

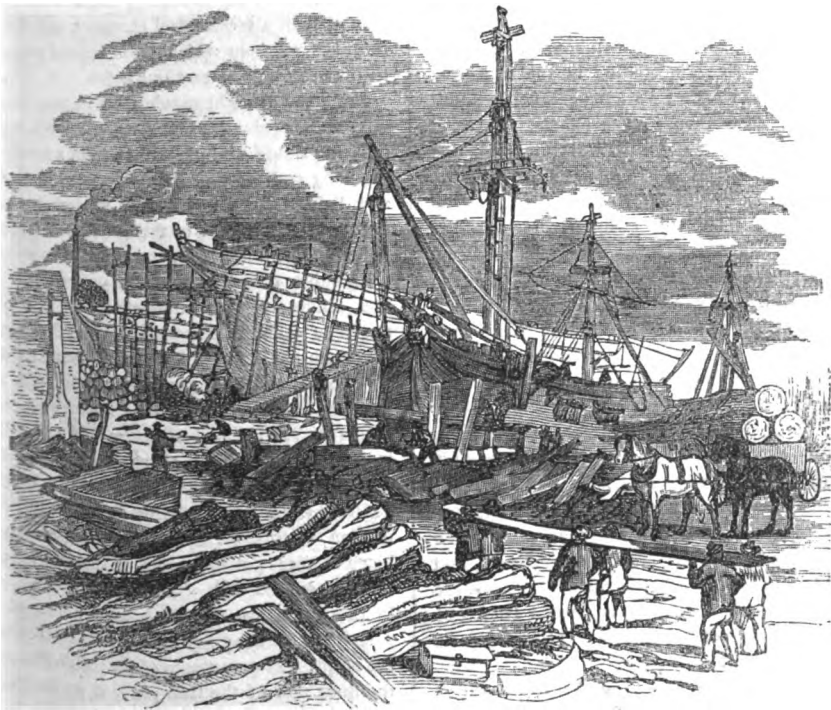
GODEY'S LADY'S BOOK.

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EVERYDAY ACTUALITIES.—NO. XXI.

ILLUSTRATED WITH PEN AND GRAVER.

BY C. F. HINGCLEY



SHIP ON THE STOCKS BUILDING, AND SHIP IN DOCK FOR REPAIRS.

A DAY AT A SHIP-YARD.

A SHIP must ever be an object of interest and admiration, whether regarded as the substitute, the more than substitute, for stone-walls as a defence, or as the channel whereby commerce is carried on with foreign countries. As a work of art, too, a ship has at all times and in nearly all countries called forth expressions of wonder.

We may or may not, as we please, give credence to the opinion expressed in Dryden's lines:—

“By viewing Nature, Nature's handmaid, Art,
Makes mighty things from small beginnings grow;
Thus fishes first to shipping did impart,
Their tail the rudder and their head the prow;”

but certain it is that, whether fishes were or were not the first ship-draughtsmen, the art of

form as may be practicable; and are afterwards worked with the adze, to give them the proper contour. This must not be supposed to imply that the planks are hollowed or curved by the adze to the exact shape of the vessel, but that the width and thickness of adjoining planks are adjusted to each other. When a prepared plank is laid against the outside of a vessel, the convexity of the latter causes the ends of the planks to stand out several inches from it; and on the other hand, when laid on the inside, the concave surface causes the ends to be in contact with the timbers, and the middle to be several inches away from them. The planks require, therefore, the aid of powerful instruments to force them close to the timbers previous to bolting, and this operation is further assisted by bringing the plank to a heated and moistened state by steam.

The parts of the planking vary in thickness, and receive distinctive names, according to the places which they occupy; but all are treated nearly in the same way—sawn, dressed with an

adze, steamed, forced to the curvature of the ship, and fastened to the timbers with bolts. The trenails, which are more numerous than the bolts, are not driven in till a subsequent stage in the operations. In adjusting the planks to the ship's sides, care is always taken that the adjoining ends of two planks in one row or strake shall not occur at the same part of the ship's length as a joint in the row next above or below it—a caution similar to that observed in laying the courses of bricks in a wall, or the rows of slates on a roof, and the object of which is sufficiently obvious in relation to the strength of the structure. Whoever has an opportunity of seeing the whole hull of a vessel will observe that the planking is ranged with great regularity, each strake or row diminishing in width towards the ends, to conform with the diminishing size of the vessel.

But our day is ended, and the ship is not finished. We will, therefore, in our next issue, invite the reader to spend with us a second "day at a ship-yard."

THE THRICE-WEDDED.

BY MARION EARLAND, AUTHOR OF "MARRYING THROUGH PRUDENTIAL MOTIVES."

CHAPTER I.

"It is actual profanation!" exclaimed Miss Eleanor Lisle, with a look of vexed disgust.

"What is the sacrilege, Nelly?"

"You remember that antique gem of a stone cottage, at the foot of the Clearspring Lane?"

"I saw it yesterday, and found it one of the few things Parisian taste has left unaltered. The creeper clings to the rough walls with its tough fingers; the white rose-bush is as full of buds; the elms meet over the door in the same arch as when you, Agnes, our poor dead Raymond, and I, frolicked upon the broad step, and kind Nurse Martin sat in the porch with her eternal knitting-work. I stopped to drink at the spring, too, and thought more of the days of Nelly, Aggy, Ray, and Will, than of the accomplished Misses, the travelled Wilton Lisle."

"How tiresome and odd you are, Wilton! What pleasure you can have in perpetually running back to those old times which everybody but yourself has forgotten, I cannot divine. I am in a literal, not a sentimental mood, to-day. I have no particularly tender associations connected with your cottage, but it is visible from the east drawing-room windows, and my Pa-

risian taste' could desire no more picturesque object to close the shady lane than its brown roof and vine-covered walls. Imagine the tap of a shoemaker's hammer ringing up to the house on still summer evenings, and the odor of leather, cabbage, and onions regaling our senses, when the wind is from that quarter! As your memory is so tenacious of past events, you may recollect that it was the fashion once to form parties to visit Mrs. Martin, and the praises that her clean house and pleasing manners elicited. Now I shall never dare lead company in that direction for fear of the apparition of a fat man, guiltless of coat and vest, apron on, and last in hand, and a slovenly woman, standing arms akimbo, and mouth open, to stare at the 'quality.'"

"I begin to understand. Pride, not affection, is alarmed. It is not that a stranger dwells in the hallowed place, but that that stranger is a shoemaker, and one of his craft is not a very dignified appendage to the Lisle mansion. Talk of republican simplicity and equality! I tell you, Eleanor, that society lacks stamina and durability, which smiles upon a brainless ape, because he is well clothed, and his velvety paws unsoiled by labor; and sneers at the man

who makes honorable the sentence: 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.' I have seldom seen a handsomer or more intelligent man than this same shoemaker, or a prettier woman than his bonny bride."

"You have called, then?" said the young lady, contemptuously.

"I have. I was passing the cottage yesterday morning before you were awake, when I heard singing. The door was open; and, looking through the little parlor, I saw, in the back room, a young man, in a leathern apron, plying the waxed-ends upon a shoe, and humming a clear, deep bass to a popular roundelay which his wife was warbling. She sat near him, binding a shoe-vamp; her profile turned to me. It was as regular and delicate as any high-born damsel's; the roses upon her cheeks, if less vivid in color than some I have seen, had the advantage of being natural; and I would have given broadcloth, broad acres, and blood, to be that Apollo of a Crispin, as she paused in her song to ask, with a happy smile: 'Is that right, Harry?' showing her work. My shadow fell upon the floor, and he looked up. I advanced, begged pardon for the intrusion; 'but the house had been, in my boyhood, a favorite resort.' 'No apologies are necessary, Mr. Lisle; you are welcome,' he said, rising, and offering his hand with manly frankness. 'My wife, Mrs. Thorn.'"

"And you bowed at the impertinent's forwardness, as if 'Mrs. Thorn' had been a duchess, and she blushed and simpered?"

"I *did* bow, most respectfully; but she neither blushed nor smiled. She had risen, and, after returning my obeisance with quiet grace, would have left the room, had not I requested her to stay. With a half apology, Thorn resumed his work; but I doubt whether your irresistible Captain, or the pompous Schmidt, could have talked as sensibly and agreeably as he did during my visit. He is a native of New England, and learned his trade there. Three months since, he married and came to this State. He spoke hopefully of his aims and prospects, having been favorably received and encouraged in the neighborhood. 'You find time for reading, I see,' said I, glancing at a well-stocked book-shelf. 'Yes, sir; Minnie here will not hear of my working after dark; so I read aloud.'"

"What is Wilton talking about?" drawled Miss Agnes, a fairer and less animated beauty than her elder sister. She entered from the garden, and sank upon the first ottoman, "wearied to death."

"Why he has been peeping into a turtle-dove's

nest," rejoined Eleanor; "and has an idea of paying Werter to a shoe-binding Charlotte."

"Ah! that odious cobbler! I wonder papa let him have the house!" said Agnes, with a faint show of displeasure. "You are not really in love with his wife, are you, Wilton? Susan says the creature is passable."

"The creature is more beautiful, and, to your shame be it said, more of a lady, in behavior and heart, than my sisters!" retorted Wilton, angrily, turning on his heel, without waiting to mark the effect of his rebuke.

