rubbing; and Mrs. Jones says she did the work.

And now comes the question, who will they employ when the child is next seized? People are all afloat on the system of medicine. One doses one way, and another a contrary; yet they both recover, have perfect faith in their own way of doctoring, and are loud in declaring against others. But hear the conclusion of the whole matter, as given by experience.

Trust not thyself to quacks, neither in medicine nor religion. A prescription for thy conscience should be as accurate as one for thy stomach. Fast, keep thy mind cheerful and thy countenance hopeful, and diseases will not often come to thee; or, should they threaten, they will not find thee an easy prey to conquer.

MALE COQUETRY.

"WELL, mere attentions ought to mean something. If you, Mr. Small, have been appointing such special meetings, making engagements, likewise, to ride and walk, and everybody has construed them into a courtship, unless you mean *something*, you ought to pursue a different course."

"But Mary is agreeable, and a pleasant girl to carry on a flirtation. She sighs like an angel when I tell her it will be inconvenient for me to call for a week, and she actually wept when I left her for my travelling tour. I suppose she feels dependent upon my attentions."

"Mr. Small, you are trifling with Mary's affections. What is she to understand by your glances and visits, and walks, and moonlight wanderings; by your serenades, your selecting her as your first partner in the dance, your call the next morning to inquire for her health, the music-sheets you gave her, the invitations from the family which you accepted to dine frequently with them, and the whole stock of courteous and winning ways by which you sought to win her regard? I ask you, Mr. Small, what did these things do but raise an expectation?"

"Only mere attentions, aunt;" and Small took his cigar, and, with all the nonchalance in the world, acted the

comfortable gentleman who never did a wrong deed in his life. His conscience was easy. He *did* care more for Mary than anybody else. But, then, marriage was an absurd thing; he never breathed a thought of it in her ear, and how could she infer anything that had never been expressed?

"Mr. Small, you know not the baseness of thus trifling with a woman's affections. Mary is a gentle, confiding, lovely girl; pure as the mountain dew, and unsullied as the white violet that you and she have cultivated in her parterre of flowers; but, be assured, she dreams these 'mere attentions' *mean something*. Why, the very suggestion of your name mantles her cheek with such a conscious blush, that I have seen her turn to the window for concealment; and then you may be assured those lonely musings in her chamber, and those solitary walks by the river-side, greatly favor the idea, that in the future she is weaving a fantastic wreath of ivy over a cottage, wherein are the charms of wedded life. But tell me plainly, Small, did you never say anything by which she might construe these attentions into that which had its centre in the heart?"

"Never, aunt, never! And, really, your eloquence has quite moved me. Mary has only been to me as a pretty pastime of my idle hours. She is a sweet vocalist, and we have only sung love songs, and glanced occasionally in each other's faces. With the old man, too, I have often accepted the honor of a glass of wine; but I can look them all in the face without a fear of being arrested for a breach of promise;" and Small puffed out a long volley of smoke, and turned over the pages of the book

as if he were not much interested in its contents, since this conversation commenced.

Far differently was Mary occupied. She was arranging a bouquet of flowers, according to the language which they indicated, to present to Mr. Small; or she was catching the sweetest tone of music, or practising the last chorus, hoping it would meet his enthusiastic approbation; and when she was alone with him, she was hoping some of his sentimental sayings might be construed into some definite words, that the mere repetition of them might clothe them with an unmistakable meaning. But, to do Small justice, he never did mean to trifle, except for his own pleasure; for he was supremely selfish, and, since the remarks of his aunt had resounded in his ears, he resolved to absent himself yet more and more; for he would not injure the pure affections of Mary, not he — and so he saw her the less frequently, and was more taciturn.

Mary grew sad. She lost the vivacity of spirits and the elasticity of gait which were her former characteristics; there was a sinking at the stomach, a fluttering at the heart, a throbbing in the head; restless nights followed, and febrile symptoms called for medical aid. Alas for the prescription which could not effect a cure! Then the incipient stages of consumption began to appear, and a change of place was recommended. But Newport and Niagara both failed in restoring the bloom that had faded upon Mary's cheek. Mere lookers-on spoke of the baneful effects of our climate, in thus sapping the vital springs of health; and the beautiful world we live in was condemned as only fostering the seeds of

early decay. A sea-voyage was at length undertaken. Italian skies, Swedish landscapes, and England's bracing air, added to the subduing influence of time, did give a partial restoration; but Mary was never again the same blithe and happy being as before her affections were thus chilled. There was a tinge of romance, however, left in her nature. She lived among flowers and pensive scenes, and ere long the village clergyman became so enraptured with her pure and gentle nature, that he offered her his hand, and soon after rejoiced in the possession of so precious a treasure. Yet there was a sad history, all unrevealed in words, which those mere attentions had caused to tinge and shade her once bright and joyous spirit.

And Mr. Small was still pursuing one gala-day of enjoyment. He did occasionally wonder if Mary were perfectly happy. He still had a kind of regard for her welfare; but the field was large and his friends promiscuous. He had since flirted with a dozen hearts and pretty faces; they were to him like garments when slightly worn, which he threw off without compunction as some fresh charmer appeared. Yet Mr. Small was tolerated in excellent society; flirt as he might, and entrap the affections as he did, he was always received with welcome, and scarcely a mother in the land but would have freely consented to bestow her daughter upon him; for Small inherited a large fortune, had a singular faculty of pleasing, and his mind was just cultivated enough to make him a fascinating companion; but he was a heartless wretch, and caused more sighs than smiles from having lived in the world.

LOVE OF FASHION.

