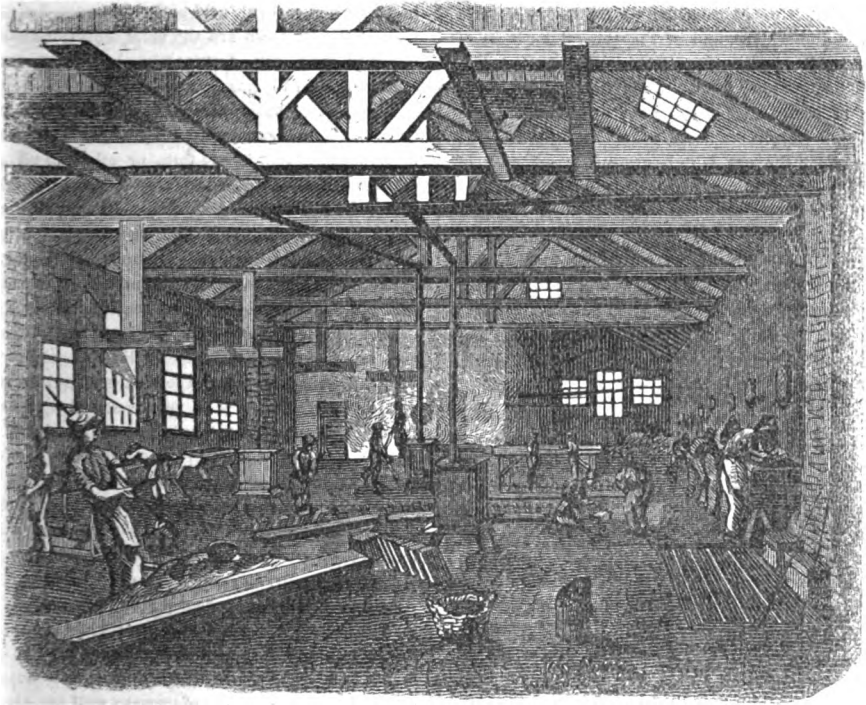


GODEY'S LADY'S BOOK.

PHILADELPHIA, MARCH, 1853.

EVERYDAY ACTUALITIES.—NO. VIII
ILLUSTRATED WITH PEN AND GRAVER.

BY C. F. HINCKLEY.



CASTING-SHOP OF MESSRS. CORNELIUS, BAKER, & CO.'S GAS-FIXTURE ESTABLISHMENT.

THE MANUFACTURE OF GAS AND GAS-FIXTURES.

THE invention of gas is of comparatively recent date, it being in the year 1739 that the Rev. Mr. Clayton made the first experiments in extracting from coal, by means of heat, a permanently elastic fluid of an inflammable nature. Human observation has been directed, in all ages, to a means of procuring light after the rays of the sun have been with-

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drawn from the earth. A lighted pine or fagot was the first device used. That was found to be defective; and fatty substances, with a wick inserted in their mass, were used instead, which means of artificial light remained stationary for ages. Various patterns of lamps were used by various ages, but they all acquired their illuminating powers from as various kinds of oils or fatty substances. It was not until the year mentioned above that an idea was formed of making, from one of the minerals

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MARRYING THROUGH PRUDENTIAL MOTIVES.

BY MARY VALE.

"My dear Mrs. Elmer," said I, taking my seat at her feet, as her visitor, a sentimental young lady of the first water, left the room, "did I not hear you express a disbelief in first love?"

"I suspect it was the name of a favorite author that attracted your attention, rather than any remark of mine. I merely read the following extract from one of his letters:* 'Assure yourself that scarce one person out of twenty marries his first love, and scarce one out of twenty of the remainder has cause to rejoice at having done so. What we love in those early days is generally rather a fanciful creation of our own than a reality. We build statues of snow, and weep when they melt.' In my opinion, this consummate reader of human nature never penned a truer paragraph than this."

"I do not understand you," said I, puzzled. Like most young ladies, I had formed a grand theory of "first, unchangeable, eternal love," and did not quite relish its destruction. "I believe that many, after being disappointed in their first affection, marry through prudential motives; but I cannot believe that such unions can be happy."

"You display a romantic contempt for 'prudential motives.' I should be sorry were you to marry with any other. I hope that they alone influenced me."

My astonishment increased tenfold. I had always regarded Mrs. Elmer as a pattern of conjugal affection, and had inwardly resolved that, if I ever married, I would strive to select a husband who should resemble hers in manly devotion, goodness, and intelligence, only he should be far handsomer. My mind instantly seized upon this want of beauty as the cause which, at the time of her marriage, had prevented love from mingling with the motives which had induced her to accept him.

"You are bewildered, I see," she said, with an amused look at my face. "I have shocked your refined notions of matrimony most terribly, and, to get myself into favor again, shall have to tell you a real love story—of first love, too."