Agnes widened her sleepy blue eyes. Eleanor's glowed with rage.

"They move before the year is out, or I am not virtual mistress here, Mr. Wilton!"

CHAPTER II.

LITTLE cared Minnie Thorn that her nearest approach to the "great house" was in her journeys to the spring, hardly more than a stone's throw from her dwelling. Her world was her rustic home; it was comfortable, neat as hands could make it, and more attractive to her, with its shadowing trees and mantling creepers, than the gloomy grandeur of the pile of turrets and chimneys upon the hill. Mr. Lisle, senior, a proud, weak old man, vain of his pedigree and possessions, drove by their door almost daily in his easy gig, bestowing but a careless stare, as upon objects too far beneath his notice to awaken curiosity. Eleanor's sweeping habit, streaming plumes, and bold horsemanship, excited wonder, not envy; and still less did she grudge her the attendance of the mustachioed ex-cadet, who was her cavalier as invariably as another man, similarly bearded, but Dutch in physiognomy and form, sat beside Miss Agnes in the softly-rolling carriage. Serenely complacent in her happiness, they troubled her less than she did them; for often a scorching ray from Eleanor's flashing orbs fell upon her simply-attired figure, and Harry's white shirt-sleeves, as they talked together in the porch on warm evenings; and over Agnes's full red lips flitted a smile of disdain.

One afternoon, Eleanor and her lover rode by, unaccompanied by carriage or groom. The lane was crossed by a gate a few yards below the cottage. It had rained in the morning, and the bars and latch were black and wet. The gentleman bent over his horse's neck to the fastening, but Eleanor restrained him.

"Forbear, rash youth! You forget that your

gloves are immaculate, and that you are going to visit ladies."

"But the gate must be opened."

"True. Call the cobbler out."

Minnie was at the window, and arose to retire from view; but he espied her.

"Ask your husband to open this gate, will you?" said he, in a tone neither respectful nor exactly insolent.

"He is not at home, sir," replied she, coloring.

"Then come yourself!" said Miss Lisle, imperiously. "Make haste! we are in a hurry!"

With crimsoned cheeks and shaking hands, Mrs. Thorn performed the service demanded. Eleanor seemed as if she would have ridden over her, so impetuous was the forward leap of her steed through the gateway; and as the officer struck his rowels into his charger's side to pursue her, he flung a coin to Minnie. This was too much! She stamped it into the red clay, and burst into tears. "She was not a slave, to be ordered about and insulted by those purple-powd highflyers! Harry was as much of a nobleman as the best of them, and she was his wife. He should know of their conduct as soon as he came back!"

She had dried her tears, and was busy pruning the rose-tree, when a gentler voice accosted her. It was Wilton Lisle, also on horseback, who, raising his hat, inquired for "Mr. Thorn."

She returned the answer she had given before.

"Ah! well, I will call as I return. I wish to see him on business. Good-day."

"He is a gentleman," thought Minnie, her wounded vanity mollified by his courteous demeanor. "Very different from the rest of the family! I don't know that it will do any good to complain to Harry. He is quick-tempered, and I should be sorry to have him quarrel with his landlord."

Her prudent resolution was established, as she removed his hat and wiped his heated brow after his long walk. He was tired and hungry; she must refresh, not annoy him. Their supper of light, sweet bread, cool milk, and berries was dispatched; the round stand—too diminutive to merit the title of table—set back, and the young couple repaired to their seat upon the step. The moon, glancing through the clims, floored the porch with arabesque mosaics; the air came fragrantly over the mown clover-fields; and the insects were chirping their vespers in the short turf of the yard.

"God's blessings are free to all!" said Harry, drawing his wife's head to his shoulder. "We enjoy this evening as much as though we lived

on the hill, instead of in the valley; don't we, Minnie?"

"Yes," said she, somewhat reluctantly; "I had rather be Minnie Thorn, the shoemaker's wife, than Miss Lisle; but——"

"But what? My Minnie is not tired of her lowly home already?"

"No, indeed! But things are so strangely ordered in this world! I am content; but you are good and handsome, and, if self-educated, greatly superior to that haughty imbecile, Mr. Lisle."

"Minnie, take care!"

"You are, Harry! And why is he put above you? why has he the right to dictate to, and oppress you?"

"Minnie, darling, he is not above me; but our spheres are different. In the sight of our Maker we are equal, although his means are more ample, his responsibilities heavier than mine. As to enjoyment, his heart is void to-night in comparison with my full content. Riches do not purchase happiness, Min, nor does honor always secure the self-respect of him to whom it is awarded. What has brought on this unusual frame of mind, little one?"

"Oh, nothing!" said she, evasively.

"Listen! do you not hear a horse's tramp?"

"Yes; it is young Mr. Lisle."

"He is kind and pleasant, if he is rich; hey, Min?"

Wilton galloped up to the gate, and stooped to open it; but his horse sheered.

"Let me do it, Mr. Lisle," said Harry; "he is skittish."

"Thank you; but stand aside, if you please. Skittish or not, he must do as I choose. He has been vicious all day. Now, sir!" and his whip descended upon his flanks. The animal reared and plunged, but refused to approach the gate. By main force, Wilton brought him within reach of the latch, and again, as he leaned towards it, was jerked away. Spur, rein, and lash were exercised upon the refractory brute at once. He arose high in the air, vaulted, and cleared the fence, falling upon his forehead with a concussion that broke his neck, and dashed his hapless master to the ground at some distance off.

He did not unclothe his eyes in consciousness until seven days after. He was in unknown quarters. The whitewashed ceiling was lower than that of his spacious chamber at Lisle Hall; the walls were bare, except where a single engraving—a portrait of Franklin—hung; the sheets were clean, but their texture was many degrees coarser than the fine linen which had draped his couch from boyhood. It was early

morning; he knew this by the dewiness and odor of the breeze that flapped the curtain of the lattice-framed window. He remembered nothing since his going forth to ride. Where had he passed the night? A softly-uttered observation of the beauty of the day attracted his eyes to the speaker, who sat in the door between this and the next apartment. He saw the very scene he had described to his scornful sister, after his first visit to the shoemaker. The waxed ends and the needle were moving as rapidly as then; but their progress was noiseless, and the song hushed.

"If Mr. Lisle could taste this air, it would revive him," continued Minnie. "He was very restless all night."

"And you would sit up alone?" said Harry, reproachfully. "Put down your sewing; your eyes are dim."

"Oh, no! I must be employed. I am so anxious about the poor young gentleman. So handsome and good as he was, too! Miss Lisle said, yesterday, they had succeeded in obtaining an efficient nurse, who would come to-day. She cannot mean better—whatever she may do—than I."

"Still, if his family desire it, you must give him up promptly and cheerfully," answered Harry.

"Not if I can speak to prevent it," thought their auditor.

Minnie flushed painfully, as she looked towards the front door.

"Here they are!" she whispered; and Miss Lisle's queenly head bowed under the low portal; then came the family physician, and a fat, fussy-looking woman. Wilton feigned slumber.

"Really, Mr. Thorn!" began his sister, "this is obeying the doctor's directions! He enjoined quiet, and you are here, with your lapstone and hammer in his very ears! Doctor, danger or no danger, he must be carried up to the hall to-day. Better kill him at once than torture him in this style!"

Minnie spoke quickly and fearlessly to vindicate her husband.

"The bench and lapstone are out of doors, where their noise cannot reach the house, Miss Lisle. He only brings such work in here as can be done quietly."

"Tut!" was the unfeminine response; and, gathering her robes about her, she picked her way daintily over the spotless floor to the bedside. "How is your patient, Dr. Bailey? Why, he is awake and sensible! Wilton!"

He motioned to her to put her ear to his mouth, and summoned all his strength for the energetic whisper—

"I am grieved and ashamed of you! Send that woman away! I won't have her about me."

Dr. Bailey nor his father could alter his purpose. He was silent during their harangues; but at the close his answer was pithy and resolute—

"Send her away! I will have no nurse but Mrs. Thorn!"

And most unwillingly the aristocrats had to confide him to her care.

A strong friendship grew up between the youthful pair and their sick guest. To them he was docile and patient; his sister's visits always left him uneasy or fretful. The perfumed handkerchiefs suffocated him; their silks rustled, and their jewelled fingers did not soothe him as did Minnie's cool hand upon his brow. No marvel that he was voted, in family conclave, "obstinate" and "whimsical," "perfectly infatuated with the society of those low people!"

It was a sorrowful day when his removal could be no longer postponed. He was able to walk about the room, and looked much as formerly, only paler and thinner. Harry laid aside his work to chat with him awhile, before the carriage arrived to bear him away; and Minnie hovered around, "a smile on her lip, a tear in her eye," busied in little arrangements for his comfort.

"She will have it I am good as new, despite my cleft skull," said Wilton to his host.

"And you are!" interposed Minnie. "When the hair grows over the temple they shaved, it will conceal the scar."

"It was an ugly scratch," remarked he, examining its zigzag lines in a mirror; "an inch lower, and my good looks would have been ruined."

"A hair's breadth deeper," thought Harry, "and what then?" "Minnie has the most singular scar upon her wrist I ever saw," he said aloud. "It is a well-defined butterfly."

