

# GODEY'S LADY'S BOOK.

PHILADELPHIA, FEBRUARY, 1855.

## FURS FOR THE LADIES; AND HOW THEY ARE OBTAINED.

FUR is a material most abundantly produced in cold countries, where also it is most largely required as a suitable clothing for the inhabitants. It consists of the skins of animals which, for their own protection, are covered with thick, soft hair; and, the colder the climate, the more abundant this provision for their needs. The skins, taken from the animals, having been fitly prepared on the inner side, are exceedingly durable, and often very beautiful, and make altogether the most proper clothing for severe climates. When thus prepared, these skins are called "fur;" in their natural state, "peltry."

The wellnigh universal use of fur as an article of dress, even during our own comparatively mild winters, will suggest some idea of what must be the demand for it in more rigorous climates. In Russia, Poland, East Prussia, Hungary, Bohemia, Saxony, &c., lambs' skins constitute an essential part of the dress of thousands among the humble classes. The skins, too, of several other animals are considered articles of absolute necessity. The more beautiful and costly furs, which rank as articles of luxury and fashion, are used chiefly in China, Turkey, Russia, England, and the United States.

Even in the sixth century the skins of sables constituted an article of fashionable attire in Rome, and were transported, at great cost, from the borders of the Arctic Ocean to supply this demand. It was several centuries, however, before Western Europe craved the same luxury. In the reign of Edward III., the Italian traders imported into England so large a supply, that the king judged it wise to interdict their use to all save the wealthier classes.

The Canadian fur trade was commenced by the French soon after their settlement on the St. Lawrence. At first, it was exceedingly profitable, since the Indians, totally ignorant of the value of the skins, would eagerly exchange

them for beads, nails, hatchets, trinkets, &c., of inadequate worth. At the outset, moreover, there was an almost unlimited supply. When, however, the hunting-grounds bordering on the European settlements had become exhausted, longer journeys were necessary; and various settlers, bearing the name of *courriers des bois* (wood-rangers), made excursions to more remote hunting-grounds, where they sometimes remained for many months, adopting the usages of the Indians, and forming connections with them.

But the great success attending this traffic soon aroused competition. A company, formed in London, was chartered by Charles II., in 1670, for trading in fur with the Indians inhabiting the region north and west of Hudson's Bay, and hence named "Hudson's Bay Company."

This association prospered, founded numerous establishments, and prosecuted its trade successfully for more than a century. It then encountered a powerful rival in a new company, composed of opulent and influential settlers in Canada and others, who recognized no exclusive right in the Hudson's Bay Company to trade in a particular region, since their charter had never been confirmed by act of Parliament.

This second association, entitled the Northwest Company, managed its affairs with great spirit and energy, having its principal establishment at Montreal, but pushing its trade upwards of 4,000 miles to the northwest. Wherever these companies came in contact, animosities were kindled, which occasionally produced acts of reciprocal violence between their servants. After protracted dissensions, the two companies were finally united in one powerful body, under the title of the "Hudson's Bay Fur Company," which now engrosses the main portion of the fur trade of British America.

## THE SYMPATHY MEETING.

BY MARION HARLAND, AUTHOR OF "MARRYING THROUGH PRUDENTIAL MOTIVES," "THE THRICE WEDDED," AND THE NOVEL OF "ALONE."

"There's a chield amang you takin' notes,  
And, faith, he'll prent 'em."

"I HAD a call from your friend Mrs. Parks, this morning," said Mrs. Cushman to her husband, who had lingered to chat with her for half an hour after their boarding-house dinner. The honey-moon was hardly over, which fact may account for this extraordinary procedure on his part.

"Indeed," he rejoined, with an appearance of great interest, and added that most stupid, yet most natural of questions, which everybody asks and nobody likes to answer, "What did she say?"

"Oh, she was very pleasant, although she did not stay long. She only came to invite us to take tea with her this evening. I told her that I would go with pleasure, if you had no engagement to prevent your accompanying me."

"Of course, I am at your service. All engagements, precontracts, etc., are null and void when they stand in the way of your happiness."

"Come, George," interrupted the little lady, laughingly, pulling his ear just the least bit in the world, "you need not trouble yourself to make fine speeches to me *now*. Can you go or not?"

"So you call my expressions of devotion 'fine speeches!' What language shall I employ to convince you that I am ready, willing, and anxious to attend you? First, because you desire it. Secondly, Parks gives elegant suppers, and oysters are just in season; his cook has not an equal in the Union at a 'scallop' or 'stew.' Thirdly, Mrs. Parks matronized me in my celibacy, and I am desirous that she should see how well I have practised her thousand and one rules for selecting a wife, since mine has a virtue for each!"

"There, do stop, Parson Poundtext! you have got around to the point from whence you started. The party is to be small, and we ladies are to go, unceremoniously, with our work, early in the afternoon."

"An unceremonious afternoon!" repeated the provoking husband, slowly. "What does that mean, Lizzie?"