"When I was about your age—and, if you will excuse me, I will add, in some respects quite as nonsensical; even more perhaps, since I was an only and petted child—I resided in a small inland town in the interior of the State. The society of B— was better and more select than is generally to be found in so retired a place; and, although at a dis-

tance from the metropolis, a tri-weekly stage, which brought us the newspapers, and the arrival of 'Godey' once a month, kept us from falling entirely behind the times and the fashions. The entry of the mail-coach was, as it always is in a village, an event of great importance, even if it were empty; but one day the interest of the public was raised to the highest pitch by the appearance of a passenger, who alighted at the hotel and ordered his baggage to be removed. In the course of half an hour's conversation with the landlord, he announced his intention to become a citizen of B—. He had just been admitted to the bar, and had heard that there was a good opening there for such an one, the principal lawyer of the place having died a short time before.

"For several days nothing was talked of but the late arrival. 'Lawton's' puns were quoted by the young men, his opinion of trade by the papas, his respectful and deferential demeanor praised by the mammas, while the daughters exhausted their stock of superlatives in describing his bright eyes, sweet smile, and enchanting whiskers. In short, Mr. Lawton became at once the great man of our 'little Utica;' and, like most other lions, paid dearly for his honors by lending a patient ear to all quarrels, domestic and public, and, no matter how pressing his business engagements might be, holding himself in readiness to play the part of chief guest at every pleasure-party and merry-making.

"It was at one of these last that I first met him. I had half made up my mind to dislike him. I had pictured him as conceited, and foppish, and was resolved to show the good people of B— that they had been making fools of themselves only to gratify his self-love. He should see, too, that one of them at least was not to be blinded by high-flown speeches and outside show. Accordingly, I did not look towards the end of the room, where I knew he was stationed, for nearly an hour after I entered. I had been indisposed for a week or two previous, and therefore had never met him even at church. At length, I was led to the piano by one who had been our Adonis until recently, and whom I now treated with more affability than I had ever before shown. I had played several pieces, and sung divers songs, which were named by the company; there was a pause in the demand, and I took advantage of it to sing my favorite, and what I intended should be the last before quitting the music-stool. It was 'Moore's Farewell.' In the thoughts inspired by the exqui-

* Sir Walter Scott.

sitely mournful words and music, I had almost forgotten the presence of others, when, chancing to raise my eyes, I encountered a gaze which startled and confused me: I could not tell why. Standing at one corner of the instrument, almost facing me, and bending slightly forward, as if to drink in every note, was a young man, a stranger, and handsome enough to satisfy even your fastidious taste. You like portraits, and I will describe him as he then appeared to me.

"He was tall, with a figure of the most graceful proportions, walking and moving as if he had been the monarch of the universe; raven hair, not curling, but waving around a fine, thoughtful brow; eyes that flashed and glowed at times, until I hardly dared look at them, and anon seemed melting into tenderness; perfect teeth, and a smile which even now I must acknowledge was singularly sweet. I did not make these observations at first, for I looked away instantly, but could feel that his regards were fixed on me still. He remained motionless until I ceased singing, and then walked slowly away. In a few seconds, the lady of the house, bringing him up to me, introduced Mr. Lawton. This was done, I know, by special request, since the worthy hostess had several marriageable daughters, and never was known to neglect their interests for the momentary gratification of a guest, and I was sufficiently well acquainted with her to read chagrin in her eyes as she presented him. This proof of admiration, coupled to the one he had already given me, softened somewhat my determination to treat him coldly; and, had these failed, his address must have disarmed me. His voice, when addressing a lady, was 'ever soft and low, an excellent thing' in man as well as woman, and his manner on this occasion respectful almost to timidity. He stood by me for a short time, making remarks and replying to mine with distant gravity, until a rather lively observation from me caused him to turn his eyes to my face with a smile, at the same time responding in a gayer tone. The ice was now broken; he soon drew a chair to my side, and moved no more during the remainder of the evening.

"If I had been pleased with his appearance and manner, I was charmed with the insight which his conversation gave me into his mind. I have always cordially detested the soft nothings and chit-chat with which the other sex are wont to regale us. I had rather be fed all my life upon syllabubs and whipt creams. Lawton's first approach to this interesting compound was obnoxious by a remark similar to this, but couched, I dare say, in more elegant terms; for, in those days, I prided myself upon what I conceived to be the perfect propriety of my language. He took the hint, and at once led the conversation into other channels, touching lightly upon different topics until his quick eye assured him that he had found one peculiarly interesting to me. He spoke of music, and from this, by a most natural

transition, we wandered to poetry, from poetry to romance and works of a graver nature. I was now completely in my element. From my earliest childhood I had been an indefatigable bookworm, devouring everything that came within my reach; my brain was filled with a mass of heterogeneous lore, crowded in without order; but I could generally find a little knowledge of almost any subject.

