

1870

The Young Lady's Guide

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THE
YOUNG LADY'S GUIDE.



PUBLISHED BY THE
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,
150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW YORK.

1870

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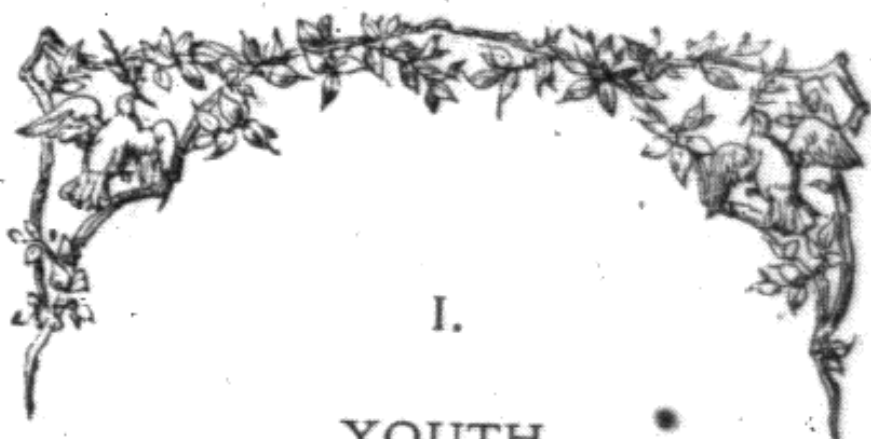
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PAPERS

FOR

THOUGHTFUL GIRLS.

BY SARAH TYTLER.



I.

YOUTH.

THERE is no greater mistake than to suppose that youth is necessarily the choice period, the green spot of life. To some it has not even the buoyancy and light-heartedness which are its ordinary portion. To not a few, cares and trials come while the frame is yet in its fresh vigor, and the eyes are sparkling with their first bold, blithe lookout on the world. To almost all, youth is a power which hurries them to its goal; the young heart is "hot and restless;" it will not take time to appreciate its treasures; it will not be satisfied with its goodly possession; it is full of uncertain desires, and wayward inclinations, and passionate impulses; it is grasping and straining and striving after a vague, uncomprehended good, an airy or ornate, ill-proportioned ideal; it is troubled with its ignorance of its own destiny, its unresolved will, its undeveloped circumstances. Youth is not often the cycle of peace. Do not fear then, young girls, to leave behind you the gayly-jested-over or mincingly-mentioned epoch of your teens.

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Do not dread growing graver or even stouter. With ripe womanhood, and the still, mellow decline of life, are won, and very often only then won, rest, power, wisdom, content. There may be a great garner in store for your future, there will be an abundant harvest if you will but sow in grace. It is a half pagan, and wholly untrue notion, to associate all blessedness of existence with rash, heady, crude youth. Fight the fight, and run the race, and the older you grow the more royally you will prove the conqueror, and the grander will prove your prize.

But the important question now is, how to employ this youth so as to make of its notes some of the sweetest and gladdest of the melody which began softly in the cradle, and which, if not drowned in the clang and discord of idol music, should swell until it joins the chorus of the skies. The writer supposes herself speaking to those who are very weak, very unstable, very erring, very imperfect, as she is; but who are in earnest, as even girls can be in earnest, about Christianity and their duty; who would con their lesson and practise their calling humbly, modestly, perseveringly to the end. She is aware from experience that not a tithe of girls of a contrary spirit would listen to her, even from curiosity; and they do not consequently come within the scope of her argument. Only to them she would say, once and for all, solemnly, wistfully, and affectionately, it is a piteous sentence which they are preparing to pass on themselves—to refuse to come to the Father for life, the Elder Brother for love, the

Holy Spirit for light. Idleness, disobedience, and rebellion, unless great mercy interpose, must sow the wind to reap the whirlwind.

"I do not know what I shall do with myself after I leave school," says many a good girl, doubtfully and regretfully. She need not be ashamed of the difficulty; her position is a problem of the present day. How to train the faculties of women, to gather up and employ their energies; how to provide for them a quiet and noble sphere, consistent at once with their dependence and their dignity; how to furnish with suitable objects the disengaged capacities and activities of mature single women, are considerations engaging a host of the great and good—enough with a blessing to bring women's affairs to a happy issue. The solution is not found, but it may not be distant. The difficulties run in this direction: Shall the girl return to the pickling and preserving, the herb-gathering and doctoring, the primitive housewifery and seamstresship of her great-grandmother? Shall the Protestant girl borrow a lesson from Catholic humanity, and, while she abjures asceticism, enthusiasm, and unnatural vows, become a deaconess instead of a sister of charity, have her *rôle* regularly laid down, of teaching the ignorant, nursing the sick, feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked? Or, shall she discover her bent like a boy, pursue her profession fearlessly and innocently, achieve independence, and from her own lawful earnings endow and cheer her own dear home, and let the rays from that centre of love and charity

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stream forth on every poor, stunted, burdened, desolate home on earth? Probably the solution lies in a union of the whole three: in domesticity, alms-deeds, and independence, woven into a Christian crown.