YOU may talk about love of parents, and conjugal love, and brotherly love, and love of humanity, and love of the church; but what do they all amount to, when put beside the love of fashion,—that everlasting pride of appearance, which drives so many into insanity, which makes so much wretchedness on account of unpaid bills, which torments when one would be at ease, which produces a restlessness which no drug can relieve? Yes, that insatiate demand, which must be appeased, makes the bane of existence to many sensitive minds; good-natured fellows, who hate to deny their wives and daughters; who never did say “no” to an importunate request; who are made to believe it is necessary to have half a dozen French hats and a change of jewelry once a month; who can easily be persuaded by daughter or wife that a change of climate is demanded by their impaired health. All these get the better of a man’s condition when his pecuniary resources are insufficient, and he is the most unhappy man alive. Place him on a splendid couch—is there any ease for him? It is not that fly that lights upon his face which annoys him. Those unpaid bills, and the face of that dunning little urchin, who, twice a week, wishes to know “when it will be con-

venient to settle Mr. Todd’s bill,” take all the starch out of his dickey, and all the flavor out of his coffee. He turns over his newspaper; but what avails it to him that California is disgorging her mines to consignees?—he has no interest there.

“Why is it father is so dull?” inquires young sixteen, flounced up to her waist—one item which helps out his misery. And just at this time the cook demands her wages, and the seamstress exacts her pay, and “wife” wants her purse replenished, and business is dull, and fashion is importunate, and the good man cannot make a clean breast of it, and say he does not feel as if he could afford the supplies; and so he goes on, goaded with a load of unrevealed anxieties, which prey upon his health, and completely victimize him, so that he pays the penalty by a short and fatal fever, or a paralysis, or some malady which suppressed grief has engendered.

And what a family is left! The quantity of bombazine and crape for mourning his loss tells the story. And then the estate is declared *insolvent*, and after a great outcry about the extravagance of the man’s family—why, a purse is made up by the friends of the deceased, and presented to the widow; and she still keeps cook, chamber-maid, and parlor-girl, yet forever has a moisture about her eyes as she speaks of the sacrifices she makes on account of her “altered circumstances.”

Let a poor mechanic die, and how people proclaim, “Well, he has left a smart wife, and likely children, who can earn their own living!” And who would not rather be the independent wife of the mechanic, than the patched-up widow of the late fashionable man?

CHANGING PLACES.

A RESTLESS, roving habit, seems to be gaining in our community. Once it was considered almost indispensable to a good marriage that the husband should be the owner of the house he occupied, especially in the country. Now, *everywhere* has become a city, *everybody* has assumed city habits. The country shoemaker hires his tenement, because he does not consider himself as "a fixture" in any village; the shopkeeper is making a trial, and boards his family at the hotel; the minister even has abandoned the old, ivy-grown parsonage, and takes "lodgings" with some wealthy parishioner. In the city, the trades-people move into the country in the summer, and back again in the autumn. We have few social firesides, and seldom does a man sit under his "own vine and fig-tree."

What we are to become, where we are to gather the household band fifty years hence, on a time-honored "Thanksgiving," or a "Merry Christmas," is a matter of some perplexity. If there are no family "mansions," of course one strong tie is broken that linked us with the past. As it now is, who can talk of his early home? The child is born in one town, schooled in another, his lot is cast in yet another for subsistence;

and, perhaps, the far West is destined to hold his family, and be his sepulchre.

I should not wonder if our New England homes, our old family records, the places where our fathers lived, the very tombs of our ancestors, in coming time should only be a beautiful history — relics which have passed away under the all-powerful ban of present "improvements." Do you not know, reader, many a homestead that has been transmitted for half a century, nay, more, sometimes a hundred years, from father to son, and again to the same descendant of the same name; in the best parlor of which you may find the "coat of arms," "the record and genealogical tree," where all the different branches are traced? And who would think of removing such a relic any more than displacing a landmark? But times are beginning to change. The most promising son hears of large fortunes made in trade; of golden California, or some region where the slow accumulations from agricultural toil dwindle into insignificance. He goes to that spot; perhaps fails in health and purse; but still the life of a farmer does not suit his taste, and, rather than return back and take "the homestead," where he might live respectably, and die regretted, he suffers his patrimony to be sold into the hands of strangers, takes his pittance, perhaps settles on the banks of the Mississippi, dies of some "fell disease," and his children never see, and scarcely know, their father's birthplace!

The ennobling business of agriculture is too often exchanged for one of traffic or speculation in some distant city. This arises partly from our aversion to hard labor; but could I depict to you the thousand vexations, the

struggles, the heart-sickness, nay, more, the ruin of health and loss of all the vigor which manly toil would give, I know you would desire to be carried back to the plough, the scythe, the sickle, and the threshing-floor. These are toils which a few hours' suspension will enable you to prosecute again with cheerful hope; but who ever forgets "protested notes," settlement with a "hard creditor," and the stigma and loss of manly strength which he feels in never being able to do business in his *own name*?

Young men, beware of change. All is not enterprise that is ranked as novelty; all is not a mine of wealth which looks so gilded. You may part with your integrity by leaving your home; you may secure a post of honor by remaining there. See where *duty* leads, not where inclination prompts, and your course will be right.

Home! the old home of thy nativity! Is there no charm in its venerable look, in its ancient trees, in the murmurings of that brook, in the yard where thou hast frolicked, and the green fields where thou hast sported? If not, sell the homestead — it matters not to whom; but if *there be* a sacred, touching influence in the spot, keep it; often visit it, if thy lot is cast away; go to the tombs of thy ancestors; keep alive the sentiment of love which once animated their bosoms, and be assured, when your spirit takes its flight, your last aspiration will be "bury me with my kindred; let me sleep in death near the spot where I awoke to life."

THE AUDIENCE AND THE LECTURER.

WE hope it is an innocent amusement to watch the promiscuous company in a lecture-room, especially a crowded one. Arrive at what hour you may, somebody is sure to have preceded you. "Silsby," the man with the high dickey, always "foregoes" his tea, that he may occupy his particular seat directly in front of the lecturer. He carefully arranges his wig, draws up his high overcoat collar, secures as much elbow-room as is necessary, pulls out his evening paper, runs over the doings of the legislature and common council, and notes particularly the action upon the subject of a public library, as he is a bachelor, loves reading at a low rate, and imagines there may be some spare seats in the appropriated room.