"My love of poetry amounted almost to a passion, and gave a tone to my whole character. I was not in the habit of displaying my treasures to those whom I considered cold and prosaic, sordid and heartless; but I had now met with one who could appreciate me. With great tact, he drew me, as it were, out of myself, and I was not aware how completely engaged I had been until a movement of departure throughout the room warned me of the lateness of the hour. I arose.

"'You are not going yet, surely?' said my companion, in a tone of surprise. 'It is very early.'

"I held up my watch. He affected great wonderment, and begged to be allowed the pleasure of attending me home.

"'Do you know,' said I, as he assisted me to put on my cloak, 'that, if our conversation of the last hour has been overheard, we have lost, irretrievably lost our reputation as followers of the *bon ton*? I am alone to blame, as you are a comparative stranger, yet I thought that you had resided here long enough to know that it is high treason in a gentleman to speak of literature to a lady. It is regarded as an insinuation that there are things in the world worthy of attention besides herself. Do not think me ill-natured. I only say this to show that my fault was not one of ignorance of established rules, which is, in such a case, a more heinous sin than wilful transgression.'

"'I am not so ignorant as you imagine,' he answered. 'I flatter myself that I am already *au fait* to the court rules of B—. This I speedily discovered to be one of the most imperative, and have met with no temptation to break it until to-night. At least,' he continued, 'I shall have a companion in misfortune; for, if I am convicted of pedantry, you will not escape the title of "blue."'

"I did not rest well that night; my dreams were troubled by the picture of a stern schoolmaster, whose every third word was Greek or Latin, and myself seated by his side, in solemn state, with an immense black letter tome in my lap, and my feet covered with a pair of indigo stockings. But then a voice murmured, 'At least, I have a companion in misfortune;' and I turned to meet the laughing glance of my new acquaintance.

"He made his first call a day or two afterwards, and from that time was a constant visitor. I was, remember, very young, and new to the world, my knowledge of which was drawn from romances, all of which assured me that life without love was naught. I had long treasured in my secret soul an

ideal being, whom I had endowed with every grace and virtue, and I now found myself repeating—

‘But from that first hour I met thee,
All caught real life from you.

The more I thought of it, the more firmly convinced was I that this extraordinary windfall, dropped, as it were, at my very feet, was designed by my good genius for my especial benefit. I can truly say that I made no effort to attract him. I looked with contemptuous amusement upon the manœuvres and lures of my young companions, never feeling jealous of any attention which they might extort, well knowing that, although he might linger with them for a while, he would ere long be found again by my side. I even delighted to appear perfectly indifferent when in their presence, and I have since thought that he was himself deceived by my manner, and piqued into an attempt to inspire other feelings.

“Time flew on, and the gossips of the town began to wonder if we were engaged, and, if not, why he delayed the declaration. But none of these things troubled me. I was only too happy to have him near me, to feel his eyes fixed on me as if reading my very soul, to mark how widely his manner to me differed from his deportment to others, to pour into an ever attentive ear the thoughts and feelings that fear of ridicule had hitherto led me to conceal within my own bosom. Of love we never spoke; but he wore a gently protecting air, as if he felt that he had a right to guide and support me, while I looked up to him with a confiding tenderness—a little singular in one by nature so high-spirited and independent. I heard that he was at times petulant, even passionate; some called him a heartless trifter; and all agreed that he was conceited—except myself. Who had a better right to know and understand him than I? Yet I saw nothing of all these faults; and, if they had existed, I felt that I could have loved him better perhaps, for the distance between us would have been lessened. So I set these remarks down to the score of envy, and smiled complacently at my keen discernment of character and motives.

“Matters were in this train when I one day received a call from Miss Noyes, ‘the belle,’ as she was called, a distinction to which she was by no means insensible or indifferent. She treated me with an unwonted degree of affection and sociability, which I knew presaged something peculiarly disagreeable.

“‘Do you go to Mrs. Henderson’s party to-morrow night?’ she inquired, presently.

“‘I expect to attend,’ said I.

“‘No doubt your presence will be very agreeable to most of the company; but I know a few who would rather you would remain at home. There are a set of designing misses who can never forgive your monopoly of the only decent beau fate has granted us; or I should say that he monopolizes

you, since I have never seen that desire for his attentions which he says you have shown.’

“Half of this speech, smoothly and innocently as it was delivered, would have sufficed to make my blood boil. In a voice choked with passion, I ejaculated—

“‘I desire his attentions!’

“‘Forgive me, my love; I would not wound or excite your feelings for the world; but, as a friend, I repeat this that you may refute the false charge, not by words, but by actions. The remark I alluded to I heard myself; and he added, the scandalous fellow, that he was too old a bird to be caught with chaff.’