Minnie bared her plump wrist and showed it, a wonderfully accurate figure.

"A coal of fire had fallen into her cradle, while she was an infant, and burned her," she said; "Harry says, if I run away this mark will certainly betray me."

Wilton had but a short time to spare, and he employed it in an ineffectual endeavor to persuade Thorn to accept some substantial token of his gratitude. He offered him the cottage rent free for life, or as long as he chose to occupy it, when he refused direct pecuniary compensation. Harry was thankful, but stubborn.

"I can support her and myself while health and strength last. My daily thanksgiving is,

'I owe no man anything.' Rob me of my independence, and you deprive labor of its zest. You say I am 'born for a higher station than this.' If so, I will work my way up to it. The little we have done for you was done heartily and freely; we are repaid in seeing you well again. If you please, we will change the subject, Mr. Lisle."

"But one promise," pleaded Wilton. "If you are unfortunate or disabled, you will apply to me first of all."

"I will!" replied Harry, relaxing his proud tone, and his eyes moistened as he gave his hand to the generous youth.

Wilton did not mend as rapidly after his return home, and his uncertain gait and pallid cheek alarmed his selfish parent for the succession of his name and estates. Avaricious only when the welfare and aggrandizement of his family were not concerned, his purse-strings were put into his son's fingers when Dr. Bailey recommended that he should again travel for some months. With his going, the hall and cottage were separated by an unbridged chasm. The tossing cataract of life at one did not disturb the sunny ripple of the other. As winter approached, however, Harry became conscious of a counter-current, sluggish at first, but gaining power so steadily as to excite serious misgivings. He was surprised that the cold weather brought such a trifling increase to his earnings; but another shop had been opened half a mile off, and he received no more orders from the hall.

"What will you do?" asked Minnie, as he heard that his rival had been sent for to the houses of two of his best customers, to measure their children's and servants' feet for their winter shoes.

His bright face had looked troubled for an instant, but he answered, smilingly—

"An enemy hath done this! I will live it down, Minnie; never fear!"

How far his probity and unflagging energy might have enabled him to do this, was not to be proved. On a dreary autumn day, he walked five miles to carry home some work, for which "it was not convenient" for the rich farmer "to pay him just then;" and on his weary and sad way back he was caught in a violent shower of rain. Drenched and shivering, he reached his dwelling, and Minnie's tender skill was inadequate to ward off an attack of acute pleurisy.

It is trying to the most resigned to lie, useless and helpless, upon our couch of languishing, set carefully without the thronged path of busy life; yet with its din penetrating our ears, its rush

and whirl jarring our nerves, even if we can be spared from the battle-field; but to know that with every minute of inaction are passing returnless opportunities for acquiring comfort and honor—to be tended through sleepless vigils and days of pain by Penury and Disgrace, gaunt, inexorable handmaids ready to pounce upon all that is esteemed precious—this was poor Thorn's fate. The latent energy of Minnie's character stirred nobly. Her husband's nurse, with no domestic to relieve her of any part of her household, she solicited plain sewing from the ladies, then from the servants in the neighborhood; and toiled over her needle early and late, only quitting it to reply to Harry's call.

His illness was tedious. For awhile, his slender savings and her industry kept them above water; but nearer and nearer stalked Want. On Christmas Eve, Minnie carried her clock—a bridal gift—to the wife of a small farmer near by, who had admired it, and obtained, in exchange, about one-fifth of its value in money, and a chicken, which she served up in broth for her husband's dinner next day. He could not touch it; hiding his face in her bosom, he wept like a child.

"Oh, Minnie! to think that I have brought you to this!"

She coaxed and expostulated.

"They could live along," she said, "for the few weeks that might remain of his sickness. The darkest hour was just before day;" and many other worn phrases of consolation, such as rise to the lips when the comforter's own heart is sinking.

"You are starving!" said he.

"Oh, no, dear Harry! I have food enough, and could eat with an excellent appetite, if you could enjoy it with me."

"But the doctor's bill, Min! it must be met."

"It shall; and Dr. Bailey is rich enough to wait!"

"The rich are not always the merciful," murmured Harry.

Rap! rap! struck the head of a cane against the door; and Minnie went to it. A thick-set man, his dreadnought and fur cap covered with snow, walked in unceremoniously, nodded, with a "Sick! hey?" to Harry; and shook himself before the fire, with the gesture and splutter of a huge water-dog.

"Your name is Thorn, I b'lieve?" he said, approaching the bed.

"Yes, sir," was the faint reply, followed by a distressing fit of coughing.

"And I'm the sheriff of the county."

Minnie exclaimed in terror. Harry was calm in his innocence.

"Well, sir?"

"Well; your rent is due the first of January, and Mr. Lisle asked me to call and see whether it was ready."

"I paid him a quarter in advance."

"Of course; or you wouldn't ha' got the house; but there's three-quarters more, 'cording to my arithmetic, which ain't the one you Yankees study, maybe. You are keen chaps at a bargain; but 'casionally you run against your match. The money 'll be forthcoming, I s'pose?"

"I am entirely unprepared for this," said Harry, the blood rushing to his temples at the fellow's impertinence. "My sickness has obliged me to use the money intended to defray the debt. I never expected that Mr. Lisle would press me for it; if I recover, it is safe."

"If! he don't believe in 'ifs,' nor I neither. My advice to him was, 'Catch him while you can!' I've writ down against half the Yankees I've had on my books, 'Dcad,' or 'G. T. T.' You've got notice. I'll come and see you New Year's day."

There was a grand ball at the house on the hill that night; and the snow-flakes' quiet fall, incessant though it was, did not deter the most delicate of the bidden guests from venturing out. They did not feel the cold in their close carriages, and bundled in mufflers; but through the drifts there struggled a pedestrian in the same direction, whose limbs were stiffened and sore from her walk. The hall door was stretched wide, having just admitted a group of revellers; and as she paused in the porch to brush her cloak and shoes, a young man crossed the hall, in stature and general appearance so like Wilton, that she sprang forward with a glad cry—

"Oh! Mr. Lisle! you have come!"—checked as she saw his face.

"I am Wilton Lisle's cousin. Can I do anything for you? Do you wish to see either of the ladies?"

His friendly smile encouraged her. Too diffident to apply directly to the stately landlord, and with tolerable confidence in her ability to move one of her own sex, she complied with his invitation to walk in, asking to see Miss Lisle "for a few minutes."

He showed her into a small library, warm and bright as summer, and upon whose rich, flowered carpet she almost feared to tread. Over the mantle hung a small oval picture of a lady, so like Miss Lisle and her brother, she could not doubt that it was their mother; and she was still gazing into its dark eyes, and gathering assurance from their mildness, when Eleanor's voice sounded at the opening door.

"Three minutes; just three!" said she, coquettishly.

"Three centuries," responded a voice, Minnie knew for the mustachioed officer's. "I shall count the seconds."

"Very well. Let me know when you are tired of the employment;" and she shut him out. Regally she looked and moved in her chameleon velvet robe of brown and gold, the white shoulders swelling above the narrow edge of lace. Upon one strayed a curl that seemed to have escaped from the braids of its kindred tresses, of precisely the hue of her dress. Diamonds sparkled upon her neck and arms; and although Minnie was ignorant of their value, she was overawed by the splendor of this imposing apparition. The smile retreated from Miss Lisle's lips as she recognized her visitant. "Did you send for me?" she inquired, in indignant surprise.

"Yes, madam," faltered Minnie; then, as the image of Harry, sick, and lonely, and miserable, rose in her mind, she forgot all else. "My husband is very ill and cannot work. The little I can do just procures food and fire; yet a man came to-day with a message from your father, threatening us for the rent of our house. Miss Lisle, you are a woman, and can feel for us in our destitution. Harry does not ask to be forgiven the debt, but for time. He is honest and honorable; your father will never regret his indulgence. Will you not intercede for us?"

Her language and manner were so different from what might have been looked for in one of her station, that the vain, ill-furnished heart of the patrician belle felt a pang of jealousy firing the dislike she already had for the "cobbler and his wife."

"I have nothing to do with my father's business. I cannot interfere," she said, icily.

"But you are his child; he will not refuse you."

"I shall not make the attempt," and she turned to go. Minnie caught her robe. Its magnificence was nothing to her now.

"Miss Lisle, my husband will die if he is driven out in this weather. Leave us our poor shelter; you, who have every luxury, spare us a home!"

"You are very presumptuous! Are you insane?" and her fingers were loosed from their hold. "Take him to your relations. We cannot provide for all the paupers in the State."

"I have no relatives except my mother and sister, who are far away. My dear, dear mother! she never thought her child would beg in vain for a place to lay her head! Oh, Miss

Lisle, you had a mother!" she pointed to the portrait; "for her sake pity us!"

The beauty reddened with anger and rising shame.

"I have said all that I can. If my father had consulted me, you would never have been his tenants."

"May I see him?"

Minnie stood against the door.

"He is engaged. Let me pass!"

Her frown menaced annihilation; but Minnie spoke again.

"Will you tell me where your brother is?"

A push shoved her aside, and she was alone. Every door of hope double-barred. Before Wilton could hear from them they would be homeless. She tottered back to the fire, stunned and irresolute. Harry—high-minded to the last—had strictly forbidden the most distant allusion to the services they had rendered their oppressor's son. Her inquiry as to his address was wrung from her by the agony of the moment; and a clutching at this straw was the only sign her mind gave of vitality.