"George, your nonsense would vex a saint." But such she certainly was not, for she laughed

heartily. "What a flow of spirits he has!" she said, as she saw him from the window lift his hat to her before he turned the corner. "I can never be gloomy in his presence, the dear fellow!"

When Mrs. Cushman and her unceremonious work-bag made their *entrée* into Mrs. Parks's parlor, they found most of the afternoon guests already there. Our heroine's reception was flatteringly cordial; and she was speedily working and chatting quite at her ease, casting, meanwhile, well-bred glances at the rest of the company. She had seen nearly all before at her "reception," or when returning her bridal calls. There was but one stranger, and her name, "Oram," did not seem new to her. She was still young, and retained traces of striking beauty, shadowed by a pensiveness that betokened sorrow or ill-health. Mrs. Cushman's seat was next to hers; and even her manner of paying the compliments of the day, trite and commonplace in the mouths of most people, evinced a desire to contribute to her enjoyment. They were like old acquaintances in ten minutes. Mrs. Oram became more silent as the others joined in; and when, at length, they took the lead in the conversation, she spoke only at long intervals, as if to show that she was not selfishly inattentive. The news of the day was summarily disposed of by the dozen busy tongues. The new-style bonnet was pronounced "shockingly unbecoming" to all but young and pretty faces, yet it appeared that each one present had either procured, or intended to purchase one; and those baggy incumbrances, by a fashionable misnomer called "oriental" sleeves, which officiate as spoon, ladle, or broom, as coffee, soup, or dust come within their sweep, were voted to be "exceedingly graceful and pleasant, especially in summer." One lady, who looked as if she might have been "literary," affirming that they "gave quite a classic appearance to the figure." The crochet-mat, then in Mrs. Cushman's hands, was next admired, and several polite applications made for the pattern.

"I am passionately fond of such work," said Mrs. Harris, examining the iris-hued network; "but, with my large family, recreation of any description is out of the question."

"When do you expect to get into your new house, Mrs. Cushman?" inquired Mrs. Parks.

"Before long, I hope. I am very tired of boarding."

"Do you really prefer housekeeping?" asked Mrs. Harris.

"She has never tried it yet," said another, significantly. "She will change her tune in less than a month, and wish herself back in her boarding-house."

"I think not, Mrs. Lane. I am domestic in my tastes, and have a positive liking for what is generally termed the labor of keeping an establishment in order."

"You are inexperienced. You do not know what you are bringing upon yourself. When boarding, you can live just as you did while single; no bother about servants and dirt. Your husband comes in to a good dinner, over which you have not been puzzled and heated; the house is clean from bottom to top—you never think how it is kept so; you have but to sew, visit, and enjoy yourself. I have tried both ways of living. Take my advice: rent out your house, stay where you are, and don't fly into trouble before it comes to you."

Lizzie thought of the snug dwelling George had exhibited such taste in preparing for her, and was emboldened to reply, half proudly—

"Indeed, I have no fears. As to inexperience, I have kept my father's house ever since my fifteenth year, and should never have resigned the charge, but for my marriage."

"Ah, you will find this a different affair. Husbands and fathers are not alike easily satisfied."

Again, George came to Lizzie's aid. She contrasted his indulgent good-nature with her father's fastidiousness and capricious notice of whatever she did.

"I should imagine that a husband would be more apt to overlook the imperfections of a novice than a parent, who considers it his duty to correct every fault."

"My dear Mrs. Cushman," exclaimed Mrs. Merry, blue-eyed and rosy-cheeked, who was called "Annie" by all, and seemed to be a universal pet, "you never were more mistaken in your life. But I don't wonder; I was as silly once. I married as soon as I quitted school, with my head full of the noble, long holiday I was going to have. There was something grand in the idea of being the head of a family, the lady of the house; and I coaxed Arthur to settle at once. He suggested renting until we should have made the experiment; but I told him that I was not to be hauled from pil-

lar to post in that way. I wanted to live and die in the home to which I had gone as a bride. This and a deal more stuff pleased him so much, that he went to great expense in buying and fitting up a perfectly new building in one of the best situations in town. We took possession on our return from the wedding-tour. My toy was very entertaining for a week or two. Everything was so new and pretty; the servants were upon their good behavior; Mr. Merry ditto; and I anxious to give satisfaction. But, somehow, things began to get a little awry. I could not worry myself to death with the servants. They had their orders. Was I to waste time and patience in following them about, to see that they did their work? If it was not done, I should find it out soon enough; and, if they obeyed, there was no use in watching them. Then Arthur got cross. Instead of, as at first, praising my management upon all occasions, he said nothing about it when others were by, and gave me what he called a 'few gentle hints' when we were alone. 'Gentle,' indeed! 'Twas downright scolding. 'Matters would go more smoothly if I gave them my personal superintendence.' It was my 'duty to be at home at such and such hours' (that is, when he was there); 'the servants were wasteful and slovenly, and I too negligent of their misdemeanors.' For a while, I did not suspect what he was at. I had no idea that he wanted me buried alive, though I knew that some men would gladly be widowers even on these terms. He always wound up by being wonderfully good and affectionate, 'to alay,' he said, 'any feeling of vexation at being what I might consider reprov'd,' and I could not get angry. But just let me tell you of a little scene that took place when we had been married about six months. You must know that my most intimate friend, Ginnie Hubbard, lived just opposite to us. We had been schoolmates, and changed our names upon the same day; so it was natural and proper that we should be together a great deal. Now, Ginnie had more spirit in the tip of her little finger than I have in my whole body, and, as Mr. Hubbard was easy-tempered, they got along swimmingly. Arthur said she was a capital housewife; but I don't believe she knew any more about cookery than I did. Only that's the way with men; they will praise any man's wife, if, by so doing, they can get a chance to disparage their own. Well, as I was saying, I loved Ginnie very dearly, and one cloudy afternoon, when I did not dare to walk far from home, I ran over to sit an hour with her. Mr. Hubbard was out of town, and she very lone-