Next in turn comes in the Widow Wadman. She is generally found on the same settee with Silsby, although there appears to be no affinity between them, since the bachelor is quiet, and the old lady is all of a nettle. She has so many things to look after; her spectacles, her fan, her opera-glass, her muff, and her over-shoes, are all in particular places, before she can hear a word. That little roguish elf beside her is her grandson, and, as she cannot see in the distance, his tiny neck is continually

on the stretch to ascertain for the old lady whether "the Pickle family have come in, and if General Bounce has taken his seat, and whether he sees the governor yet."

Off in yonder corner sits an unhappy-looking couple, a man and his wife, undoubtedly. The man is a grocer, and the passage of the Maine liquor law would ruin his trade; he is conning over some paragraph adverse to his trade, and, heavens, what a frown! His wife asks him a question, and he shakes his head. Those pipes and quarter-casks in the custom-house fill his brain.

Right behind him sits Commodore Apsley. He has been to a dinner party, and his eyes look heavy and red. By his side comes in a dapper little clerk, and a young lady with a white nuba on her head. All the world with them goes well; they are talking of some adventurous sleigh-ride, or some jilted swain who went too far in his attentions, and the fair damsel played a game with him.

Beyond them is a freshly-engaged widower. How gracefully he bows his lady into her seat! — and the feathers wave, and the smiles play around dimpled cheeks, and he inquires, "if she is entirely at her ease, — warm enough, — does she feel the fatigue of walking? — and then such a pleasant tête-à-tête follows! How strange it is that Mrs. Simple must make the ill-natured remark, "It wasn't so in the first wife's day! She, poor woman, had to delve all day, and get the baby to sleep before she went out; but in those days the man had not made his fortune. Well," she sighs out, "that is human nature, out and out."

All eyes are now directed to a particular quarter, — some "distinguished stranger" is whispered. He looks

blandly round upon the audience; the man in the front seat rises, and most heartily shakes hands with "the illustrious," passes him to his seat, and feels much taller for the honor conferred.

Now scores, of all ages, sexes and conditions, crowd the seats, alleys and vacant places; chairs and settees are in high requisition; somebody has trodden on the skirt of old Mrs. Rodman's dress, and she is almost frantic; Corporal Stubbs sneezes; Major Baron gapes; the boys in the gallery stamp, and the organist enters, pulls out all the stops, and thunders music loud enough to make one deaf a week afterwards!

But the filling-in is not yet entirely completed. There are those "reserved seats," where some stupid fellow places his "lady attendant," when they are suddenly driven out by the keeper in charge, while, just after, the particular friends of the orator enter and fill them.

Finally, the lecturer enters. He may have a school-boy's gait, or a sailor's swagger, or a State-street air; and, if he lacks in confidence, few places are so trying to his natural gait as the nine feet on the stage to the chair behind the desk. Now he takes out his notes, — opens a large white handkerchief, puts it to his mouth as an excuse to look upon the audience, and forthwith is announced and begins his theme. It takes some minutes to engage the minds of such an audience. You have their eyes at first, that is all.

Woe to the lecturer that is prosy! In a short time, in the further gallery, boots are in motion; the contagion spreads, the door slams, — it is all over with the speaker. The old lady in front is nodding; the man

behind her is fast asleep with his mouth partly opened. The Widow Wadman has dropped her fan, and the engaged couples are in close conversation. Why spin your yarn to its close, my good sir?

Far different, however, is the reception of the witty lecturer. He tells an anecdote, or says a "droll thing," and what a universal shout ensues! Everybody is wide awake. Those a "little hard of hearing" place their hands behind their ears to catch the sound; the boys are all on tiptoe to clap, and old men bring down their canes. The orator proceeds, holding his audience captive.

MODERNIZING.

THIS *modernizing* has been the ruin of many. Says one, I have tried it, and experimental knowledge is worth a great deal. I once thought it would be a fine affair to repair a house somewhat out of fashion, and thereby I should get the cost of my "improvements" back again in the market value of my estate. I wanted to make a large parlor without folding-doors; — so I called upon my carpenter and stated my plans, which he assured me could be executed very satisfactorily. I engaged him forthwith, and set about the business. It soon damped my wife's ardor, however, when she saw the dust and confusion it occasioned, and so I was forced to hold on my way without sympathy. The rooms were thrown into one, but what could I do with the ceiling?

The mason protested against *patching* the walls; — of course, then, the whole ceiling must be torn down, newly lathed, and freshly mortared. Then the lookers-on perceived as clearly as myself the importance of cutting down the windows, throwing out an iron balustrade, &c. This was concluded on; — but, alas! who ever wanted two fire-places in one room, especially when both were rendered useless by a furnace? And what could be done? Why, I had gone so far, that I endeavored to make the work

as faultless as possible to myself and future purchasers. So the fire-places were removed, and yet the unseemly jog in the wall, which the chimney occasioned, left the monument to tell where they once stood. Just as I began to think I saw the end, every one who stepped in to witness "the improvements," made the remark, "What a pity that the ceiling is so low! I think the cutting down of the windows a decided failure!"

Upon settling with the carpenter, I found my "improvements" amounted to nearly six hundred dollars; my mason was sure his bill ought to be two hundred more, for the work on the chimneys was a heavy job; and sundries amounted to a few dollars short of a thousand. And had I accomplished my aim? Scarcely one looked upon the work but wondered I had not sold the old house as it was, and purchased a modern one; for all the doors, windows, ceilings, and work in other parts of the building bore distinct marks of the very year it was completed. I was not satisfied, after all my labor, and concluded, after passing one uncomfortable winter in my large modern room, which the furnace was hardly sufficient to heat, — I say, I concluded to sell my house! At a private sale I entirely failed in my purpose; at public auction it was finally sold for just two hundred less than I had been offered before I attempted to improve it! Passing by the premises a month after, I felt a little chagrined to see my improvements all displaced, and the owner putting things back into the very condition from which I had removed them.