The secret of happiness here and hereafter, the gold thread of youth, lies in loving God and loving our neighbor, loving them early if it be yet possible, loving them well; losing one's own life in theirs, becoming guileless and docile, meek and reverent in our intercourse with them, loving them long, yea, for ever.

These Papers are written with a diffident but yearning wish to aid young girls in their aim at so lofty and beautiful a purpose. They are intended to steady their views, to comfort and confirm them, to help them in trying to contemplate by the broad light of God and the gospel, some of the things which are before them. These things consist of those gifts and faculties (in which youth is included) which necessarily and inevitably occupy much of their notice; those pursuits which form part of the nurture and growth of the soul; those stumbling-blocks which beset their road: those encouragements which will enable them to lift holy hands, without wrath or doubting, which will preserve them our own bright, trusting, eager, joyous young people, till God shall please to lay upon them the responsibilities and the labors of more advanced years.



II.

PLEASURE.

SUPPOSE no one denies that we all desire pleasure, notwithstanding our difficulty in attaining it. However, there is this curious contradiction, that there is nothing more necessary than to urge young girls to cultivate purely pleasant habits, purely pleasant tastes which shall not pall, which they may reasonably hope will increase and brighten with years, and be made perfect in a better and an enduring world. There is nothing more puzzling, and yet more patent in the present day, than the neglect and destruction, as far as it is possible, of a multitude of delicate instincts which, quite as much as great faculties, fill us with pleasure. The eye is untrained, or only artificially trained; the natural ear is neglected in the midst of its elaborate tutoring, or only accustomed to discord; the quick feelings are allowed to run riot, or condemned to be blunted; the bright humor to sleep; the buoyant elasticity to sink flat and dead. How full our life is; how much we might enjoy it, and thank God for it! But we overlook our treasures,

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and forsake them for the cold glitter of fairy gold, or the dead heaviness of substantial but unlacked, unsuitable bullion, till we find our error too late. And well it is if it only end in a long, wistful sigh of regret; if, in spite of all our follies and imputations, we have still built on the rock of our Master and our duty.

One of the very first lessons to be learned is, that true pleasure is a simple, lowly, homely, hearty thing, open, in a great degree, to most of us. Alas, alas! that ever there should be such hard circumstances as to crush it out of existence. But to many, to multitudes, to the mass of those addressed, pleasure is an easy thing; is nigh you, is ready to burst out into blossom over your head and under your feet. Only condescend to lift up your eyes and look for it, and stoop and pluck it; for, like every thing else worth having, it is coy, and will not force itself on your reluctant or careless grasp.

It is scarcely necessary to say to a good girl that true pleasure cannot consist in what belongs to mere rivalry and gratified vanity. Such pleasure is, to treat it most gently, very empty and unsatisfactory; and unless it is mixed with some genuine emotion, some honest assertion of honest claims, honest satisfaction in honest gifts, honest gratification in the honest pride of friends, it is about as noisy, hollow, and short-lived as that crackling of thorns beneath the pot, which the wise man banned.

But it is incumbent to publish, that pleasure, like duty, does not consist in any thing like intellect

and great mental attainment. To some, of course, it lies there, as even to the soldier it may lurk in the smoke of artillery and the flash of steel; and to another soldier of the same master, it may actually abide in the dark and noisome den in which he blesses God that he hails the dawn of a better day. But to all it is plainly in what affords them innocent gratification. It is a giant with a hundred hands; a rainbow with a thousand dyes. It changes, Proteus-fashion; it varies with a million temperaments. It may be something very different to you from what it is to me. But it perfectly agrees in this respect—it is a harmless, nay, a softening, sweetening enjoyment, though we may not and need not go far out of our way to seek it, and must not sacrifice for it our cross of duty. We are bound to cherish it as one of the instalments of the future, one of the alleviations of the present, a bright drop of dew, a brave beam of sunshine sent to refresh and gladden us by our gracious Father. And the more childlike our hearts are, the more submissive and loving, the more readily we admit, the more freely we entertain the heavenly visitant. We cannot be true Protestants, but must be clinging very pertinaciously to the doctrines and practices of will-worship, asceticism, supererogatory mortification, if we do not recognize the obligation and privilege of drawing forth all the pleasures within our nature and locality, and carrying them heavenwards.