some, and overjoyed to see me. We talked and sewed until dark, when I said I must really go home.

"Oh, no," said Ginnie; "these winter afternoons are so short. It is only six o'clock. Only think, Rosa Grant is to be married!"

"Rosa was another school-fellow; and this led us to a long confab about old times and old friends, until I was astonished to see tea brought in.

"You *must* stay!" said Ginnie. "You can go after our supper is done, and be in time to give Mr. Merry his."

"This was true, for Arthur often stayed out until eight or nine. I make no pretensions to sense (I believe Arthur thinks I have *none*); but I knew that it was not polite to run off the instant I left the table; and Ginnie commenced telling me a rigmarole about a man who had shot himself, or his wife, I forget which. After I thought a decent time had elapsed, I peeped at my watch, and you won't believe me when I tell you that it was after ten. Ginnie held a light in her porch until she saw me safe in mine, then she called out 'Good-night!' and went in. I opened the front door. The entry was dark. That stupid Bob had not lighted the lamp; he always wants to be told to do it. I looked into the front parlor, it was like midnight; and, nearly breaking my neck by falling over a chair, I groped my way to the door of the other room. One solitary, forlorn candle was on the mantle-piece, the fender was covered with ashes and cinders, and there was not a living coal in the grate. Arthur was marching back and forth across the floor. Men always do that when they are out of humor. He stopped, and looked at me.

"Good-evening," said I.

"So you have come!" said he.

"I put out my hand towards the bell-rope.

"Stay!" said he. "What do you want?"

"Some coal," I replied, bridling up.

"You may spare yourself the trouble of ringing. There is none in the house, and it will be stormy in the morning. Why was I not apprised of this in time to send some up?"

"How was I to know anything about it?"

"Robert says he told you of it last night," he answered, sternly.

"I could not deny this, although I had not thought of it since. He resumed his promenade, and gave me time for reflection. What was the cause of all this fuss? I had spent an evening with a friend. If he had seen fit to stay out until twelve; instead of ten o'clock, it would be no concern of mine, he would say;

but I was to be treated like a child that deserved a whipping. My spirit was fairly up; so I said—

"What has happened to put you in such an amiable mood?"

"He did not reply immediately; but, after two or three more strides across the room, he stalked up to me.

"You are pleased to sneer, and I shall not attempt to move your sympathies in behalf of one who, after battling all day in the world, fondly expected something like comfort at home."

"That was the text, and you never heard such a 'scorch' as followed. I say 'never heard'; but you will, if you go to housekeeping, and forget, while talking with one you love, that you have the pantry keys in your pocket, and a famishing, fuming husband at home. I asked why he did not send for me?"

"And have it reported all over the country that my wife cannot leave the house for an hour without being summoned to wait upon me! No; if your sense of duty does not induce you to attend to your household, my commands shall not."

"Then he went out, banging the door after him; and I sat down upon the rug to have a comfortable cry all to myself. I had not shed more than a dozen tears before he came in again.

"Annie, you must not sit here in the cold. Go up stairs!"

"And I had to obey. I have learned since not to regard these little *contretemps*. If Mr. Merry begins to rail, I leave him with the walls for listeners. All husbands are tyrants, and mine is no worse than most people's."

It was impossible to listen gravely as she rattled off this story with the mimicry and gesture of a spoiled child. So winning did she appear, as she looked up from her low seat in the corner, that it must have been a callous heart which could not find, in her youth and beauty, excuse for the thoughtlessness that in her seemed scarcely to deserve the name of fault.

"Hush, child!" said a middle-aged lady, with an affectation of reproof. "Be thankful that your husband loves his home. You would find it much worse if he sought his enjoyment elsewhere. Now, there's Mr. Sherman; he has an engagement for every evening in the week. I believe he is a member of all the societies that ever were set on foot."

"He is very active in all projects for doing good, I know," responded Mrs. Parks.