Modernizing is very common; but we should remember some things look best as they are first made. For exam-

ple, a man generally looks best when he looks naturally. False whiskers seldom improve him; a wig does not look better than the gray hair which age puts on; indeed, any attempt to improve nature will generally prove a failure.

I pity the girl who uses rouge instead of her natural complexion, — who modernizes her form almost to distortion, — who puts on artificial airs, and simpers affectedly; for I am well aware the object is never accomplished by such means.

This is the season for modernizing. We lay aside hats, bonnets, coats, dresses, for a fashionable summer attire. See that it is becoming before you purchase. Do not wear a fashionable hat if you dislike it; do not wear an unbecoming bonnet because your milliner tells you it is fashionable. Do not repair your house unless you can improve it; do not do it unless you can *afford* it. Make no outlay which will haunt you if "money continues hard," or "banks refuse to discount freely;" but always remember, seasonably, few people grieve over full purses, while many cry over *empty ones*!

THE FIRST BEREAVEMENT.

LIFE had been to me one summer's day. In that day, to be sure, there had been some variation; but the clouds that overcast my sky only caused the sun to appear in greater effulgence. From bereavement I had been spared; and the tear of sympathy had not lavishly been bestowed upon others' sorrows. Judge, then, of the preparation of mind with which I met the sickness and death of Myrtilla.

She was a lovely child; it was the general impression, as well as the feeling of parental partiality. She had been lent us scarcely two full years when the messenger of disease prostrated her, which was only a prelude to the Angel of Death. I had often sat and watched the expansion of immaturity. The first accents of speech, how fondly were they treasured, repeated and reëchoed, by the little, fragile child, who seemed delighted with the transports she thus inspired! And that feeble, tottering little walk,—supported by chairs, and held up by various articles of furniture; and occasionally the giving way of some hold, which more generally ended in a merry laugh than the natural cry. And now she began to notice, and gradually develop the infantile mind. Sweet child! we taught her the old-fashioned but never-worn-out petition

of, "Now I lay me down to sleep;" and years have passed since those lisping accents were repeated, yet they are as audible to me this moment as if just echoed from her voice.

When sickness came and assumed a threatening aspect my courage forsook me. My faith (had I any?) was too weak for my reliance. I felt she must not die. Had I not a better right to the darling child than her heavenly Father? And why was she forced to suffer? Innocent and lovely, yet there she lay, racked with pain, fevered, tossing, delirious; and I was equally so, questioning the Almighty's behest!

The third day, Myrtilla died. A transient calmness seized me, as I looked upon features now at rest; yet an agonizing, choking sensation followed, and I would fain have gone with her. But whither had *she* gone? Now the awful realities of the unseen world began to dawn upon me. In vain did my friends try to assuage my anguish, by comforting assurances that "of such were the kingdom of heaven," and that Jesus especially blessed such. My sorrow was selfish: I wanted my treasure back again. For weeks I carried about with me a disquieted spirit. I shrank mostly from friendly intercourse, save with those to whom I could detail the uncommon traits of my lost one's character. I could not compose myself to read. Occasionally I would peruse some touching passages in the records of the evangelists, showing me how Jesus sympathized with the mourners; but, alas! I wanted a present Saviour to restore my child, as was done to the widow of Nain.

I felt myself rebellious and sinful, unreconciled and

distressed; and I wandered about, performing my necessary duties, but having no heart in them. Many pious and many worldly friends visited me. One besought me in the offices of prayer and holy submission to yield to God's wisdom, who always appoints what is best; while others begged me in the round of gayeties and recreations to try and obliterate the past; but I could bear anything better than the trial of forgetfulness.

There was no sudden change came over me, which immediately subdued me, and yet there was something wholly distinct from the effacing hand of time which brought resignation into my heart. My feelings were gradually softened; my sympathies were quickened; I felt chastened, but not destroyed. A friend of mine begged me to interpret to him my experience. I thought it over, and the first distinct beaming of God's countenance upon my stricken soul was in answer to my *first prayer*. It was a feeble utterance; it was wrung from my heart after anguished weeks; but it was sincerely uttered: "Father, lead me to understand thy dealings with me."

Years passed on, and we were gladdened by the birth of five promising children. They were healthy and vigorous; yet I never felt I had such a claim upon them as was preëminently attached to Myrtilla. *That* chastisement was my first sorrow; and it broke my stubborn heart. It did, indeed, prove a blessing in disguise. I have since often watched by the death-beds of little children; I have witnessed the convulsive agony of parental hearts, and have longed to tell them that there is relief for such troubled spirits; but the words died upon my lips.

Yet I can never tell you all the benefits of my earthly sorrow. It so wonderfully checked my reliance on the perishing, and implanted such a hope in immortality, that, bitter as was the cup, and reluctantly as I drained its bitter dregs, yet of the fruit of such an experience I would not be dispossessed, could that child have lived to have been to me an earthly ministering angel.

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," says Holy Writ; yet I would not think to carry the earthly attachment to a heavenly state. I fear we become too selfish, too carnal in our desires, to reach that blissful state. I may not recognize my lost child *there* as once *mine*; I may not know any of my dearest kindred and loved companions of this world; but I trust to God's love for *that*. If I need such helps to make my enjoyment, undoubtedly they will be furnished. What may now militate against my wishes, I may leave behind me with the perishing flesh. I would not fix my thoughts on eternity by making it consist of similar pleasures I have known here. Alas! that Christian hearts should be so distrustful of a Father's fostering care!