There was a tap at the door; then it was opened, and Eleanor's admirer looked in—

"Where is Miss Lisle?" he inquired, hastily.

Minnie's answer was a request at which he started.

"Can you give me Mr. Wilton Lisle's address, sir?"

With a bold stare and prolonged whistle, he wheeled towards the door. The almost delirious woman followed. Wilton's cousin was still in the hall, apparently watching for her.

"Hazlitt, a word in your ear," said the officer, linking arms. Ere his whisper was concluded, his friend broke from him.

"Are you the Mrs. Thorn who nursed Wilton after his accident?"

"Yes, sir."

He wrote hurriedly upon a card.

"That is his direction. You will make no improper use of it, I know."

She seized it, and stammering her thanks, wrapped her cloak around her to go out into the storm.

"Have not you an umbrella?" pursued Mr. Hazlitt.

"No, sir. I do not need one."

"Take this," and he carried it into the porch, raised it, and put it into her hand. With a grave face, he watched her disappear amid the falling snow.

"You've lost one umbrella," said the militia, smiling with a bad grace.

"I would lose fifty sooner than let a woman

go out, so unprotected, on such a night. I wonder how far she has to walk?"

The person addressed knew the distance well; but he did not care to see an associate of his racing down the long avenue to overtake and escort a mechanic's wife.

"How sorrowful she looked!" said Hazlitt to himself. "My respected uncle is not famed for his charities; but he surely will not let her suffer."

He took his departure upon the succeeding day, or the memory of his cousin and friend might have induced him to inquire into the condition of his humble acquaintances. Prompt as was Mr. Lisle's agent, Dr. Bailey's was as quick. Harry had paid for his medicines, but not for attendance, and the benevolent Galen, whose love for money was only equalled by his thirst for popularity, aware of the evil disposition of the Lisles towards his debtors, forwarded both of these darling objects by sending in his bill an hour after the sheriff had levied upon the furniture of the cottage, stripping it of everything but the bed, upon which the sick man lay, and his now useless bench and tools.

"The law must be obeyed," said her myrmidons; and she was to the pound of flesh, for Harry Thorn lay that night in the county jail; in a week, in the repose that knows no troubling, he filled a pauper's grave.

CHAPTER III.

It was one of the hottest days of an unusually sultry August, and the sun poured fiercely upon a small wooden building, situated directly upon a sandy road, in what is called the "pine region" of North Carolina. The house was but a story and a half high, and could not contain six rooms; yet upon the turpentine-exuding boards of a red sign, hung upon a pole at the door, was scrawled:—

"TAVERN. BY MRS. WILLS."

The doors and window-facings were of the same sanguinary hue; the rest of the edifice had never known the touch of the brush. In front of the main entrance grew a melancholy Lombardy poplar, a horseshoe nailed to its trunk, not to keep off witches, but as a hook for bridles. At the farther end of the house was a no less lugubrious locust, its dusty and shrivelled leaves crackling in the burning wind like the blackened tendrils of Jonah's gourd; and in its shade—if its feeble resistance to the glaring rays could be so called—a woman sat at the window

making a man's jacket. It was of coarse, stiff homespun, a servant's garment; and her taper fingers, although roughened by labor, could hardly drive the spike of a needle through the fabric. She was youthful, not yet five-and-twenty, and neither her face nor figure was in keeping with her surroundings. Her expression was unnaturally gloomy; the eyes seemed to have wept their last tears, so stern was their dejection; she looked like one, not prepared for the worst, but to whom it had already come. Yet she was very lovely. The cold despair of the eye did not fade its lustre; and the habitual compression of the lips gave character to a feature that might else have been of too soft a beauty.

A stir ran through the house; a troop of tow-headed children scampered to the outer door, imitated by a barefooted negro woman; then the sharp tones of Mrs. Wills rang out piercingly—

"Ike! Ike! come take these 'ere horses!"

"My servants will attend to them, madam," said a decided voice; and, for the first time, the sewing-woman looked out.

A travelling-carriage was in the road, a colored man removing the baggage, and another disengaging one of the horses from the harness. The animal was trembling, and scarcely able to stand, yet he turned his head intelligently as his master came to his side. He might have been fifty—he might have been seventy, so erect was his carriage, and so blanched his locks; his features had a foreign cast, and he spoke with a slight accent.

"Take him to the stable," he ordered. "I will see to him myself. Madam"—to the officious landlady—"can I have a room?"

"Certainly, sir; certainly, sir. Walk this way, sir."

"It is not necessary that I should see it. John, look to the baggage." And he disappeared in the direction of the miserable stable.

John rejected Ike's clumsy aid in transporting two large trunks into the best room, the one in which our seamstress was seated. Mrs. Wills preceded him, inquisitive and bustling; but the dignified valet stayed not to listen or reply.

"De Trac-y," read Mrs. Wills upon one of the trunks. "I wonder where he came from, and where he 's goin'? Good gracious, how heavy! Full of money, maybe."

The needlewoman was silent.

"Ain't you done that jacket yet?" exclaimed her task-mistress, jerking up a sleeve. "You ain't worth the salt to your bread. Git up, and clear away your scraps and litter. Be s'pry; you've got to help cook supper. Folks like that 'ar man don't stop here every day."

But, when tea-time arrived, the stranger declined sitting down at the common board. He "would have a cup of tea and a slice of toast in his room." His servants were attending to the horses; and Mrs. Wills, while sneering at his "fine airs," revered his equipage and luggage too sincerely to be unaccommodating.

"Here, Laveny." And the young woman above mentioned arose from the table. "Do you take in this waiter, and wait till he 's done; and, mind you, ask him what else he 'll have."

The traveller was pacing his chamber with a firm, military tread that gave no indication of fatigue or infirmity. He bowed and seated himself at her entrance. Setting the tray before him, she retired to a window, and gazed listlessly from it, unconscious that his falcon eye was upon her. He did not withdraw it until his meal was concluded, when, with another silent bow, he recommenced his promenade. It was arrested by her question—

"Do you wish anything more, sir?"

Her voice was sweet, and had no vulgar tone. That brief sentence evidenced her dissimilarity to the family into which she had been cast.

Mrs. Wills visited the state chamber in person before bed-time, ostensibly to take in a fallow-candle, and see that "Mr. De Trac-y was comfortable."

"Your horse is better, I b'lieve, sir?"

"Yes, madam."

"But you won't be able to drive him tomorrow, I reckon?"

"I think not, madam."

"Come far to-day, sir?"

"Thirty miles."

"Dear me! You don't live in Caroliny, I s'pose?"

"No, madam."

"Whar then? In Virginny, maybe?"

"Yes, madam, in Virginia."

"Them 's likely niggers of your'n. Raised 'em yourself, sir?"

"Yes, madam."

Laconic as were his replies, he sustained the catechism with more suavity than his formal aspect had led her to anticipate, and she lingered to beat up the pillows and fold down the counterpane.

"Were you born in Virginny, sir?"

"No, madam; in France."

"You don't say so! Why that 's over seas, ain't it?"

"Yes, madam." Here he smiled, and asked a question in his turn. "Have you resided here long, madam?"

"Goin' on fifteen years. Ever since I was

married. Mr. Wills, he died three years ago last spring; and here was I, a lone widder, with six children, to scuffle for myself."

"Have you not a sister living with you?"

"No, sir. I reckon you took Laveny for my sister."

"Ah! only a niece?"

"No, sir; she ain't no kin. Thank gracious, nothin' like her ever came of my family. She was a sort o' cousin of my old man's. There was three o' em, a mother and two daughters—New Yorkers. This Laveny married some no 'count fellow in Virginny, and t'other two went to Wilmin'ton, 'cause the doctors said the oldest girl's health couldn't stand cold weather. Well, she died 'bout the same time Laveny's husband did; and what should her mother do but sell out what little she had, and start off to see her daughter. She got this far, and was took sick; so she sent on money to bring Laveny, and you may be sure I had my hands full for six months, for she lived that long, and kept her bed all the time. This girl didn't have enough to keep her from starvin', and my old man says: 'You may stay here and help my wife, till you can do better.' But she's 'nough to tire anybody's life out with her long face and ladyish ways."

"Very probable, madam. Will you be so kind as to send my boy John to me?" interrupted her hearer, yawning.

He remained through the following day, taking his meals in his room, and preserving, in Laveny's presence, the same respectful silence until evening, when, as she handed him his tea, he addressed her abruptly—

"I have a proposition to make to you, Mrs. Thorn, which may appear strange; but I beg you to hear me through. You are young, poor, and dependent upon one whom you must dislike. I am rich, and my own master. I feel daily the need of a companion and a stay under my increasing infirmities. I am a physiognomist, and you will suit me. I am a fatalist, and was led hither to find you. Therefore, madam, I propose to marry you, take you abroad to afford you such advantages of education as my wife must have, then, returning to my Virginia estate, introduce you into the best society in the country. In recompense, I demand of you only the duty and attention an indulgent husband may ask of a wife. While I eat my supper, you can deliberate upon my offer. If you are the woman I take you to be, your answer will be ready when I have finished."