“With a mighty effort, I commanded myself sufficiently to thank her for her disinterested kindness, and assure her that, if an opportunity offered, I should gladly reciprocate the favor. She took her leave, and I gave way to my feelings. Disappointed love, mortified pride, and resentment strove for mastery in my breast. The latter triumphed; and, with glowing cheeks, I hastened to my toilet, resolving to make him feel to the utmost the mortification he would have me experience. Never had I bestowed such pains upon my person. I carefully laid aside every article of dress or ornament that he particularly admired, taking care, however, to replace them by others equally becoming. My stern determination was nearly overcome by a very beautiful bouquet which was handed me just as I was ready to go. The tears rushed to my eyes; but I drove them back, and, without looking for the delicate note of compliments which I knew lay *perdue* among the leaves, I tossed it into the fire.

“The first person that I saw upon entering the room was Miss Noyes, who, ‘lapped in Elysium,’ was listening to the sugared sentences poured into her white ear by the ‘scandalous fellow’ whose conduct she had deprecated. His face lighted up instantly, but I affected not to see him. Half an hour more saw me engaged in a rattling flirtation with a young naval officer now on a visit to B—. We promenaded, and I swept past Lawton hanging on the middy’s arm, apparently in the finest humor with myself and my new conquest. The conversation of my companion was the flattest of small talk; but I listened as to the wisdom of a Solon. I ventured one look at Lawton as we passed him for the twentieth time. He had left Miss Noyes, and leaned against the wall, silent and moody. I declined walking any longer when we reached the other end of the room, and threw myself upon a sofa. The middy pouted, and I recollected that his fine figure and bright buttons could not be seen to much advantage in this retired corner, and sent him to borrow a fan from a lady some distance off. He requested it in his own name, and she, of course did not resign it without a little coquettish trifling, which occupied some time.

"'You are enjoying yourself much to-night,' said a voice at my elbow.

"I bowed assentingly, gazing with much interest at the gold lace upon the officer's collar.

"'I am not,' he said, in a lower tone.

"I dared not trust myself to speak, but looked as frigid as an iceberg.

"'I cannot be happy when I fear that I have alienated a friend,' he continued, with a perseverance that surprised me; 'and it is very evident that such is the case with you. I know you too well to suspect you of caprice, and therefore blame myself, although unconscious of my offence. You were wont to be frankness itself. Will you not explain the cause of your changed manner? I am ready to make any apology or reparation that will place us upon our former friendly footing.'

"My gallant tar returned with the fan, and, like a booby as he was, handed it to Lawton, supposing that he had usurped his place, and steered off in search of another prize. A *tête-à-tête* was unavoidable. I felt my inability to hold out much longer, and abruptly answered—

"'Do not trouble yourself to render apologies; from such a source, and under such circumstances, they would be even more worthless than chaff; and, to use your own elegant phrase, "old birds cannot be caught with that."'

"'My own phrase! You surprise me. I do not understand,' said he in such genuine wonderment that I could not doubt his words. 'Ellen, there is something wrong here.'

"It was the first time he had ever addressed me by this name.

"'I will know what it is,' he pursued, planting himself firmly in front of me; and the rigid cross-examination that ensued, indeed, elicited the truth, all except the name of my informant. 'Answer me but one question: Was it a man?' he demanded, fiercely.

"'It was not.'

"'And pray what lady stands so high in your estimation that you will receive from her a tale like this, of one who has never given you cause to doubt his word or honor?'

"Again I refused to gratify him, and he contented himself with an explicit and indignant denial of the charge. From this moment we were closer friends than ever. Often since has my cheek crimsoned at the thought that, on this occasion, I fairly challenged a declaration; but then I was too ignorant, as well as happy, to think of it.

"The winter passed, spring, summer; and the frost began to give signs of the decline of the year. It was the day preceding my birthday, and my ever-indulgent parents had promised me a *fête* upon that occasion. Night had closed in, and I sat alone in the parlor, my father and mother having gone to see a sick neighbor. I lay upon a lounge, my eyes closed, and my mind filled with bright anticipations

and rosy dreams. A knock at the door made me start; it was a gentle tap, but one that I had emphatically learned by heart. I stood in trembling expectation until a servant ushered in the visitor. My heart was a true prophet. He saluted me with more cordiality than usual, and tried to talk of indifferent subjects; yet I could see that his thoughts were wandering. After an hour spent in this manner, he looked at his watch, started up, sat down, then rising again, with a desperate attempt at composure, asked me for his favorite song. It was the same that I was singing when I first met his eye, and he had told me that the feeling manner in which I had executed it had attracted him to the piano. He played finely on the flute, and was accustomed to accompany me, but now declined. 'He would rather hear my voice alone.'

"'Thank you,' he said, sighing, as I concluded. 'I shall never hear that song without thinking of you; and it is with deep sadness that I reflect that this is the last time I shall hear it from your lips for years—perhaps forever.'