"So people say; but, for my part, I think it is the duty of married men to stay at home and take care of their families. I am jealous of

these new-fangled enterprises. I cannot forgive them for usurping my place. No poor wife can call them 'benevolent organizations.' I never inquire where he is going, if he asks to have an early supper. He drinks his tea scalding hot, seizes his hat, and is off. I put the children to bed, and then sit alone all the long evening, shaking with fright if the wind rattles the windows. I dare not sleep, and am too nervous to read or sew. Every burglar in the city knows that I am a lone, unprotected woman; and this keeps me in nightly dread of housebreakers. Besides this, I am wretched lest some ruffian should attack him in the unfrequented lanes, through which he passes at all hours of the night."

"Oh, horrible!" cried Mrs. Cushman, who was of a very timorous disposition. "Why do you not entreat him to stay with you?"

"Ah, my dear, those times are over now. If I had been married only as many weeks as I have years, I might hope to be heard; but one gets used to refusals in ten years."

"I never should get used to them!" thought Lizzie; and the crochet-needle grew to twice its usual size, as if seen through a magnifying lens.

"You have one consolation, Mrs. Sherman," said Mrs. Lane; "you have everything your own way indoors. Mr. Sherman does not pretend to interfere with or condemn your arrangements. As for my husband, he begins to quarrel so soon as he gets within sight of the house. 'Is anybody dead, that the blinds are all shut? The house feels like a vault. It is enough to give a man the blues to come into such a dungeon!' Or, if they are open, 'How long since you opened a tavern? It is no fault of yours, if your neighbors' curiosity is not gratified.' I slave all the morning in the hope of eating one dinner in peace; but no! If I were to put the only rickety chair on the premises in the attic, under lock and key, the plaguy thing would contrive to be the first on which he sat. The child who has been latest at the sweetmeats, or who has the most ragged apron, is invariably first to meet him. Either of these circumstances upsets him completely; and, once wrong, heaven and earth cannot set him right. He looks over the dinner-table in search of something out of order, before he will taste a mouthful. 'Tom, where are the salt-spoons?' And, before the boy can bring them, up he jumps, and snatching them from him, throws them the whole length of the table. 'Zounds, madam, I should think that I have enough to do out of doors without housekeeping!' If he is particu-

larly crabbed, he will not be waited upon, but shoves his chair back and helps himself, especially if what he wants is at the other end of the room. I have been dreadfully mortified, when we have had company, by his going out to the hydrant for a pitcher of water, while we were in the midst of dinner, the servants standing by doing nothing. Then the soup is 'dish-water;' the fish 'as raw as when it was taken out of the river;' the turkey 'might as well be stuffed with cotton.' Sunday is worst of all! He has nothing to do between sermons but growl. The Sabbath evening lecture is upon the evils of my housewifery, ending with, 'There is not an Irish laborer in the United States who lives in such a pig-sty as I do!'"

Lizzie's eyes had dilated more and more as each relation progressed, and now her mouth shared in their expansion. If Mesdames Merry and Sherman had astounded, Mrs. Lane's harangue shocked her. Its very homeliness lent it force. It sounded like unvarnished truth. She had never conceived of such brutality. Already her well-appointed cottage was reft of half its charms. There were more things in housekeeping than had been dreamed of in her philosophy.

This appeared to be a regular "experience meeting." Mrs. Harris next took the floor.

"These are but minor troubles, after all; annoying, but resulting in no serious consequences."

"I don't know what you call 'serious consequences,'" retorted Mrs. Lane, "if having one's life fretted out of her by inches be not one."

"That is disagreeable, I grant; but what is it compared with the pain a mother experiences when seeing her children in the road to ruin without power to arrest them? I have no more control over mine than you have; indeed, not so much, for they might stand in awe of a stranger. Mr. Harris neither corrects them nor allows me to do so. It 'breaks their spirit,' he says. My life is a scene of perpetual discord and disturbance. Archibald, my oldest boy, respects my lowest menial more than he does his mother. When only five years old, he would return my caresses with blows. I endeavored to chastise him but once, and he nearly destroyed the sight of my right eye, besides reducing to shreds a superb lace dress cap. His father upholds him in his unnatural rebellion."

"Take care," interposed Mrs. Parks, who had been visibly uneasy for some time; "Mrs. Cushman will not thank us for teaching her to borrow trouble. We must not abuse husbands too much."

"Where 's the harm in telling her the truth?"

asked Mrs. Merry, opening her great blue eyes in comic inquiry. "I don't want her to be disappointed, as she will be, if she goes on thinking that married life is the height of happiness. It is well the novels stop when the characters are all paired off. They would spoil the story by repeating the quarrels that follow."

"You are a silly girl, Annie. Who, do you think, believes you?"

"Why, Mrs. Cushman here (let me call you Lizzie) will remember all that I have told her some of these days. I shall make you a visit of condolence. We shall be sisters in affliction."