We are too prone to feel that the friends who contributed to our enjoyment here will again rejoin us hereafter. It is a delightful thought, I well know; but who can tell how independent the disembodied soul may be of what made its essential enjoyments while here? No doubt there are hidden avenues to our future bliss, which no mortal conception has penetrated. That "redeemed host" may all be equally dear to us, employed in different missions, but all fulfilling their immortal destiny. The death of a child, or any other bereavement, the

severe disappointment, the failure of earthly plans, indeed, anything that has rebuked our waywardness and inclined us to take hold of our Father's hand for support, may be a primary cause of gratitude, for which, for eternal ages, we may thankfully bless our God; but, we must remember, our souls are destined to unknown expansion. It may not be necessary in eternity that we should remember our birthplace in time, only just so far as the discipline of earth was the preparation for the enjoyment of heaven. We talk profoundly of the capabilities of the soul. Alas, how little do we understand them! The lifting of the thin veil, which partitions us from such a revelation, may disclose such new senses, such an illimitable state of progression, as to utterly absorb all our earthly associations. Our employments may be so happily adjusted to our enlarged conceptions, that the friendships of time may seek no renewal. But in one thing let us be confident: as we had no personal agency in furnishing the auxiliaries which promote our present peace, so, beyond this state of being, we shall undoubtedly be introduced to just as radiant and beautiful visions as our improvement *here* has fitted us to comprehend or enjoy *there*.

But our faith is so weak! Do we not hear sorrowing friends exclaim, under any fresh calamity, "If the departed know the sufferings of the friends they have left behind, it must embitter all their glorious state;" as if we only closed our eyes, and carried into the future the same earthly feelings with which we struggled here! No, I would say; nothing but the *impress* of this life follows us; the aggregate of good or evil is concentrated

in our judgment, which the soul passes upon itself, as with heavenly vision it then sees the end from the beginning. How *can* we, then, for a moment suppose, that the great Author of immortality left such a flaw in his almighty wisdom, as not to guard us against every defect which our *finite minds* may suggest? I would arm thee against such a jealous distrust, my bereaved friend. Infinite wisdom has, in holy keeping, all those "who have crossed the flood." See thou to thy earthly combat, and struggle on for the attainment of a more perfect character, if thou wouldst make thy sorrows blessed.

PROPERTY.

ACQUISITION and possession are two very different things, producing very different results. The desire to *get* seems an instinctive element in many. Indeed, we know not but it is a natural element of our being. Take a glance at life. The little infant first opening his eyes cries for something out of his reach; the blaze of a candle arrests his attention, and he would fain put his tiny fingers in the brilliant light. Childhood is just as grasping. The boy begs for his kite, his marbles, and various playthings, which, when obtained, fail to satisfy. There is always some other lad who has a coveted treasure. The youth of sixteen longs to feel he is no more a minor, and boasts what he will do when that period arrives. The man looks out from his busy store, and hears of the retired cottage, and sighs for ease amidst luxurious indulgence, where the irritating bustle of trade will no more reach him. The man of retirement feels a vacuity, and wonders why, as he ranges over his elegant mansion and his gravelled walks, so little enjoyment attends the acquisitions; and old age, still tenacious of life, recounts the exploits of an early period, dwells on the changes of society, and, when not solaced by the prospect of a heavenly home, tightly clings to its earthly posses-

sions, and even mourns that so little time is left to hold on to present acquisitions. The desire, nay, even the struggle to attain, seems to be the period of the greatest enjoyment.

A friend invited one of his companions to visit him, and promised to show him the beauty of his garden, the varieties of trees, the shrubbery and green-house, where so many rare plants were deposited. He accepted; and, having surveyed the beautiful enclosure, and feasted his eyes upon all it contained, as he turned away from beholding it, he bowed, and said, "I thank you." "For what?" asked his friend; "surely you have had nothing yet demanding gratitude." "I think differently," replied the friend. "I have gazed upon all, which has cost you so much money and anxiety, for nothing, and have been about as much benefited as yourself; for, after all, you can do no more than *look* upon these things."

It does not necessarily follow that the man in possession of his million must be unhappy. If he is indolent, he will undoubtedly be so; but, if his mind is active, of course his hands will be often employed, and the ennui which attends repletion will not be his fate. Why is it that the poor and middling classes so often envy the rich? Certainly these people have the advantage of fortune's favorites. A gentleman who owned a valuable horse once remarked that his groom took the most pleasure with him. Said he, "I am always fearful when I drive him that he will be lamed, or when I stop at a hotel that he will not be properly attended. My servant has no such fears. He drives him at will; whistles as he goes;

follows him to the stable, and, refreshed by his ride, sits down and enjoys a hearty meal. I, on the contrary, have some vexatious bill to settle, or stocks are depreciating and money is difficult to invest; and, with these thoughts crowding upon each other, the zest of *my* appetite is taken off."

The man of wealth has many tenants who inhabit his shops and houses. He employs a man to collect his rents; the person returns, and informs him one is about removing, another says he shall do the same unless some repairs are made, while a third deems it needful to his comfort that the pure Cochituate should be conveyed to his chamber. Some of the rents are paid, some are left in the arrears, and some will never be paid. The owner finds real trouble in his possessions.

You may call these trials small trifles, unworthy one's attention, yet they do help to make up *life*; they discompose the spirits, lead one to dwell upon the ingratitude of human kind, and often wish they were *acquiring* instead of *possessing*. There is a kind of vigor attends the *getting* — a spur which urges us to make sacrifices, and a deceitful, yet buoyant hope, that the future will remunerate us for all present discouragements. But in this we see the wisdom of our heavenly Father, who permits us never to rest satisfied with earthly attainments. Thus the soul is, as it were, pushed along to realize its higher destiny, and seek its more enduring treasures in things which perish not with the using.

THE CAST-OUT EVERGREEN.