"I felt myself growing faint; I did not speak; and he went on to explain that he had been chosen *attaché* to a foreign embassy, had that day heard of the appointment, and should be forced to leave town early the next morning.

"In all probability, I shall be absent four years, possibly for a longer period. In some respects, this change will be highly advantageous and agreeable to me; but I have, in my sojourn here, formed friendships that it pains me to break. I have not a moment to spare this evening; but I could not leave without thanking you for the kindness I have received under this roof. It has seemed, not an abode of strangers, but like my own dear home. Believe me, my dear Miss Ellen, whatever may be the events and changes of my future life, I shall ever cherish fondly the remembrance of the happy hours I have spent with you. In the beautiful words you have just sung—

"Let Fate do her worst, there are relics of joy,
Bright gleams of the past, which she cannot destroy;
But which come in the night-time of sorrow and care,
To bring back the features that joy used to wear."

"Scarcely knowing what I did, I accompanied him to the door; murmured a few parting words in answer to his affectionate farewell. My hand lay for an instant in his—was respectfully raised to his lips—the next moment I was alone. I strained my eyes to watch his figure through the thick darkness, and listened to the echo of his hasty step upon the pavement until it died away in the distance.

"And this was the end of my fairy dreams! Gone, gone, and forever! rang in my ears as I sank upon a seat in the piazza and bowed my head upon my hands. I did not weep; I was too wretched. A cold autumnal rain was falling; the drizzling mist lay heavily upon my hair and dress; I did not re-

gard it; I even bared my brow to the damp air to cool its feverish throbbing, and as the night wind moaned through the fading vines, I thought of the churchyard, and wished that that breeze rustled the grass over my unconscious head. The sound of voices aroused me; they were those of my parents at a little distance. I hastily sought my chamber, but not to sleep.

"The morning found me calmer. One thing was uppermost in my mind: none should know my disappointment. I will not weary you with the details of the long-wished-for festival, the very thought of which was now sickening to me. I forced myself to go through with it; arrayed in my gala attire, played the smiling hostess and light-hearted girl; even listened unflinchingly to Miss Noyes's lamentations over what she called 'our mutual and irreparable loss.' One circumstance relieved me in a measure, since it showed that no one suspected my real sentiments. Lawton was known to have honored me with a parting call, and rumor said that one cause of his sudden departure was my rejection of his suit. My indifference, on being rallied on the subject, confirmed the impression. Necessity and pride taught me dissimulation. I brooded over my griefs in silence; in the presence of others was extravagantly gay. My health began to suffer from this unnatural state of mind, and with secret delight I saw each morning the change that a day had made in my appearance; my cheek grew paler, and my eye more dim. It would be a beautiful piece of constancy to die for his sake! I pictured him when, at his return, he should learn that I was no more; his surprise, grief, and remorse. In a secret drawer of my cabinet, lay a parcel directed to him, 'not to be opened until after my death.' It contained sundry notes, unimportant in themselves, but sacred in my eyes, together with dried flowers, and one or two trifles presented by him. A farewell letter was to be added, and this was to be written in due time.

"One day I felt more languid than usual, and considered that I had better begin this precious document while I had strength. Accordingly, I had seated myself at my desk, and dipped my pen in the ink, when a rap at the door made me drop it upon the paper, thereby causing a frightful blot. In no amiable mood, I obeyed a summons from my father, who, the servant said, awaited me in the parlor.

"My friend, Mr. Elmer, my dear," he said, as I entered; and a young man bowed whom I had never seen before.

"I had, a few days previous, heard my father speak of a certain Rupert Elmer, son of an old crony of his, who had written to inquire if the station Lawton had occupied were yet vacant. 'And he thinks to fill his place!' was my first thought. 'What presumption!' You need no description of my new acquaintance; the few years that have elapsed since the time of which I speak have produced little

change in him. In person he differed widely from his predecessor, and in character not less. Somewhat to my vexation, he, at my father's earnest solicitation, became an inmate of our house, and I was thus thrown into daily intercourse with him. I treated him with frigid politeness, which he met with unvarying courtesy, not strained, but proceeding from the innate kindness of his heart.

"My manner altered by degrees; I no longer availed myself of every opportunity to escape from the room, and seek the companionship of my own sad thoughts. My heart was still too full of the memory of the absent to think of another, and I could not join in the encomiums passed every day in my hearing upon the amability and intelligence of the new-comer; but I began to look upon him as a pleasant, good young man, whose conversation might be agreeable when one had nothing better to engage the attention. He took less notice of me than of any other member of the household, held mamma's silks and sketched patterns for her embroidery, and read aloud to papa. He read well, and his manner, more than the beauty of the style, caused me to listen with pleasure. He was popular; why, I could not tell; he was too straightforward and candid to be a ladies' man, and detested sycophancy too heartily to seek patronage. Yet his coming was always hailed with pleasure, and he soon obtained a thriving practice.