"I hope never to have occasion to make you such a call, Mrs. Cushman," said Mrs. Oram, kindly; "but I owe you an apology for having delayed until now a visit which it was my wish as well as my duty to pay. Mr. Oram and myself are under many obligations to Mr. Cushman's generous friendship. This, of itself, would create a desire to cultivate your acquaintance. My babe has been sick ever since your arrival amongst us, and I could not have left her this afternoon, but for the offer of my sister to take the place of nurse for a few hours. It is now time for my return. We shall meet soon, I hope."

Lizzie responded heartily. Her interest in her new friend was redoubled, now that she knew her to be her husband's also. If Mrs. Parks really wished to turn the conversation, her first observation after Mrs. Oram's departure was unfortunate.

"Has Mr. Prescott recovered entirely from his attack of pneumonia?" she asked of one of her visitors.

"Thank you, he is apparently well; still I am not easy about him. Gentlemen are so imprudent. They consider proper precautions against cold or damp as womanly weakness. I have tried again and again to induce James to wear a fur-lined over-coat since his illness, but he only 'pshaw!' and asks if I take him to be a sickly woman. I wish that he was. I could manage him then. He has a great horror of appearing to be ruled by me. The doctor advised him to tie a worsted comforter over his mouth when in the open air. He put it on one morning, but had not gone two squares before he met John Burton, who wanted to know if 'his wife thought he had lived long enough, that she had muffled up his respiratory organs in that style, or was it a gag to prevent his talking to the girls?' He has never touched the comforter since, giving, as his reason for discarding it, that it is hot and inconvenient; but I

know very well that it is nothing in the world but John's ridicule."

The duskiess of the room had put a stop to manual employment, and Lizzie thought with dismay of the impetus tongues would receive from this cessation. She anticipated nothing less than a declaration of an exterminating war against the other sex, should the indignation of these maltreated slaves continue to ferment. She was relieved, and the seditious symptoms quelled by the appearance of Mr. Parks, accompanied by Mr. Lane, who, to her surprise, bore little resemblance to the truculent boor she had imagined; nor did his wife's deportment towards him partake of servility or marked deference. The entrance of these two checked further divulgations, and introduced a new set of topics; but Lizzie's pleasure was marred for that evening. In vain she expostulated with herself. "It was foolish to allow this idle gossip to discompose her. What if it were all true? George was so different from the men they had been describing; and she would try so hard to gratify his every whim, that they could never be participants in such disgraceful altercations." But reasoning and resolving did no good. She was low-spirited and miserable; and, worst of all, George, who came soon after Mr. Parks, saw at a glance that all was not right. Her smiling effort could not hoodwink him. He prudently forbore to take any notice of her dejection; and, by the time that his spicy sallies had set everybody to joking and laughing, she was able to appear quite like herself again.

"I saw Arthur this afternoon," said he to Mrs. Merry. "He will be along presently."

"Yes, I expect him," she rejoined.

"You know Mr. Merry, then?" said Lizzie, in a low voice.

"Know him! What a question! Mrs. Merry, here a moment, if you please. You have to answer to the grave charge of having passed a whole afternoon with my wife, and not hinted once that Arthur and I were old chums and inseparables, until he took an unaccountable fancy to like a certain lady (who shall be nameless) more than he did me. Is this your gratitude for my advocacy of his suit, when an unreasonable old gentleman demurred at granting it, because, forsooth, his daughter was too young to enter into a contract so important?"

Lizzie did not hear Mrs. Merry's retort. George and this tyrannical taskmaster had been boon companions. This argued a coincidence of tastes and sentiments. What if all men should, indeed, be alike? Would he, too, leave in time to rave, grumble, and neglect?

"Lizzie," said George, leading up a noble-looking man, who had just entered, "this is my friend Merry. You should have met before."

"I have been unfortunate, but not to blame, that we have not," replied Mr. Merry. And, having paid his respects gracefully to her, his next bow and smile were for "Annie."

"How different men are in society and at home!" reflected Mrs. Cushman, as she remarked this; and this feeling was uppermost in her mind until the company broke up.

"Mr. Sherman was at a returned meeting of the Colonial Society," his wife stated; and Mr. Cushman, with difficulty, screwed his face into grave respectfulness as he volunteered himself as her escort, her residence being in the same street as their boarding-house. They had the talk all to themselves on the way home, Lizzie speaking only in monosyllables. The poison was not without its effect. She could not help thinking that, if George were suffering, as he must see that she was, she could not appear unconcerned. It was her first hard thought of him, and it almost broke her heart to admit it. She had no sullenness in her nature; but she was hurt and disappointed.

"You are not well to-night, Lizzie?"

She stood by the fire, knotting her bonnet-strings around her taper finger.

"Yes, I am quite well."

"You are unhappy, then. It is useless to try to deceive me. I have watched you all the evening. Already a grief which you will not let me share, Lizzie?"