Beyond a start at the beginning of his speech, she exhibited no sign of confusion or surprise; and now, withdrawing to her window, she

looked forth with the same immobility of countenance, never stirring until he pushed aside his cup. Then she took up the waiter, saying, calmly—

"My situation cannot be made worse. I accept your offer; stipulating, however, that the ceremony shall be performed here, and by a minister whom I know."

"It is well. This is the twentieth of August. On the twentieth of November, I shall be here again. Make no preparations, but expect me. Remember, November twentieth. Good-night."

Three months more of petty tyranny, and insulting jeers, and uncomplaining toil. The dry leaves of the locust had dropped, piecemeal, from the sapless twigs; the lean poplar stretched up naked arms in its woful prayer towards heaven; the sandy road was heavy with a fortnight's rains, when the De Tracy carriage again halted at the "tavern" door.

Four gentlemen alighted; and Mrs. Wills recognized, with astonishment unspeakable, the clergyman of the district and two of the most influential men in the region—one a justice of the peace, the other a respectable farmer. But one trunk was removed this time, and John carried it in to "Mrs. Thorn," who accepted it without remark. It contained a complete suit of travelling apparel, and ere Mrs. Wills, having recovered from her wordless amaze, had exhausted a tenth of her invectives, the bride presented herself in the room where the gentlemen were waiting. With involuntary and profound respect, they arose and saluted her. She appeared like a lady of rank, who had put off her disguise, rather than the maid-servant of an inn assuming one, so well did the habit of gray silk, the rich cashmere, the velvet bonnet and plume become her. Disregarding Mrs. Wills's abuse and interrogations, she advanced and laid her hand in the proffered one of Colonel De Tracy, for by this title his companions addressed him, and the ceremony proceeded. It was short. A written certificate of the marriage, signed by the witnesses, was intrusted to the minister, another given into the bride's keeping. The coachman had not quitted the box, and John stood holding the carriage door for his new mistress. Mrs. Wills disdainfully repelled her attempt to bid a civil farewell; but her righteous indignation did not urge her to the length of refusing the munificent *douceur* tendered by the colonel in the name of "Mrs. De Tracy."

The whip cracked, the plumed leaders darted off, bearing not Minnie Thorn, "the cobbler's" widow, but Lavinia De Tracy, the beautiful consort of the descendant of a line of nobles.

(To be continued.)

GODEY'S LADY'S BOOK.

PHILADELPHIA, AUGUST, 1854.

EVERYDAY ACTUALITIES.—NO. XXII.

ILLUSTRATED WITH PEN AND GRAVER.

BY G. T. HINCKLEY.

A SECOND DAY AT A SHIP-YARD.

In the building of a ship, matters are so arranged that many different parts are in progress simultaneously; some workmen making preparations for the beams of a vessel withinside, while others are planking the exterior, and others perhaps engaged at various parts of the head and stern. The beams are stout and well finished timbers, stretching across the vessel from side to side, at intervals of a few feet, and serving not only to support the deck or decks, but also to bind the two sides of the vessel together. These beams, situated as they are at right angles to the keel, have given rise to many nautical expressions which are rather incomprehensible to general readers: thus the "breadth of beam" is the width of a vessel; an object seen at sea in a direction at right angles with the keel is said to be "on the beam;" when a ship inclines very much on one side, so that her beams approach to a vertical position, she is said to be "on her beam ends;" and many similar phrases might be adduced.

The beams are ranged at such distances apart, that a merchantman of a thousand tons burden requires about thirty beneath the main deck. Each beam is usually formed either of one or of three pieces, according to the dimensions of the vessel; the three pieces, in the latter case, being securely joined or scarfed together. The beams are not straight, but are curved upwards in the middle, so that their upper surfaces are convex and their lower concave; the bending being such that there is a curvature of about one inch to every yard in the length of the beam. The ends of the beams are made to rest on stout planks

called clamps; but the real fastening is by means of iron brackets technically termed *knees*, bolted both to the beam and to the timbers of the ship. Besides the fastenings at the two ends of each beam, there are supporters in the middle, which are often formed of cast-iron, combining lightness of appearance with strength.

Various ledges and frames, called *partners*, *coamings*, and *carlings*, being arranged between the beams, the decks are next attended to. These divide the hull into different stories, analogous to those of a house; and in the one case, as in the other, the number of floors is greater in some instances than in others. Large ships of war are furnished with three entire decks, reaching from the stem to the stern; besides two shorter decks called the forecastle and the quarter-deck, the one placed at the head of the vessel, and the other towards the stern, a vacant space called the *waist* being left between them, at the middle of the ship's length. In smaller vessels of war, and in merchantmen, the decks are fewer. The deck is generally made of Dantzic or Memel fir, and for vessels exposed to a hot climate, yellow pine is sometimes employed. The deck-planks are laid side by side, lengthwise of the ship, or parallel to the keel, and vary from six to ten inches in breadth, and from two to four in thickness. They are nailed down to every beam and to every carling, either with iron nails or with nails formed of a mixed metal.

We have said that the planking which covers the inside and outside of a ship is secured, partly by bolts and partly by wooden pins called trenails, to the timbers; and that the trenails are not driven in until some time after the bolts. The object of this seems to be that, by making

THE THRICE-WEDDED.

BY MARION HARLAND, AUTHOR OF "MARRYING THROUGH PRUDENTIAL MOTIVES."

Concluded from page 23.

CHAPTER IV.

COLONEL DE TRACY'S eccentric character was so notorious that, when news reached his American friends that he had married, it was believed, an English lady, and was living in comparative seclusion in Paris, it was "no more than everybody had expected," although some were sadly chagrined thereby. His nearest relatives were the son and daughter of a half brother. They had been reared and educated by him, and notwithstanding his liberal portionment of them at their marriages, which had occurred several years previous to his, it was currently whispered that he would make the eldest son of one his heir. This unforeseen matrimonial adventure was a terrible blow to parental ambition and friendly prognostications. But his letters—succinct as war dispatches—were regular as ever; still, at stated, and not distant periods, came costly gifts to his grand-nephews; so hope maintained a struggling existence.

Two years elapsed, and without a word of preparation, the Colonel electrified Captain and Mrs. De Tracy, who resided within a few miles of his country-seat, by walking into their breakfast-room one clear, frosty morning. The lady's scream was certainly unfeigned, as was the gentleman's start; their expressions of overwhelming rapture may have been equally so; but a less shrewd judge of human nature than himself could have detected a dryness in the inquiries they would have had cordial, after the health of "his lady."

"And when are we to see her, dear uncle?" asked Mrs. De Tracy. "I am so impatient!"

He drew two cards from his pocket.

"She charged me with these for you."

"At home Thursday evening;" but you will not forbid her relations from seeing her before that time? Almost a week!"

"By my desire, she receives no company until then," he replied; "I wish her to recover entirely from the fatigue of travelling."

He made a similar excuse to his niece and her husband, upon whom he likewise called that day; and it was with curiosity, whetted by

delay, that they repaired, with the crowd, to his house at the set time. His establishment befitted his wealth and taste, and it could have had no fairer mistress than the magnificently-attired woman who awaited her guests. Refined in every motion and look, with strength to conceal her own feelings, and tact to divine those of others, she was listening, with an air of respectful attention, to her lord's last injunctions.

"It is, as I have told you, my intention to adopt one of the boys, sooner or later. In the choice, I shall be guided by further observations, and in these I require the aid of your woman's eye and wit. I should decidedly prefer Edward's son as bearing my name, were it not that certain early follies of his father have weakened this predilection. His sister Emily married a man of talent and good family, a cousin of Edward's wife. A proud race are those Lisles."

"Lisles!" almost passed the lady's lips; and a perceptible tremor did not escape the speaker.

"Do you know them?" he inquired.

"I have heard of them," was the quiet reply.

"From me, doubtless. I must have spoken of them frequently to you."

He never had; and his further remarks were unheard. This Eleanor, then, whose dutiful letters to her "very dear uncle" she had perused, was her early, causeless foe! the murderess of her husband! for thus was she branded in the fire-stamped book of her Past. She, to whom she owed her lifeless heart and frozen affections; her infidelity in human goodness; her utter isolation of spirit, would be in her presence in a few minutes; and she must meet her with honeyed phrase; must curb the impulse to dash her to the earth, and crush her with reproaches and scorn!

She was first upon the list of arrivals. Leaning upon her husband's arm, she swam into the apartment, as haughty in her bearing, if not so handsome, as formerly.

Mrs. De Tracy knew them instantly; and as he drew off his glove to present his hand, she thought of the dripping gate-latch and trampled coin. They did not recollect her. She had not feared this. Eight years had transformed the blushing girl into the self-possessed woman.

Very ladylike and composed was her reception of their lavish courtesy; the blood of the Lisles did not impart to their daughter an air of such thorough breeding. Later in the evening, another couple pressed through the fast-filling rooms. For a moment, people and walls were a rushing whirlpool, whose turbulence scarcely subsided, ere "My niece, Mrs. Hazlitt," "Mr. Hazlitt," were named.

She had heard that he was cousin to the Lisles; but how could she expect to see the frank, kind face which had beamed upon her that bitter Christmas night—the one star amidst black clouds?