"My selfish sorrows were interrupted by real affliction. My father was taken ill with a lingering fever, that slowly dried the blood in his veins and wasted his strength. My mother, always delicate, was soon too feeble to render much assistance, and I became his constant attendant. Absorbed in the cares and anxieties of the sick-room, I scarcely noticed who were my companions, and paid no regard to one who hung over the patient sufferer with the devotion of a son and tenderness of a woman. One night, I took my place by the bedside with a spirit worn down with depression. There were no signs of a favorable change, and hope forsook my bosom. I gazed upon the pallid face, and thought how soon the remaining spark of animation would forsake it: the blow, I felt, would be too heavy for the devoted wife. The anticipation was too harrowing; my fortitude gave way, and I burst into tears. My sobs did not break the stupor-like sleep of the invalid; but some one entered hastily through the open door of an adjoining apartment. It was Elmer, who, with an alarmed look, passed to the side of the bed, and pressed his fingers lightly upon the thin wrist that lay upon the coverlet.

"His pulse is feeble, but regular," he whispered, "and his fever is off. I hope—I think he is better. Let me entreat you not to distress yourself."

"I could not answer. With the gentle force of a brother, he led me to the open window, made me drink a glass of water, and, as I grew composed, playfully threatened to give me into the hands of

the physician, if I did not keep my feelings under better control.

"I know it is difficult, especially as you have been tasked beyond your strength. I have watched you with great uneasiness. Will you not be persuaded to rest during the remainder of the night? As I told you before, I think him better; at least, there is no immediate danger. I promise to summon you upon the slightest change. Will you trust me?"

"Mrs. Ainslie is to watch part of the night," said I; "but I shall not retire; I could not sleep. What is my health compared with his?"

"But for his sake you must preserve it."

"And you?" said I, remarking his jaded look for the first time.

"Oh, that is nothing; I am accustomed to it."

"You have been up much lately?" I asked, recollecting that the door through which he had come had been open for several nights, and that in the apartment, the library, I had seen a light.

"I sit up late studying," he rejoined, evading the remark. "But I remember a time when for fourteen nights I did not close my eyes; a time that makes all that I am now able to do seem as nothing."

"You are, then, an experienced nurse."

"I learned in a bitter school: at the death-bed of my own mother." He spoke in a saddened tone.

"I should die, too," said I, glancing at the bed, while tears again filled my eyes. "How could you bear it?"

"I bear it that I may be better fitted to meet her hereafter. She taught me submission to the will of Him who doeth all things right."

"Here the conversation ended for the time. After a vain endeavor again to induce me to rest, he retired, leaving the door slightly ajar. I compared my violent grief with the chastened sorrow of this pious son. His bereavement was recent. I knew; for when he first came to B—— he was dressed in deep mourning, I had never inquired for whom. The invalid stirred in his sleep, I stood by him; and, as I pressed my lip to his brow, inwardly resolved, 'I too will bear it, that I may meet you in a happier world.'

"The much-dreaded blow did not fall; symptoms of amendment appeared, gradually strength and health returned. I was again free to follow my former habits of thought and action, but had little inclination to do so. My feelings had undergone a change; they flowed now in a different channel. I felt the folly of the dreaming, useless life I had led, and set to work in good earnest to effect a reformation, not by my own strength, but with the aid of Him who is ever ready to receive the penitent. Elmer's companionship and counsel were of great benefit to me. By degrees, I learned to look upon him as a dear friend; but the thought of his being anything nearer never occurred to me. Judging from my experience on the subject, I thought love a

mental hallucination. Some writer has remarked, 'There is no anguish like that of an error of which we are ashamed,' and I felt this truth deeply. I regarded Rupert as a brother, and therefore great was my surprise when informed by my father that he had asked his consent to address me. The old gentleman had assured him of his warmest wishes for his success; and, although he forbore to urge me, I saw that his heart yearned to embrace him as a son. Firmly resolved, as I believed myself, not to accept him, I could not bring myself suddenly to disappoint a parent whom I loved so fondly, and avoided giving a direct answer.

"Perplexed and sorrowful, I left him, and sought relief in the open air. Stepping out of the door, I found myself on the very spot where I had parted with Lawton just eight months before. It was a lovely night in June; but I was too perturbed to notice its beauty. Restlessly I paced the piazza, unable to define my own feelings or form any settled determination; the more I thought, the more my first resolve wavered. I considered the character of my lover; in every position of life firm as a rock when duty required, yet, on every other occasion, ready to sacrifice his own pleasures to promote the happiness of others. I dwelt upon his strict integrity, his manly honor and delicacy, his warm friendship.

"A voice pronounced my name, and he was by my side. I did not tremble; my heart felt warmer, but its motion was not quickened. I did not withdraw my hand as he drew it within his arm—in short, my love, there was nothing romantic in the whole affair. We walked beneath the bright moon, and conversed calmly and seriously upon the proposed change in our prospects. All my agitation, the effect of irresolution, was gone. I refused to give a definite reply; but he was not very unhappy when we re-entered the house.