This was the drop too much. She sunk her head upon his shoulder and burst into tears; nor was it until his anxiety had increased to an insupportable degree that she could command her voice to tell him of the boding fears that oppressed her heart, and their origin. He did not interrupt the relation, although his lips parted more than once; but it is doubtful whether the nearly uttered ejaculation might not have startled more than edified the narrator. When she ceased, he looked relieved, vexed, and amused.

"So your afternoon has been spent in discussing husbands," he said. "A sorry entertainment! I do not wonder at your being out of spirits. From your account, I should judge that we were pretty well 'showed up.' Is this a standing dish at these feminine assemblies?"

Lizzie could not refrain from smiling.

"I don't know. I never was at any but young-lady parties before."

"And then you talked of your beaux. Well, this is only a continuation of the same subject—

lovers are developed into married men. You have learned much to-day, dear Lizzie, of which I had rather you had remained ignorant. I hardly know whether you will now believe me, if I say that, as it is, I prefer your lessons in these matters should be taken from any one else than from me—that all your knowledge of the discomforts of housekeeping and sour-tempered husbands should be acquired from hearsay, not experience."

Lizzie's arms were around his neck in an instant. "Dear George!" was all that she could say. He went on, kindly and seriously—

"But this cannot be. I know that, in the revulsion of feeling, you are ready to look upon the histories of the tribulations of Mrs. Merry and her compeers as sheer fabrications, or exaggerations of trivial misunderstandings. The latter supposition may be correct, to a certain extent; and I shall presently enlighten you somewhat with regard to these benevolent ladies who have taken pity on your ignorance; still, I must admit that there is probably much sober truth in what they have said. Women are not angels; and men are more than one remove from perfection. Where there are faults, there must be suffering; but this may be greatly alleviated by mutual confidence, and a just appreciation, on each side, of the peculiar trials of the other. If, hereafter, you shall feel the want of perfect sympathy with your dispirited or nervous mood after toiling through the harassing routine of woman's every-day duties—laborious, if well performed; mortifying, in case of failure—if, seated in my comfortable chair in the corner, I forget, even while reaping the fruits of your industry, whose hands have adorned my Eden, you must not grieve your affectionate little heart with misgivings of my love. The thanks for which you had hoped, as the easily bestowed reward of your self-denial; the look that should have blessed your thoughtful kindness, may be for a time withheld; and instead, a coldly spoken word, which sounds very like a taunt, or a tart notice of some omission or blunder, may pierce you with a bitter sense of injustice. These are darkened moments, such as fall to the lot of the happiest wife. I say it to our shame; but do not judge us too harshly. You know nothing of the world in which we strive; I pray that you never may. I have heard of plants, natives of the tropics, which, on being transplanted in a colder climate, grow strong and hardy, but bear no more flowers or fruits; and a woman, fighting her way in a business life, reminds me of these. Her mind may be more vigorous than that of one raised in the atmosphere of home,

and visited only by the breath of affection, but the sweet blossoms of trust and love will never be again unfolded. It is a hard world, Lizzie—a hateful, suspicious world, full of heartlessness and deceit—a world that fosters men's ignoble passions, and beats down, with a hailstorm of ridicule, their holiest sentiments. You need not cling to me so tightly, love; while I have an arm to shield you, you shall never encounter these hardships. I am a man, and my duty is in the field. I only ask that, when I am worn out and heart-sick with defeat and discouragement, you will think of all this, and pity instead of chide."

Again "Dear, dear George!" And then a silence. George broke it with a laugh.

"And you were surprised at my keeping company with an ogre like Merry, and already beheld yourself crying with Annie upon the rug before a fireless hearth? Arthur deserves sympathy more than censure. His baseless fabric of perfect harmony and contentment came tumbling about his ears before he was a Benedict of two months' standing. Annie is a dear, warm-hearted creature, but incorrigibly thoughtless and frivolous. I shall never forget their first dinner-party. Arthur invited the members of our "bachelor club"—six in number—hinting, as he did so, at the superiority of 'voluntary' over 'hired' housekeepers. Two of us kept bachelor's hall, and the others picked up a living at boarding-houses and hotels. Being quite alive to the manifold disadvantages of these modes of subsistence, we considered this somewhat rust cruel and ungenerous; and held a council of resentment for some time before we decided to pocket the insult and go. About an hour before dinner time, I left my office to prepare for the convivial occasion. I met Mrs. Merry ten steps from my door. She looked bewitchingly lovely; and there were two or three girls with her, all in the highest spirits, and apparently bound upon some frolic.

"Oh, Mr. Cushman!" she called, "have you been to the menagerie?"

"I answered in the negative.

"Then do—there's a good creature! go with us to the door. I don't mind being beauleas after we get in, but I can't pass through the crowd around the ticket-box. We must hurry, too, for I have only half an hour to spare. You know you dine with us to-day; and Arthur will be angry if I am not dressed in time. Ain't husbands particular?"

"Thus she prattled until we ascended Council Chamber Hill, on which the show was located. I procured tickets for the party; saw

them seated above the arena of sawdust, and human mingled with brute animals.

"'Now,' said Mrs. Merry, 'go dress for dinner.'