While the dance and song and hilarious converse went on—in that brain, prematurely matured, as her moral sense was blunted by injustice and suffering, there was preparing a scheme of revenge. Her mentor's maxims of fatality and destiny had not been without effect upon her mind. Chance or Fate had placed the rod and the reward in her hand. Beneath the placid mien and smiling face burned the spirit of a Medea; to herself she was a heaven-ordained Nemesis.

Colonel De Tracy, if a singular, was yet a sensible man. He had asked duty, not affection, of his partner, and was too wise to disgust her by doting fondness. They were an exemplary couple; he attentive to her comfort and wishes, she deferentially consulting his. But at heart he loved her with a proud affection. He was gratified by the readiness with which she ruled and modelled herself to his standard of female character, and her rare loveliness was an irresistible appeal to his feelings. Reserved to others, he unbent much of his formality in their private interviews; testifying his confidence in her discretion by conferring with her upon his most important projects. She knew her power better than he did. Until now, it had been a subject of indifference, awakening neither gratitude nor ambition; it suddenly magnified into an engine of incomparable force.

Others saw it as well. Eleanor cultivated an intimacy as sedulously as she had shunned her once. Her advances were met by a passive politeness she did not know whether to attribute to indifference or indolent pride. The Hazlitts did not experience this. Emily was naturally amiable, and her good traits had been developed by her husband's judicious influence. Mrs. De Tracy and himself were friends at sight; and her partiality extended to his family. His children were much at Oakwood—the Colonel's place; not more frequently than Walter and Eddy De Tracy; but these last were never en-

couraged to visit "aunt's" boudoir, or to climb her lap, as were the little Wilton and Emily.

They were at play in the parlor one day—Mrs. De Tracy reading apart—when a lisped oath from Walter caused her to lift her eyes.

"Fie, Walter! never use that word agin'!"

"Papa says it," said the boy, confidently.

"But not in the presence of ladies, sir!"

"Yes, ma'am! He told mamma so the other day, when Mr. Robinson dined with him. After he went away, papa came into her room, and said '— the luck!'"

"And what did your mother do?"

"She said, 'Dicey will be your ruin. Why don't you stop?' Who is Dicey, aunt?"

"One of your father's intimate acquaintances, I suspect," rejoined she, with a meaning smile.

Another thread of the web of Fate thrown into her grasp! Colonel De Tracy's hatred of gaming was inveterate—confirmed, if not formed by the circumstance that with his brother it had been an incurable passion, he having committed suicide in a rage of disappointment at his ill-fortune at Rouge-et-Noir. The manner of his death was carefully concealed from his son, until his uncle discovered that the propensity was hereditary. Edward was then at West Point. The Colonel made a journey thither; disclosed the whole sad story, paid his debts of honor, and swore solemnly to disgrace and beggar him if he repeated the offence.

Mrs. De Tracy had gathered rumors of her step-nephew's embarrassments—unpardonable, in view of his wife's fortune and his uncle's liberality, and suspected foul play. Robinson was a noted sporting character; his name—as Captain De Tracy's guest—was enough to awaken surmises prejudicial to his character. She waited patiently, watchfully for proof. Supports to her convictions were abundant; but it was long before she could procure positive evidence against the wary gamester. What she was sure were losses, he explained as retrenchments, and talked prudently of "foolish expenditures for plain country people," and of his wish "to lay by a pretty fortune for each of his children." A pair of carriage-horses were sold; "Eleanor was afraid to ride after them;" the carriage followed; "he wanted a lighter vehicle." His absences from home were more frequent and prolonged, and Eleanor's perturbed demeanor would have touched a less vindictive heart than that of the woman she had so cruelly injured.

So passed spring, summer, autumn, and Time ushered in another winter.

"I have an invitation for you," said Eleanor, entering her uncle's study. "Wilton is to be

married at last, and writes pressingly for us all to come to Lisle Hall. Here is his letter to you, uncle."

"Whom does he marry?" asked Mrs. De Tracy.

"A Miss Somebody or Nobody from the lower country. I never heard of her before; but he is so odd, we did not hope for a brilliant match from him. Indeed, I wonder at his marrying at all. He is thirty-two years old. I quite long to have him see you; you will be mutually pleased."

"I hope so," answered she, carelessly.

"You would like to go, then?" inquired the Colonel.

"If you think proper, sir."

He liked to show his wife, and, moreover, had a sincere friendship for Wilton; so an acceptance was sent. Mrs. De Tracy manifested more interest in this visit than was consistent with her usual fashionable nonchalance. Her husband smiled at her occasional flutter of expectation or pleasure, in the preparation for, and during the journey. Obeying a characteristic whim, he had avoided questioning her with regard to her early life. To him, her existence commenced with his acquaintance. Having ascertained that she had no near connections to interfere with his rights, he made her a De Tracy, and chose to forget that she had ever borne another name.

At Wilton's invitation, a wild, ungovernable desire to revisit her former home, and see their only friend, took possession of her, and mingled with it was a foreboding, triumphant, yet agitating, of a coming crisis; a belief that another, and the most marvellous, was to be added to the startling coincidences of her eventful life.

It was a chill, rainy evening when they reached Lisle Hall—still a mansion of noble proportions, but dwindled from her memory's picture. Wilton met them upon the steps, and hurried them into the house with an hospitable welcome. Upon the threshold was a girlish figure, with a face of changing smiles and blushes. Passing an arm around each, Wilton said, reassuringly—

"Mary, this is your sister Eleanor."

The smile faded, and the color deepened upon the timid bride's cheek, as her lips touched the icy ones of her sister-in-law; but Alfred Hazlitt's joyous greeting and his wife's kiss restored the bloom. Agnes and Mr. Schmidt were there also. They seemed to have given themselves up to the cultivation of the animal to the infinite detriment of their intellectual natures. His bushy whiskers had a streak or two of gray, and

her hair was growing scanty; but their excessive obesity made these trifling disfigurements appear of no consequence, being in itself a sufficient disguise to those who had not seen them for nine years. Wilton acted the host well; but, as Eleanor had predicted, one of the company had his especial notice. Alfred and his charming partner engaged the modest "Mary" in conversation; the Colonel challenged Mr. Schmidt to a game of chess; Edward lounged in a fauteuil, listening, apparently, to Eleanor's chat with her sister; and Wilton stationed himself by Mrs. De Tracy.

The Past throbbed along her pulses at his remembered voice. He alone was unchanged. His most honored guest, his gentle courtesy did not exceed that he had paid her as the humble mistress of a mechanic's cottage. Her emotion, hidden as it was, touched a responsive chord. He became strangely interested in his fair visitor.

"Excuse me," he said, at length, gazing admiringly upon her classically moulded face; "but you certainly are not quite a stranger to me. We must have met before."

"Probably." Her voice was untremulous. "You have travelled, and we resided abroad for some time. The face of a countrywoman, seen under such circumstances, would not be forgotten soon."

"Perhaps we did meet. My memory retains features as faithfully as events, and holds both too tightly for my comfort, sometimes."

"And do you, the *enfant gâté* of Fortune and Love, speak of forgetfulness as a blessing? Of what would you seek oblivion—of injuries or benefits?"

"Of my injuries, and the misfortunes of others."

"Would it not be wiser to profit by the experience you have gained, than to bury recollection?"

"If I *can* profit by it," he replied; "but if the injury cannot be atoned for, the misfortune is irreparable; all that is left for us to do is to forget."

Mrs. De Tracy retired at an early hour, upon the plea of fatigue, and, in accordance with her earnest request, was permitted to leave the parlor alone. She dismissed her maid when she had removed her satin robe, and hastily donned her travelling-dress in its stead. Then she threw a large shawl over her head, opened the door, and, after listening a moment, glided down the staircase, through the hall, out into the pitchy night. The drizzling rain fell steadily; but she paused not; she trod the well-known lane—past the Clearspring—its bubbling unruffled by the

swollen waters—she gained the cottage. It was dark and still—evidently uninhabited. She could just discern its outlines through the gloom; but she felt for the broad door-step, and in the shelter of the rude porch laid herself upon it. The rain plashed mournfully from the eaves and from the elm-boughs; the wind echoed her sighs. The stone was wet with tears—the first she had shed since her mother's death—and these were of a fiery, bitter flood, such as those who weep them should pray never to have renewed. One half hour to memory and grief—she arose.

"This injury cannot be atoned for; this loss is irreparable; yet I do not court forgetfulness!"

CHAPTER V.

"I see that ugly hut is standing yet. Why don't you pull it down, brother?" said Mrs. Schmidt, as she lounged by one of the east drawing-room windows, next morning.

"Not a stone shall be displaced while I live!" was the response, and a look, half regret, half sternness, passed over his face.

"As romantic and ridiculous as you were in your boyish days! If Eleanor had not married, it would not have been there this long."

"Eleanor may rest content with her efforts in that quarter!" said Wilton, bitterly. The subject evidently excited him.

"She has never repented her action," retorted Eleanor.

"I have suffered enough for both," said her brother; "but we will not revive that unhappy affair upon this, of all days."

"I wonder what ever became of the shoemaker's wife," continued the unimpressible Agnes. "She was almost pretty, rather vulgar-looking, though."

"Enough of cobblers and sentiment for one morning," said Eleanor, rising. "Lavinia, I am a petitioner for your ladyship's judgment of my dress," and the aristocratic arm encircled Mrs. De Tracy's waist. The embrace of a bo-constrictor would have been more endurable; but, save by a stiffening of the slender form, as if the muscles had changed to steel, she did not resent the caress.