"At the end of the time I had asked for deliberation, during which I had reflected much and solemnly, I yielded my consent; and, a few months after, took the name of him whom I now loved and honored more than any other human being. With a full sense of our own frailties, and an humble dependence upon One who could alone make our life one of peace and happiness, we entered upon our new state, and I can say that my lot has been happy, far more delightful than I deserve."

"But Lawton," said I, drawing a long breath; "did you ever meet him again? Perhaps you would have been equally blest with him."

She shook her head with a half sad smile—

"I have seen him; but my cup was none the less sweet after our meeting. About two years ago, we were returning from a visit to Rupert's relations, who reside in the State of New York. The fashionable summer season was just over, and the steam-boat, as it ploughed its way through the noble Hudson, carried a crowd of living beings within its

bosom. We were seated on the upper deck, enjoying the cool breeze that sprung up at sunset, and admiring the splendid view spread on both sides of us, when I discovered that I had left my reticule in the ladies' saloon. Rupert instantly offered to look for it, and went below accordingly. Just as he disappeared, I became conscious that a pair of eyes were surveying me, from the other side of the boat, with a gaze more eager than polite or agreeable. At length, annoyed by the pertinacious and continued stare, I raised my head and looked the owner of the orbs steadily in the face. There was something strangely familiar about his countenance. Where had I met him before? That he was an acquaintance I could not doubt. My glance perhaps expressed this conviction, for he arose and approached with a smile. I knew him well enough now; that smile brought back a throng of recollections.

"Forgive me; but can I be mistaken in supposing that I address Miss Halland?"

"Mr. Lawton, I believe," I said, as he offered his hand.

"I was perfectly self-possessed, and must have appeared far less delighted at the recognition than he did. He probably had not altered much; but he was so unlike Lawton the ideal, that I did not wonder I had not observed him before. To my no longer blinded eyes he was less stately and graceful; his eyes were keen, but not so beautiful as of old; his voice had little of the melody that had once thrilled my heart; his smile and teeth alone seemed the same. With an air of easy assurance he dropped into the vacant seat beside me.

"You have not changed. I have been watching you for the last half hour in the rain hope of attracting your attention, and had become almost savage in my intentions towards the happy fellow who seemed to interest you so completely. His air of devotion fairly made me jealous. Pray, who is he? Here he comes again."

"With a sensation of proud satisfaction, I introduced 'My husband, Mr. Elmer.'

"Both gentlemen bowed; one with an air of surprise—the other, I thought, rather distantly. Before I could form any conjecture as to the cause of this coldness, he turned to me—

"I met with an old friend just now, to whom I wish to introduce you—Mrs. Lawton. Your lady, I presume, sir?"

"Lawton nodded.

"I promised to conduct you to her," pursued Rupert. "I tried to induce her to come upon deck; but she feared you would not think it prudent," again addressing her liege lord. "She looks delicate; is she an invalid?"

"Not particularly. Like most ladies, she imagines herself nervous and ill. I do not oppose her coming into the air. For my part, I would not be confined to that hot saloon."

"In that case, we will invite her to join us," said my husband, with an expression of more contempt than I had ever before seen in his look; and, offering me his arm, we sought the neglected wife together.

"She was a pretty creature, refined-looking and ladylike. Her voice was sweet; but, to my ear, it had a plaintive tone. She received me cordially, as the wife of her old friend.

"I have not seen Mr. Elmer for several years; but I heard that he was married, and wished much to meet you."

"And to see me play the dignified husband, I suppose?" rejoined he, laughing.

"No; you used to be too good-natured to be dignified; and I doubt whether even marriage could change you."

"I saw Mr. Lawton a moment ago," said Elmer, "and he expressed his willingness, nay, his wish, that you should breathe the fresh air for a while."

"Her face brightened. 'Did he? Certainly I will go, if it will afford him any pleasure.' And she accompanied us.

"Lawton was standing where we left him. The glow of delight still illumined his wife's face, and her eye anxiously sought his; but he did not give her a look. He resumed his conversation with me.

"How long have you been married—may I ask?"

"Four years."

"You have worn the yoke just twice as long as I have. I became a Benedick only two years since.' His scrutinizing gaze again sought my face. 'You look well and happy. In days of "lang syne," you were subject to occasional attacks of *ennui* or low spirits; are you never thus afflicted now?"

"Never. I have grown wiser."

"And yet I should have supposed that increase of care, perhaps of sorrow"—and he lowered his voice—"would have augmented the malady."

"But if additional cares bring also new sources of happiness?" I responded, indignant at his insinuation.

"And such has been your experience?" with another searching glance.

"Unquestionably," was my proud reply.