"As you may suppose, I did not fatigue myself by the hurry of my preparations. I dressed, and read all the daily newspapers ere I started. The guests were gathered together, but I was not surprised that the hostess was minus. Arthur controlled himself wonderfully well; but his eye wandered to the window every other minute, and more than once he broke off a sentence, as a step approached the parlor-door. It was only a servant, who peered in with eyes that told of overtone beef and fowls burnt to a cinder, as plainly as his lips growled, on his retreat: 'I wish mistis would come along.'

"Two hours after the appointed time, a fleet footstep was heard upon the stairs; and Arthur begged to be 'excused for an instant.' His face was no brighter when he rejoined us; and before long we sat down to what would have been an elegant repast, had it been served in time. Annie ran in, like a playful kitten, as we reached the dining-room, with—'I told you so, Arthur! I said I would be ready as soon as you were!'

"He interrupted her by presenting a gentleman, with whom she was not acquainted.

"'I am afraid you think me shockingly unpunctual,' she ran on, pouring out the words and soup at the same time, 'but that darling little pony made me forget everything else—and then a real live tiger leaped out upon a man! I screamed, but they said it was a part of the show—and then the monkeys! I never laughed so in all my life—and oh, Arthur! I rode upon the elephant!'

"The perspiration thickened upon Merry's forehead with each fresh course of dishes.

"'You don't know how mad he is,' whispered Annie to me. 'I tell you he scolded! But I don't care. I had a splendid time at the menagerie.'

"But once did Arthur look glad or at his ease—when we took our hats to leave. We walked down the street, talking of anything rather than our dinner, when Tom Hinton, whose fun-making propensities are incurable, burst forth with—'Well, boys, it's my impression that, if Mrs. Merry does go elsewhere to 'see the elephant,' poor Arthur need not stir from home to indulge his curiosity in that respect.'"

"How could she be so careless of his feelings, and for such childish nonsense! How absurd!" exclaimed Lizzie.

"Of Mrs. Lane's *ménage*, I know nothing,"



continued George. "Her philippic against her stronger half may be just. My intercourse with him has been chiefly confined to business matters, but I do not think him ill-natured. Mrs. Sherman's piteous lamentations, however, border upon the ludicrous, when one remembers that she was a respectable maiden lady, already past the bloom of life, when Sherman found her living on a snug farm in the country, with no male protector, and no companion except an orphan niece, ten years of age. She looked after her broad acres with a vigilant eye; and the savings of years of thriftiness supplied, in her lover's eyes, her want of personal attractions. I am not surprised at her pretended pretty fears. We are apt to assume the appearance of qualities in which we know ourselves to be deficient. This will account also for Prescott's sensitiveness on the score of being ruled. The man is hen-pecked to such a degree that his very dress shows it. His collar hangs over his stock with a limp helplessness only equalled by the meek droop of his eyelids, and the corners of his mouth, and his hat! I could single it out among a thousand as that of a man who dared not entertain a sneaking notion that his soul was his own. But my gossip is degenerating into scandal. Have I disposed of all your difficulties?"

"Yes. How silly to have let them annoy me! But they all joined, either by word or look, in the condemnation of men in general, and husbands in particular; all except Mrs. Parks and Mrs. Oram."

"Mrs. Oram!" he repeated, with a start. "You did not tell me that she was there."

"She had to go home to a sick child before nightfall; but what of her? Is she not a fit associate for me?"

"A fit associate! Ah, Lizzie, she is one of a thousand; deserving of a far happier fate than the one which awaits her."

"Is her husband unkind?"

"No—that is, not habitually. I do not fear to intrust to your discretion a secret known to a very small number of his friends. He is a man of shining qualities and powerful, but perverted energies. He failed in business about two years ago; and being in want of a confidential clerk, I offered the situation to him until he should procure more lucrative employment. His able discharge of duty and engaging demeanor so won upon my esteem and affection that, at the end of twelve months, I made proposals of co-partnership. He listened with downcast eyes and a face in which gratitude struggled with shame, expressions which perplexed and mortified me."

"Mr. Cushman," said he, as I finished, "I am more than grateful for this new manifestation of confidence, unmerited though it is. It is an act worthy of yourself, my best, my only friend. You took me by the hand when all others turned away from the outcast, and restored me to apparent respectability—*apparent!*" he repeated, with a stinging emphasis of self-reproach.

"I was bewildered. He had never been an outcast. His character stood as high when he entered my office as it now did. But his distress was real, whatever was its imaginary cause; and I tried by argument and assurances to dispel the unhappy hallucination. I alluded to his talents; his integrity, as displayed in every act of his past life; to his faithfulness in my service; and added that my offer was prompted by a desire to evince my recognition and appreciation of these things.

"Oh, cease, for pity's sake!" he exclaimed. "You drive me mad! I faithful! I upright! Look here!" and he pulled rather than led me to his desk. "There!" tossing out a bundle of papers. "Examine those."