Among the throng of carriages which disgorged their contents, that evening, at Wilton Lisle's door, a travel-stained hack was driven up, and a gentleman, stepping from it, inquired for Colonel De Tracy.

"He is dressing, sir," said a footman. "Will you come in and wait?"

"My business is urgent. Take him this card."

"He will see you," said the servant, returning; "please to walk up stairs." He conducted him to Mrs. De Tracy's dressing-room.

"Mrs. De Tracy, Mr. Holman," said the Colonel, shaking hands with the new-comer. "I sent for you here because we shall be less liable to interruption. I trust nothing unpleasant has procured for us the honor of this visit."

"An affair which, I hope, may terminate more happily than my fears forebode," replied the polished man of law, with a glance at Mrs. De Tracy.

"You will speak as if we were quite alone, Mr. Holman," answered the Colonel, observing it.

"Then, sir, not to detain you from your friends longer than I can help, will you look at that paper, and say whether the signature is genuine?"

The Colonel adjusted his eye-glass. The honorable blood of the old Frenchman mounted to his silvery locks, as he exclaimed—

"It is a forgery, sir! a base fraud! Who has dared?"—His choler choked him.

"I feared so! I feared so!" said the lawyer, slowly, shaking his head.

"Do you know a man in your neighborhood by the name of Robinson, Colonel De Tracy?"

"I do! A professed gambler! an infamous swindler! What of him?"

"He presented that check at the bank. In consequence of some knowledge of his character, or from the clumsiness of the forgery, its genuineness was doubted, and the man detained until I could be sent for. I should have exposed him immediately, but for his assertion that he had received the draught from—I grieve to say it, sir—Captain De Tracy."

"Edward!" ejaculated the horrified auditor. The paper fell to the floor.

Mr. Holman picked it up, and went on, in a tone of sympathy—

"There is one way to save him. You can acknowledge this as your handwriting, refusing to return it to Robinson."

"Never, sir! never!" The resolution of a Brutus spoke in his uplifted head and marble countenance. "The viper has struck his fang into the breast that warmed him! He is no nephew of mine; the law may take its course!"

"Pardon me, Colonel De Tracy, but these are matters little suited for a lady's ears. Mrs. De Tracy would perhaps prefer to be spared the further discussion of this deplorable circumstance."

"I thank you, sir. Lavinia, you had best retire."

She was scarcely in the corridor, when a closet door flew open, and Eleanor sprang out, ghastly with terror.

"I have heard all!" she gasped, seizing her arm. "My husband! save him!"

The hour had come! A pitiless, retributive spirit filled her breast at the appeal, expelling all womanly compassion.

"Come with me," she said, composedly. "We cannot talk here."

Down the lighted staircase, through the bustling hall, she led the way to the little library, and locked themselves in. With frantic vehemence, Eleanor pleaded for her erring husband. She told of his misery at the dominion of his tyrannical passion; all was lost, she said—their estate secretly mortgaged—their furniture even pledged to the sharpers who had robbed him. "But let it all go! Let us live in pinching want; only spare us this dreadful shame! You can soften that stern old man. Oh! think of my children, my guiltless babes, and have mercy!"

In her distraction, she clung to the knees of the silent, unmoved figure.

"Eleanor Lisle! look at me!"

She obeyed, with a shudder at the unpitiful accents.

"Nine years ago, a heart-broken woman knelt to you in this room, knelt where you are crouching now, and besought your mercy in behalf of an innocent husband. You drove her out into the storm with contumely; by your agency, he was deprived of every earthly comfort; you murdered him as certainly as if you had stabbed him to the heart. You talk of pity! you, who, only this morning, gloried in a deed a fiend would blush to confess! I answer you as you did her, 'I never interfere' with Colonel De Tracy's business. As you 'could not provide for all the paupers in the State,' we may be excusable for declining to furnish means of escape to all the criminals."

Mechanically, Eleanor arose, and stared wildly at her accuser and judge.

"Who are you?"

"The avenger of innocent blood," was the reply. "You vouchsafed her but three minutes; I have wasted twenty."

She unbolted the door, and passed, with unruffled brow, into the crowded saloon.

To her surprise, Colonel De Tracy entered at the same moment, with his man of business, whom he presented to Wilton as a friend who had arrived unexpectedly. The old officer's face was ashy pale; but he controlled himself admirably, receiving recognitions and introductions

with his customary precise politeness. Exchanging bows and friendly greetings with all in his way, he drew near his wife. His brief whisper was caught by no other ears.

"All must be kept quiet to-night. We must have no scenes."

Alfred Hazlitt, asserting his right, as Wilton's nearest male relative, opened the ball with the bride, and the groom led out Mrs. De Tracy. Edward was her *vis-à-vis*, so dashing and gallant that his partner, one of the belles of the evening, did not remember that he was a married man, until Wilton asked him "what had become of Eleanor?"

"Hush!" said the Captain, affecting to whisper, looking towards the object of his present devotion, and they whirled away, laughing.

Wilton offered his arm to his companion at the close of the set, and they sauntered through the room, chatting gayly and seriously by turns. The deep recesses of the windows were filled with shrubs and flowers, and as Mrs. De Tracy put out her hand to pluck a leaf, her bracelet became unclasped. Wilton recovered it dexterously before it touched the floor.

"Allow me!" he said, playfully.

She held up her arm, dimpled and round as a child's. With a start and exclamation he raised it to the light. He had perceived and recognized the butterfly scar. One moment he stood transfixed, gazing at her in mute astonishment; then throwing back his hair, revealed the irregular cicatrice upon his temple. Subterfuge would be idle. She spoke ere he could.

"Your suspicions are just, Mr. Lisle; you knew me as Minnie Thorn. This is not the time or place for explanations."

"I must, I will speak!" said he, impetuously. "I dare not defer what I have to say to another opportunity. For years I have sought and longed for this meeting. I never dreamed that it would come thus. I can be of no use to you now. My fond hope was to assist or relieve you in some way, to the sacrifice of years of time, or the whole of my estate. But I may express my shame and sorrow at the treatment you encountered from those of my blood and name, whose obligations to you were great and uncancelled. My father was not inhuman. Upon his death-bed he assured me that he was ignorant of your husband's real character and situation. His errors were, hearkening to the representations of others, and an undue anxiety to secure his debt. His surprise and grief at learning the result of his agent's severe measures were extreme. With his dying breath, he mentioned you and your wrongs. His God forgave him,

Minnie; will you cherish resentment against the dead?"

The familiar pet-name thrilled her; but she returned with tolerable steadiness—

"I have never considered him the chief instrument of our ruin."

Wilton bit his lip.

"You allude to Eleanor. She had only the extenuation of thoughtlessness, and a silly, unfounded spite, which distorted her views of right and wrong. She was a vain, spoiled girl, with strong prejudices, remaining in force to this day. I cannot say, 'pardon her'; but your meekness and charity were boundless once; cannot they cover her transgression?"

She was silent.

"Do you know this?" he asked, taking a worn letter from his pocket-book. "I did not get it for months after it was written, too late to reply to your call for immediate aid; but it expedited my return. You were gone, no one knew whither; his noble spirit was in a better, truer world."

She had retreated further into the embrasure, close against the window, and was partly concealed by the curtain; the tears were streaming fast! fast!

"I inquired and looked for you in vain, my tender nurse. The thought of his death and your destitution has been a fever-spot upon my heart, a blight upon every pleasure. My first act, as master here, was to lay Harry where I knew he would have wished to sleep—at the door of his loved home, in the shade of the elms. I have sat by that grave often and again, and, reading this blurred sheet, so eloquent of affection and distress, have wept as for my brother. You believe me; do you not, Minnie?"

No answer but a stifled sob and a low moan, "Oh, Harry! Harry!"

Mournful accompaniments to the gushing music and the merry, answering beat of quick footsteps!

"I must be alone for awhile, Mr. Lisle," she said, presently, but extending her hand.

He bowed over it as he pressed it, and left her. She dropped the curtain about her, and looked, through tears, to the spangled sky. Her heart—deaf and dumb paralytic! warmed and stirred by the healing wand of true friendship—was answering, in feeble whispers, the voice of her good angel, whose teachings were of that sublimest of virtues—Forgiveness. One sentence of Wilton's stung like a scorpion-sting: Her "meekness and charity!" Was their proof to be found in her sarcastic, scathing denial of the prayer of her humbled foe; in her

deliberate consignment of three sinless babes to a life of hardship and degradation? Their mother—wicked and heartless though she had been—was Wilton's sister. Should his head be bowed yet lower for the faults of others? Would revenge restore her to the enjoyment of life and love, or make Harry's slumbers more peaceful? Thus she reasoned, with a changed spirit; and a sweet quiet stole over her with the birth of generous resolve. Her husband had never denied her a single request, and she knew that, in spite of his lofty sense of justice and truth, her intercession for his misguided nephew would be seconded by the pleadings of natural affection. Mortification and privation might be in store for the unfortunate family, but not open disgrace. Emerging from her retirement, she beheld Eleanor, within a few feet of her, talking with an excess of volubility and animation, the most superficial observer could see was forced. She did not see Mrs. De Tracy; but her hollow laugh, as she passed, sounded in the hearer's brain for years afterwards. The more she thought of it, the more she wondered at her presence there, torn, and racked, and despairing as she was. Some end was to be gained by a course so opposed to feeling. What was it? She looked around for Edward. He was nowhere to be seen; and when an hour elapsed without his re-entrance, the truth broke upon her. His wife had warned him of the impending danger; her appearance in the scene of mirth was a screen for his flight.