IN a tangled wild-wood there grew a luxuriant evergreen. It had taken root in the damp earth beneath a clump of dried leaves. But gradually it peeped forth, and, throwing its feeble tendrils around the scattered and decayed branches which autumnal and wintry winds had thickly strewed around, it entwined itself by such supporting embraces, until it reached a trailing length, and assumed a brilliant verdancy, which made it a conspicuous beauty among the dried shrubbery and mouldering foliage which encompassed it. And there for years, it may be, it had grown unobserved. Even the bright rays of the sun but scantily and slantingly shone in upon its branching progress; for, among the majestic oaks and stately pine-trees, the eclipse which fell upon the evergreen was sometimes almost total. Yet it knew no stint, no fading hue; and no rude footsteps had ever trampled upon it. In its obscurity it seemed to obey one of the great laws of nature, and silently to live on with increasing beauty and strength. At every few paces a livid green shot out, more tender and beautiful than others with which it claimed affinity, and thus an added beauty was given by its changing colors.

But ere long footsteps are heard in this sacred forest.

Over briars and brambles, over underbrush and rubbish, the pursuit is urged, and the lovely evergreen is at length espied in the tramp. The fatal knife soon severed it from its damp root. Gently was it untwisted from its supporting holds, and through many a gap, and over many a wild and thorny bush, had it extended itself. It was indeed hailed by the gleaners as a rare treasure, and carefully and faithfully was it twined in a broad receptacle, which was designed to enclose many of its kindred; for the Christmas holidays were approaching, and this undying evergreen was to be woven in a chaplet as an emblem of the Christian faith.

Its destination was in a stately mansion, and the preparation was in view of scenes of festivity and joy. By maiden fingers it was rounded and arranged with more perishable wild flowers, and hung in the splendid drawing-room windows. Here was an emblem of life contrasted with a dreary prospect without; but it was a new life to the vine which had been cradled amidst alternate snows and scanty sunshine. In its strange atmosphere a radiant glare of light always beamed upon it. When the setting sun would have left it in its native darkness, the brilliant artificial light shone quite as strongly upon it. And then only a frosty window-pane lent it any damp and refreshing aid to save it from decay; for, amidst the heated drawing-rooms where mirth and music were keeping time, there was no absence of a blighting heat which withered both animate and inanimate things. Yet for twenty successive holidays did this evergreen maintain its position. The wild flowers which were first put between it were long since perished, and a decaying

beauty was now resting upon the evergreen. It twisted itself, and grew rusty and fading. But it had answered its purpose — it had maintained its place as long as the festive season lasted, and then the window which contained it was suddenly thrown up, and the chaplet was thrown among other rubbish into the street!

As with quiet gaze I looked upon it, I too saw an emblem of worldly friendships. It was no more suggestive of Christian faith; for the place it now occupied was but an emblem of fallen greatness, of short-lived remembrances, and of cast-off beauty. And while I moralized, a little tattered beggar picked up the relic, and with her cold and benumbed fingers sought to place it around the crown of her bruised and faded bonnet. Then with a lightsome tread she made her way to yonder attic, where the puny baby tore it in pieces upon the cold hearthstone. Thus ended the cast-off evergreen!

Shall I weaken your impression, kind reader, by an analogous picture? Have you never seen the protected child growing up amidst silent influences, maturing year by year in a steady growth — the pride of parental fostering, throwing out the tendrils of affection, dreaming only of merry days, while the soft waters went murmuring by, and in their placid, unruffled flow seemed to image only the innocent thoughts and face of him who stood upon the brink of the stream? By and by comes a rough breeze, and the image is no longer reflected. The world has called him out of that peaceful home, and he mingles in a new and heated atmosphere. For a time he is unmindful that he has severed the root from which he drew his healthful nutriment. He plunges into the

strange glare of brilliant and festive life. He lives in an excited and pestilential miasma. By slow degrees his moral principles are undermined; he is enfeebled, perhaps bloated, perchance fevered, with the association. But, alas, he has withered at the root, and men cast him out like the worthless evergreen!

Is it not so with the devotee at fashion's shrine? So long as with princely fortune one gives and returns the merry dance, and provides sumptuously at the festive board, is he not sought, caressed and flattered? But remove the gilded show which his ample fortune supplies; let him now buffet the fierce gales which only plunge him still deeper in the dark shades of poverty, and is he not, too, "cast off" as the evergreen?

Alas, that man should be rigid and cold with his brother, even as nature with her rough winds and fearful tornadoes, which sometimes destroy the richest treasures! The little wild-flower, that grows so comely in its silent retreat, untouched by foreign hands, puts forth its tender branches and shuns the vulgar eye, content to bloom in some guardian shade. The morning and evening sun smile upon it; its honeyed blossoms scent the desert air; but the unpitying frosts of autumn leave no vestige of the flower. It came from nothing, and to nothing it has returned!

But here my analogy fails. *We* are born into an endless life, and if we suffer ourselves through our own misconduct to be "cast off," we cannot smother or annihilate our life. Consciousness, once awakened, never dies. But if, by adherence to the firm root of principle, we fearlessly tread life's thorny passages, and find ourselves

"cast out" in the conflict, no whirlwind or earthquake can destroy the germinating principle; for, unlike the frail duration of the flower, or the decay of the evergreen, we shall yet ripen beneath a more congenial sky, under the guardianship and sunshine of a Father's protecting love.

THE WELL-ORDERED HOUSE.

MY friend has been two years building a house, in order to surround himself with every convenience and comfort that can possibly be brought within his range. It is just completed, and is pronounced a perfect model. The most exquisite taste is now being displayed in the furniture. He has imported the finest specimens of marble busts, the most antique vases, and some of the rarest specimens of paintings which an Italian artist could bring out on canvas. And, when the whole shall be completed, he intends to invite a numerous party of friends to inspect it; for he is a little vain of the perfect specimen he is thus enabled to exhibit.

Yet, after all, my friend is not a good householder. The splendid out-building which holds his body has furnished him with no suitable apartment, well fitted up, to hold that invisible mind which is still vacant, or filled with a thousand fancies which make him in a constant state of unrest. He, therefore, walks his splendid halls, and traverses his magnificent drawing-rooms, where the mirrors only reflect his discontented countenance, and the wan, haggard, look of despair. Evidently, he is still in a dilapidated state; the real tenement in which he lives is suffering for want of repairs. There are a thousand vexatious disquietudes,

which this outside show does not remove; vacant chambers, which need to be furnished; large spare rooms, that need to be brushed and ventilated, and set in order, for the guests that temporarily reside there.