"I opened the package. It contained copies of deeds, etc., executed in the neatest manner. 'I see nothing wrong in them,' I said, after inspection. I seem to feel now the look he fastened upon me.

"You gave me the originals to copy?"

"Certainly."

"And what, sir, do you say of the wretch who permitted his tenderly-nurtured wife to bend for entire nights over them, doing his work while he lay snoring in drunken unconsciousness?"

"Alfred!" I ejaculated, ready to believe his senses wandering. "You were never guilty of such a deed!"

"He laughed like a maniac.

"I tell you I have done it again and again! I learned to drink long ago, and she concealed it. When I came here, she knelt to me—knelt to a fiend and a brute! and prayed me to abandon the accursed practice. Then, as she found me going down, down, night after night (for I only indulged at night and in secret), she said not a word, only asked me to bring my writing home in the evening instead of remaining down town. One morning I awoke late, to the horrors of a day succeeding a night of debauchery; and super-added was the recollection of unperformed duty. It was necessary that my task should be accomplished. I have never yet stained my soul with a lie; and ignominious expulsion was before me. With shaking hands I untied the papers and

looked mechanically over them. They were ready-written in a bold hand, a surprisingly accurate imitation of my own; but there were, now and then, delicate strokes that betrayed the woman. *She* had done it all. I might die a thousand deaths without experiencing the agony of that moment. It is a common occurrence now.'

"The poor fellow's face worked frightfully with emotion. 'This is my integrity,' he said, hoarsely—'my fidelity! Why do you look at me so sorrowfully? Spurn me from your door. I am not fit to dwell with honest men. I make but one request. Do not let my ill-used Mary know that the shame which is killing her is public.'"

"Oh, George!" pleaded Lizzie, lifting her tear-laden eyes to his. "You did not let him go!"

"No, dearest. I told him that I would not withdraw my trust. Had my friendship been less strong, regard for his noble wife would have led me to befriend him by every means in my power. The partnership scheme was abandoned, but he retains his clerkship; and although my opened eyes can trace the ravages of dissipation, his books are still kept with strict exactness. But this cannot last forever; sooner or later he will sink to the level of a common drunkard."

"And she has this weight always upon her mind!" mused Lizzie. "This has given her

face its sorrowful cast. I cannot sufficiently admire her prudent silence."

George shook his head doubtfully.

"Do you commend her prudence only? I do not wish to excite in you uncharitable feelings towards your acquaintances of your own sex, but it is enigmatical to me how a woman, who has one atom of love or respect for her husband, can make his faults or foibles the subject of conversation, even in a coterie of her picked friends. It has, to me, the semblance of a violation of her marriage vow. She is bound to 'honor' as well as 'love.' His failings should be sacred—locked up in her bosom; not held up to ridicule and censure."

"Just what I felt all the time they were speaking!" interrupted Lizzie, eagerly. "I cannot think that I could even discuss your peculiarities and offences with my dearest friend. How can I, when my husband is my nearest—my sole confidant?"

"There spoke the right mind and the true woman's heart!" replied he, with an affectionate kiss. "*Confidantes* are dangerous indulgences to both husband and wife. A man who breathes a syllable of disapprobation of his partner to other ears than hers, is a fit candidate for the pillory; and from female cabals the Fates preserve me! I had rather stand with him in the same honorable position than be flayed and dissected in a 'Ladies' Sympathy Meeting.'"

## TO MAKE PICTURES OF BIRDS WITH THEIR NATURAL FEATHERS.

FIRST take a thin board or panel of deal or wainscot, well seasoned, that it may not shrink; then smoothly paste on it white paper, and let it dry; and if the wood casts its color through, paste on it another paper till perfectly white; let it stand till quite dry, and then get any bird you would represent, and draw its figure as exactly as possible on the papered panel (middle-sized birds are the best for the purpose); then paint what tree or ground-work you intend to set your bird upon, also its bill and legs, leaving the rest of the body to be covered with its own feathers. You must next prepare that part to be feathered by laying on thick gum Arabic, dissolved in water; lay it on with a large hair pencil, and let it dry; then lay a second coat of the gum Arabic, and let it dry, and a third, and oftener, if you find that when dry it does not form a good body on the paper, at least to the thickness of a shilling; let it dry quite hard.

When your piece is thus prepared, take the feathers off the bird as you use them, beginning at the tail and points of the wings, and working upwards to the head, observing to cover that part of your draught with the feathers taken from the same part of the bird, letting them fall over one another in the natural order. You must prepare your feathers by cutting off the downy parts that are about their stems, and the large feathers must have the insides of their shafts shaved off with a sharp knife, to make them lie flat; the quills of the wings must have their inner webs clipped off, so that in laying them the gum may hold them by their shafts. When you begin to lay them, take a pair of steel pliers to hold the feathers in, and have some gum-water, not too thin, and a large pencil ready to moisten the ground-work by little and little, as you work it; then lay your feathers on the moistened parts, which must not be water-