"Blind fool that I was not to have foreseen and prevented this!" she muttered. To fly was to trumpet his crime; and he might have—probably had departed. In nervous haste, she explored the apartments in quest of her husband. He was planted in front of a loquacious dowager, enduring, with unflinching civility, her cannonade of prosy reminiscence and anecdote. Upon ordinary occasions, no one, acquainted with his punctilios, would have ventured to interrupt the monologue; but his wife touched his shoulder, and motioned him imperatively to accompany her. On their way up stairs, she communicated her apprehensions and their cause. One impassioned supplication for his forbearance towards the wretched man made him forget his harsh sentence. None of the servants knew where he was; but one had met him going to his chamber about an hour before. The key was on the inside of the lock.

"Knock!" said the Colonel, in an undertone, to the boy.

No reply.

"Call him!"

"Mars' Edward! Mars' Edward!" vociferated the negro, growing frightened at the manner of his companions.

Not a breath or a movement.

"He has set out!" said Mrs. De Tracy, aside. "They may know something about him at the stables."

The negro had sunk upon his knee, with a knife turned the key, and applied his eye to the crevice. His yell, as he sprang to his feet, brought a crowd to the spot. "Murder! murder!" it said, and the old Colonel fell across the threshold. They thronged up—master, and guests, and servants—the door was forced; and there, leaning back in an easy-chair, his hand clutching the bloody razor, sat the forger, his throat cut from ear to ear.

CHAPTER VI.

COLONEL DE TRACY was gathered to his fathers a year after his nephew's death. Eleanor and her children had a home at Lisle Hall; but a comfortable provision was made for them in their uncle's will. Oakwood was bequeathed to young Wilton Hazlitt, upon condition of his taking the name of De Tracy; and the widow, anxious to leave scenes fraught with such harrowing associations, removed to Baltimore. Here she had few associates, no intimates. Her interesting appearance and settled sadness excited curiosity and sympathy; but inquiries and attempted consolation were met by the same rigid reserve. Her religious duties, neglected for years, were attended to with a severe exactitude, denoting a morbid or uneasy conscience. No beggar passed her door or left her presence empty-handed; the heats of summer nor the blasts of winter caused her pew to be vacant; yet the eagerness with which she bestowed alms and went through the form of worship could not be mistaken for ostentation or devout zeal. Discovering that ease of mind was not to be bought, she chose to ascribe her dissatisfaction to the coldness and poverty of the Protestant faith, and sought balm in the bosom of the "Mother Church."

To her confessor, she unloaded her sorrowful breast; and he added penances to the propitiatory offerings to Remorse. But the "Benedicite" of his absolution failed to drown that hollow laughter and awful cry of "murder;" holy water nor incense could cleanse the blood-stain she felt resting upon her soul. Such sweets Revenge carries behind his back to cast upon the dupes he smiled on while approaching.

In her rounds of mercy she was accompanied, sometimes by a Sister of Charity; oftener by Father Rogét, who was exceedingly proud of his proselyte; and when he could not attend her in person, not unfrequently sent, as a substitute, a guest-brother, or one of his pupils, recommending a careful imitation of this pious "sister's" works and deportment, as an invaluable aid in the improvement of their own religion and manners.

Paul Kennedy, his favorite student, was of Irish parentage; but his feet had pressed the shores of many lands. Educated for the bar, he entered the army in a boyish freak; fought the French, and afterwards, falling in love with their customs and style of life, cut no mean figure as a *savant-dandy* in the salons of the metropolis; squandered his fortune in dissipation, disappeared in the smallest circles of the vortex of society, and came up on the other side of the Atlantic, a studious, self-denying candidate for holy orders. He was, at the time of our story, about thirty years of age, with an elegant person, grave, but winning address; a far-reaching, scheming brain, and a will that said "lord and master" to none—not even His Holiness.

He was to take orders in a few months, and the worthy Father was benevolently desirous that he should secure the favor of so useful a patroness as the rich and childless neophyte. His junior was not loath to make himself agreeable. In time, his powerful, acute mind acquired a mighty influence over hers, enfeebled by distress and superstition; and the sagacious superior foresaw, in this ascendancy, an additional and indissoluble chain, binding her to the One Great Cause.

My poor pen falters in the attempt to convey a faint idea of the pious scandal, the rage, the amaze, the unaffected grief of the good man, when coolly informed by his pupil that he had written to Rome, praying for a dispensation to espouse Lavinia De Tracy; and he added, irreverently: "If this reasonable petition is denied, 'Mother Church' loses two unworthy members. Mammon and Cupid *versus* stole and cassock! what man in his senses could hesitate in the choice?"

The "reasonable petition" was negated; but the interdict arriving but a day before the nuptials, the bride was kept in ignorance until the ceremony was over. It would be difficult to define her motives in the commission of this sacrilegious act. She had never been, at heart, a Romanist; therefore, was comparatively free from the horror with which such an alliance

would be regarded by the generality of those of that persuasion. Her loneliness and unprotected state may have had their effect in producing the change; but undoubtedly the principal cause was the mixture of fear and fascination she felt for her suitor.

Father Rogét read, with tears, the sentence of excommunication upon the Sabbath after their union; but they were beyond the mutterings of its thunders, speeding their way towards the balmy South. They wintered in New Orleans; the ex-priest launching upon the dancing billows of gayety and extravagance with an *abandon* that testified to the irksomeness of his previous austerity. Along with other affectations, he threw off the show of tenderness and respect for his wife. Without a friend in the world, insulted daily by her only guardian, deprived of the importance with which her wealth had invested her, the meanest hireling in her household was an object of more consideration than its nominal mistress. In subsequent years, in reviewing this epoch of her history, she described her heart as a desert, above which clouds brooded forever, moving, indeed, at the breath of contention, but never passing away.

They had been married but a year, when a fresh and fruitful cause of discord presented itself. By a clause in Colonel De Tracy's will, she had a life interest (*not transferable*) in certain property. This was but an inconsiderable part of her original income, and she was astounded when told by Kennedy that it was now all they had to depend upon. With this information, commenced a system of persecution as cruel as unprovoked. Again and again she represented that she had no right to dispose of either land or slaves, and surrendered every cent transmitted by her Virginia agent; he was obstinate in the assertion that she could devise some means of evading the testamentary disposition, at least that it was her fault that the clause was inserted. His worried victim seemed, even to his indifferent eyes, to be but a pace from the tomb, when he unexpectedly stepped on before her. He met his death in a gambling-house; and when his mutilated face was uncovered to the gaze of the wife of eighteen months, her comment was in her clasped hands and fervent ejaculation—

“Thank God!”

Kind reader, I have not drawn upon my imagination to tax your credulity in setting down the leading incidents of this tale of vicissitudes. I, its veracious writer, have often, in my childhood, seen the thrice-widowed heroine

—then a calm-eyed woman, long past the meridian of life, residing, in unpretending style, in a quiet country neighborhood. Well do I remember the sensation that rustled through our little church, as she stood before the pulpit, one Communion Sabbath, and pronounced the vow to consecrate her remaining years to the service of her Saviour, a vow which, as far as man could discern, was faithfully, prayerfully kept. Upon a stormy winter night, when the heavy dash of the rain was like the tramp of mourners, the sobbing wind like the weeping of the bereaved, she related her story to a dear friend of my own, who has since joined her in the far, changeless land. She touched, unwillingly, upon her latest and most singular marriage; spoke of the second as of the phantasmagoria of a dream; but upon the wedlock of her youth, she dwelt with swimming eyes and a smile of tender remembrance.

“Except during these latter years of resignation and contentment,” said she, “I have never known such happiness as when we sat in that cottage kitchen, Harry at his bench, and I, binding shoes, at his side.”

A TRAVELLER'S EXPERIENCE OF WOMAN.

I HAVE observed among all nations, that the women ornament themselves more than the men; that wherever found, they are the same kind, civil, obliging, humane, tender beings; that they are ever inclined to be gay and cheerful, timorous and modest. They do not hesitate, like men, to perform a hospitable or generous action; not haughty, nor arrogant, nor supercilious, but full of courtesy, and fond of society; industrious, economical, ingenious, more liable in general to err than man, but in general also more virtuous, and performing more good actions than he. I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship to a woman, whether civilized or savage, without receiving a decent and friendly answer. With man, it has often been otherwise. In wandering over the barren plains of inhospitable Denmark, through honest Sweden, frozen Lapland, rude and churlish Finland, unprincipled Russia, and the wide-spread regions of the wandering Tartar, if hungry, dry, cold, wet, or sick, woman has ever been friendly to me, and uniformly so; and to add to this virtue, so worthy of the appellation of benevolence, these actions have been performed in so free and kind a manner, that, if I was dry, I drank the sweet draught, and if hungry, I ate the coarse morsel with a double relish.—*Ledyard's Letters.*