The poor man, upon whom he has just bestowed his alms, looks somewhat puzzled to interpret that despairing glance he cast towards him; he is at a loss, moreover, to interpret the strange ordering of Providence in these seeming inequalities of condition. "With that house, those luxurious couches, servants to do his bidding, plenty of money wherewith to anticipate every want," the poor man queries, "why does he not look more like a happy man?" He turns away from that massive granite dwelling, and down in yonder alley he carries the dollar just given him, and distributes its avails among a swarm of hungry children with whom he lodges. They are not his own; but the feeling of pity inspired him this morning to beg in his own name for them. The food is procured; and those faces, which hunger has made lean and wan, now brighten with gratitude, and they bless the kind old man who was so thoughtful as to give them this bountiful breakfast. This blessing sends a thrill of transport through an infinite number of fibres, which lights up the love in his heart, and makes him the happiest benefactor in the world. They all eat their meal together, and sunshine plays around the board. There are merriment and jocund hilarity; and the youngest climbs his knee, and repeats her little hymn of gratitude.

The rich man took his meal alone. There was a service of silver upon his table; the smoking Mocha was distilled for an epicurean taste, yet the flavor was un-

heeded; the hot roll was scarcely tasted, for he was fast becoming a dyspeptic; and the bit of sirloin was only cut in small atoms from about the centre. He moved away his chair, gave a deep sigh, rang the bell for the removal of his delicacies, and paced his dining-room with a heavy heart. He, too, wondered why he was left a prey to such sad forebodings; why life had lost all its sweetness, and he should thus fall a wreck within his marble palace. Evidently he had taken better care of his outward tenement than of that within. One half the attention paid to regulating his idle fancies, to forgetfulness of self in some effort to relieve another, together with a cultivation of those social qualities which would gladden his heart, would have made him what he so earnestly desires to be, namely, a happy man.

And so people look on and condemn riches as the bane of personal enjoyment in many instances; as hardening the heart, and making people morose and churlish. It is not the mine of gold which necessarily produces this result; but rather, in our efforts to amass it, we so neglect the interior condition of our dwelling, as to be incapable of afterwards enjoying ourselves when most ready to do so.

I have a friend, too, who is not a good housekeeper. Her home is the abode of neatness and precision. A single cobweb could not be found in all her house. She is forever reàrranging, remodelling, and beautifying her external condition; yet she has great unrest within. A petty vexation, a small anxiety, may so ruffle her feelings, that in that capacious and well-ordered dwelling there shall be no inward peace for the day. Plainly, trifles have acquired such a sway over her feelings, that she is

unable to rise above them. You can trace that assumed cheerfulness; beneath it lies a world of harassing thoughts, and a disquietude with which her friends may be familiar; but they can never know its hidden depth. Life to her is all a cloud; there is a painful intensity in living. The enjoyment which her ample means might furnish is rarely felt, simply because she has never removed the cobwebs and dust which have so frightfully accumulated within. Had the mirror, which so often reflected her varied apparel but shown her the deformity within; had that small beginning of indulgence in an ill-tempered thought been subdued; had that wayward fancy been subjugated and controlled by reason; in one word, had she sought for strength from above to enable her to combat successfully with these inward foes, undoubtedly she might have become as efficient an interior housekeeper as she is now an outward one.

Alas for us that we know ourselves so imperfectly! We talk about being "intimately acquainted with our friends;" we analyze their motives, and pass judgment upon their actions; but what in truth do we know of our "*own interior life*"? And, yet, it is this which makes all our world; our whole prosperity centres *here*. There would be much more significance in our inquiring after the prosperity of the soul, than the health of the body. Indeed, the former quite frequently determines the state of the latter. So that, merely in a selfish view, to become happy and well, it behoves us to regulate our interior dwelling.

Take, for example, the dyspeptic man or woman. You may compound for them all the drugs in the medical

vocabulary; but, with that mind "ill at ease," you can no more effect a cure than you can cause the sun to shine at midnight. Hence, physicians so frequently recommend a change of objects as most beneficial, something which removes the moping melancholy of ill-assorted thoughts; in one word, the refurnishment of our secret apartments, which have become so blackened and shattered. Yet, after all, the mere journey from one continent to another may only be a temporary alleviation of our inward distresses. It may varnish over the unsightly spots; but they will reappear in coming time, unless a more radical application is made. The truth is, we are tempest-tost; we have lost our chart, and know not our latitude; and we need the efficient aid of more than a *human pilot*. The mind does not receive permanent rest by change of place. Have we not long enough tried the experiment? The spiritual appetite must be fed upon spiritual food. We crave that nutriment, and yet vainly, nay madly, seek to appease our hunger by attention to the mere shell which encases all that is truly ill-conditioned. We build our houses, make our feasts, go out in quest of social intercourse, or shut ourselves in well-stored libraries. Yet watch yourself, my friend, when all these allurements have ceased, and you are alone with yourself. What is the foundation of your future hopes? You have plans for coming time, unquestionably; but do they not all take hold of unsubstantial enjoyments? The partial deception may gloss over your real needs for a brief period; but you are a prodigal, and, until you come to *yourself*, no permanent peace awaits you. Empty, then, and sweep your interior dwelling. Place a mirror there

that shall faithfully disclose your true character. Regulate the furniture, and keep it in order. Subdue those extravagant fancies which cause your unrest. Keep your thoughts tranquil. Do not postpone this new arrangement whereby your prosperity is secured. Would it not just now be a favorable time to inspect this inner dwelling, and attend to repairing its condition? It is better than any gift which a friend may bestow. It is better than beautifying, by costly presents, your friends' apartments; yet such an inspection shall so reveal the extent of means whereby your generosity shall be displayed, that every proper token shall be bestowed; for the soul's prosperity never curtails generous impulses, since, in its spacious chambers, it admits every true principle, and hospitably entertains every well-conditioned guest.