"I wish I could say the same. To speak truly, I am weary of life, sick of the world, and everything in it."

"Not of everybody, I hope," said I, with a stolen look at Mrs. Lawton, who was talking with Rupert.

"Yes, of everybody. I have learned to regard a hermit's life as the *ne plus ultra* of felicity."

"I saw the pale cheek grow whiter still, and the muscles of the mouth quiver convulsively, and hastened to change the subject.

"Have you visited B— since your return to this country?"

"Once only; that is, I passed through without stopping. I saw the house in which you used to live, and heaved a sigh to the memory of the plea-

sant times we had there together. I often think of those days; they were the happiest of my life. I love to recall each incident. Do you remember the last song you sang for me? That was a sad parting to me.'

"I remembered it all; but the retrospection gave me no pleasure. On the contrary, it filled me with disgust and shame. I was displeased at his familiarity; but a moment's reflection showed me that I had no right to be so. Our former intimacy authorized it. The only wonder was that I should ever have been intimate with him. In the hope of making the conversation general, I turned to his lady. I instantly perceived that the quick ear of affection had caught at least a part of our interchange of histories. The sadness had deepened; but her manner was yet gentle. We spoke of the wild scenery through which we were passing.

"It is indeed magnificent!" said she. 'I can conceive of nothing more grandly beautiful than that view,' pointing as she spoke; 'and the sunbeams play over it as if unwilling to leave so fair a scene. See, the rest of the landscape is shrouded in the gray twilight.'

"Really," said Lawton, sneeringly, 'that last burst of poetry partook of the grandiloquent. Now that you are fairly mounted upon your Pegasus, pray favor us again, and I will take notes of the most "grandly beautiful" passages for the benefit of the public.'

"She blushed deeply, tears of wounded feeling suffused her eyes, and she was compelled to turn aside to conceal her emotion. My heart bled for her; I looked indignantly at the author of this cruel and unmanly speech; but his sarcastic smile showed that he enjoyed the sight of the anguish his words had occasioned. Shrinking from him as from a fiend, my eye fell upon my own noble husband, and the two contrasted. Indignation and pity were expressed in Rupert's countenance. He was silent; but I read his thoughts; and when, at length, his eye beamed on me with a look of unutterable tenderness, and I thought how freely his bosom would be presented to receive a shaft that threatened to pierce mine, I longed to cast myself upon his breast, and, from the fulness of a grateful heart, thank Heaven that I had been saved from the misery which a union with my 'first love' would have brought upon me. As soon as we were alone, I learned more of the history of the unfortunate being who was thus, in the spring-time of life, doomed to such wretchedness.

"I have been acquainted with her from childhood," said Mr. Elmer, 'and a more lovely character I have never seen. We were near neighbors for many years, and upon terms of the closest intimacy; yet I never saw her sweetness of temper disturbed, or heard her speak an unkind word. Idolized by her parents and friends, she inhaled constantly an atmosphere of affection and indulgence. Her feel-

ings were respected and guarded from injury as sacred things. Poor creature! She feels the change as keenly as a tender exotic transplanted from the hothouse into the biting air of a northern winter. I heard of her marriage, her friends feared an unhappy one, with one who, it was said, had sought her for her wealth. I knew his name, but did not dream that it was the Lawton of whose virtues I had heard so much in B—. He must indeed be a villain to treat her as he does. There is nothing congenial in their natures: she is a true-hearted, loving woman, clinging even in the death-struggle of joy and hope to the object of her devotion; he a cold-hearted, brilliant egotist, in love with himself, and despising the rest of his race, except as ministers to his pleasures. She was doubtless attracted by his handsome person and insinuating address, and is now suffering the penalty those must endure who allow such petty considerations to blind their reason and outweigh truth and sterling worth.'

"He little thought that he was describing what would have been my fate, had my ardent wishes once been granted.

"I have not told you this true story, my dear girl, only to amuse you. I have noticed in you a love of the romantic, a longing after sentimental adventure, and a distaste for everything commonplace, which make me tremble for your future happiness. Believe me, who tells you upon the strength of her own experience, that no union can be happy that is not founded upon—obnoxious as is the phrase, I must use it once more—'prudential motives.'"

THE HOMESTEAD.

BY LADD SPENCER.

It is not as it used to be,
When you and I were young;
When round each elm and maple-tree
The honeysuckles clung:
But still I love the cottage where
I passed my early years,
Though not a single face is there
That memory endears.

It is not as it used to be!
The moss is on the roof,
And from their nests beneath the eaves
The swallows keep aloof.
The robins—how they used to sing
When you and I were young;
And how did flit the wild bee's wing
The opening flowers among!

It is not as it used to be!
The voices loved of yore,
And the forms that we were wont to see,
We see and hear no more.
No more! Alas, we look in vain
For those to whom we clung,
And loved, as we can love but once,
When you and I were young.