IN A "WORRY."

SOME people seem only to *worry* out existence. They have all external means of enjoyment, yet they are never at ease. A lady of this character, with ability to procure herself every outward enjoyment, was lately congratulated upon her freedom from all vexatious and annoying trials. "Why," said she, "I'm full of trouble. I am always in a 'worry' about 'Isaac'; when he returns from sea I can enjoy nothing, because I know he is going again; when he is at sea, I am always expecting to hear he is dead, or cast on some desolate island." Yet "Isaac" was not her husband, but an adopted nephew, upon whom so much sympathy was lavished.

Another friend I could name is always tried, or "worried," with her domestic troubles. "Bridget got up late," or "Netty goes out too often," or "Ned is becoming a careless driver;" and, between seeking comfort and finding it, life becomes a very wearisome affair, and is entirely fretted away in relating troubles that have been lived over. What a pity it is that we are so forgetful of the laws of inward peace as to brood over the past, talk about its evils, and thus make them ever present!

Then, there is another class who are always "worried" about what no human foresight can prevent. An east wind, a hot day, a sudden shower, a dense fog, or a heavy

dew, all alike vex them. Allowing such things to prey on the spirits, makes us very disagreeable companions. Who would select such a one for a travelling friend? Who would take such a *one for life*? When a man considers how much his comfort is concerned with a wife's temper,—how she leads him through life's rough places, with a violent or gentle hand,—before he chooses his future destiny, let him consider. The embryo of the woman is often seen in the child. Petulant, ungovernable, indulged children do not always rise above the natural propensities of early years when they arrive at womanhood; neither does the surly, rough lad, often become the agreeable gentleman. Yet, upon the disposition to meet the everyday discipline of life, depends all our enjoyment. A calm, trusting spirit, a forbearing, hopeful temper, a countenance where smiles predominate,—who would fear to unite with such a one? The happiest effect upon a whole life often follows a well-matched pair. The mild and amiable graces will blunt the rough edges and the awkward manners of one nearest our hearts; for the magic influence of sympathy is electric, and assimilation often produces the admirable traits we come in contact with, and a likeness is imperceptibly stamped upon the character. It has been said (I know not how truly), that gazing upon the benign expression of the portrait of a deceased and beloved friend, will, in time, produce a calm and serene expression upon the gazer; so indelible is the stamp, that the soul of our friend becomes mirrored in our own. Away, then, with "worrying," fretting trifles; they mar the beauty of the human countenance, and eat, like canker, into the soul.

THE FADED LEAF.

It was only *a leaf* which riveted my attention, — a dried, sere, yellow leaf! It fell from yonder tree, whose luxuriant shade had so softened and mellowed the bright rays of the morning sun, during the hot and sultry days of midsummer. It made but one of the thousand which had helped to form the deep shadow, and it was the first to fall; yet it seemed possessed of a restless activity, now it had dropped from its former companions. The slightest wind wafted it under busy feet; anon it rose again, as a higher gust came; then it whirled along the thronged street down the shallow ravine; and, after fluttering and dancing like a thing of joyous life, it was borne into the watery current and floated down the narrow stream into a vast reservoir, where it disappeared forever!

Just after the fall of the leaf, I missed hundreds of its companions; at length they all disappeared, and only the bare branches and barren trunk stood, unclothed and unsheltered, alone! Nature, as if prodigal of her monitions, put on a sterner countenance; and chilly winds and clouded skies, and heavy storms, succeeded; so that her summer smile was followed by strong indications of her inflexible purpose to change her universal aspect;

and, added to these, came an inscrutable dispensation of Providence. In yonder apartment was the friend of my summer hours, who had stood with me beneath the spreading foliage of the desolate tree, and she too was smitten by a sudden disease, which caused her to wither like the frail leaf. Many tendrils of affection were entwined around her; loving hearts and ministering hands were there; but the common decree, that causes the leaf to fall, had likewise been passed upon her. She too faded, withered, and fell. We bore her to her last resting-place among the rustling leaves and tall branches of desolate trees, and, with a few clods of earth, we raised a mound, under which she securely sleeps. And where was the *spirit*, with its unceasing activity, as it floated down the current of life? Did it wander, like the leaf, void of companionship, till it plunged into a vast abyss, and there met its final extinction? It could not answer me one of the thousand queries which I would fain know. But nature again spake; that leafless tree was only preparing itself, by stripping its foliage, for a greener dress and more luxuriant shade; its branches were resting awhile, to expand and strengthen themselves, and reappear in still more beauteous attire. This *seeming decay* was not, then, *real*; the going away of my friend was only a preparation for higher life. "But why," said a lovely form, that gently whispered in my ear, and whom I knew to be an angel, "why gatherest thou thy strength from the decaying, restless monuments of nature alone? Hast thou no higher revelation of the God of nature? Has he not sent a messenger to dissipate the darkness of the tomb, and to teach thee that it is meet

the corruptible should put on immortality by this apparent death? That spirit is now surrounded by ministering angels, and, having been welcomed by its Saviour into unknown regions of delight, after feasting awhile amidst the seraphic joys of its new existence, will have a mission such as glorified spirits only can perform. A life of useful, beneficial activity on earth, peculiarly trained that soul for its celestial employment in heaven. Thy friend is still near thee; heaven is no distant place." And while I listened and wondered, the spirit fled, and my gaze was only fixed upon a little white speck of cloud, wherein the vision entered and passed away forever. So Nature was swallowed up in Revelation, and I went on my way cheerfully, but thoughtfully; for I knew that in a little time a greater company would be gathered, and the tendrils which now clustered around my heart would be broken, and I, too, should long to join in the blessed society.

Then I, was glad the leaf had fallen, and I murmured no longer that my friend had departed; for Nature and Revelation were but handmaids to each other, and both spake by the same great teacher, Death.