But if pleasures are countless as the leaves on the tree, and, like the leaves, not two alike, they fall

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also pretty generally into classes, and offer themselves in their divisions to particular classes of the community. To young girls, allowing for many exceptions, there exists a peculiar range of delights, capable of expanding and maturing with the growth of the woman, until, in full dropping ripeness, balmy and mellow they salute the last, lingering, earthly sensations of widowed wives, aged mothers, frail spinsters hovering on the border-land. This range belongs largely to primitive nature, to flower gardens, kitchen gardens, fields, woods, moors, mountains; to animals, wild and domestic, useful and ornamental, cows and poultry, birds and bees. That a love for nature is latent in the great body of men and women, is clear from its appearance under the most unfavorable circumstances, and after the longest intervals. The successful merchant withdraws to his villa, and dedicates his hard-won leisure to mangel-wurzel and pineapples, while his wife expatiates and luxuriates among her Alderneys and Cochin-Chinas. Of the retired tradesmen and their partners, whose ease and cash do not drag upon them, ninety-nine out of the hundred are amateur farmers or gardeners, or holders of some description of live stock. That so many only take to the teeming world—animate and inanimate around them—late in life, demonstrates that the original bent was choked and overlaid, and wanted excavation. Those who soonest disentangle it into breezy air and hardy life, develop also the most wholesome bodies and souls, the sweetest and sunniest tempers. Ques-

tionless, there are instances of crabbed gardeners and gruff farmers, but what would those rugged specimens of humanity have been without the lilies and the wheat? And are not their roughnesses mere outer excrescences? See them with the favorite child on the knee, the chosen friend at the elbow: why, they are tender philanthropists and kindly humorists in disguise.

Now, with regard to this wide arena of health and happiness, in the green fields and the singing birds, it is a mistake to consider the girls of the present day before their great-grandmothers. It is not only that heedless youth, in its own headstrong, self-engrossed fashion, rushes along and misses the very sedative of which it stands in need; but the habits of our present generation, the very accomplishments, the excessive pushing and straining after social importance, are all against simple, natural tastes. You will find the mother watching the young lambs coming into the fold with the careful ewes, while the daughter is off in a fit of the gapes; the aunt, contrasting the crimson-tipped oak leaves with the blue-green of the juniper and the olive-green of the wild rasp, while the niece is in fretful horror lest the sprays from the bushes tear her cumbrous crinoline. You will even discover the tottering old grandmother pulling up the gay celandine or the feathery meadow-sweet from the waterside; while the granddaughter has borrowed her brother's rod, and is fishing the pool, for "a lark," as she says in her brother's slang, but in reality to attract the

attention of all the half-scornful, half-scared fishers up and down the stream.

It is not that the present race of young people are more frivolous than the last, but they are more removed from unconscious, close, constant study of nature. Yes, they are, in spite of science and art, perhaps, in some instances, because of superficial, undigested science and art; in spite of far greater accommodation—immensely increased facilities of travelling, greenhouses made easy, aviaries, aquariums—they are very generally more removed from our old homely, humble, blessed mother-earth and her subordinate creatures. This is the case, just as much reading is apt to end in little thinking, as popular lectures have often resulted in popular ignorance, self-satisfied, defiant, all but incurable ignorance, for the reason that it wore a shallow disguise of knowledge.

All the appliances of modern training include a danger of leaving our girls vain, arrogant, pretentious, and insincere. They have studied botany, but they do n't care for their specimens one-hundredth part that their mother cared for her hydrangea in the green-and-white striped stoneware pot, which was such a cold, hard substitute for the soft-stained, oozy brick. They do n't mind their ferns and mosses as she prized the upper slice of carrot, which she cut and floated on a wineglass full of water, and saw rear its shafts of feathers when the snow was lying thick in the valley; or the cress-seed which she sowed on the moistened flannel over the cup, to

astound and delight poor sick little Hughie. Ah, you girls want the easy admiration, the frank, loving wiles of your mothers!

Our great-grandmothers, in the dearth of many other resources, thought much more of the fragrance of the mint and thyme in their herb-gardens, the sweetness of the fruit of their cherry-trees, the gayety of their larks' songs, the stature of their calves, the fatness of their chickens, the familiarity of their pet-lambs, even the smartness of their parrots and tame starlings and sparrows, than many of their descendants dream of doing of any plant or animal at home or abroad.

The sciences are noble in their own way; open-air sketching is a valuable power; picnics are occasionally pleasant social reunions; but Charlotte Brontë has told how little the agreeableness of a picnic has to do with burying one's face and heart in green leaves. We have all known picnic visits to ruins which were never looked at, to views which were never seen, to waterfalls which were missed. Picnics, in the old days, were named whims or follies: my lady's whim, or my lady's folly, to eat a syllabub or a bun under a tree, or on clover. As far as regards learning to know God's world, picnics (unless strictly family gatherings) will be whims and follies to the young always.

No, take nature quietly; make a secret contract with her, or at most, a threefold friendship between you two and a home-brother or sister. Don't mix her up too much with books. Look at her in her

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own simple, lovely light. Learn the shades and shapes of the trees from the belt in your own shrubbery; grow intimate with the moon, looking at her silver bow or her mellow autumn radiance, from your own parlor or drawing-room window, with your old father taking his nap at your elbow; or with your baby-nephew stretching out his arms to that shield in the sky, and drumming with his feet against your knees from his station in your lap. You may visit a botanical or zoological garden occasionally with pleasure and profit, but you will never cull from the foreign plants and beasts and birds, not even from the Victoria Regia and the hippopotami, a tithe of the benefit to be won, with little trouble, from your beds of anemones and sweet-william; or your canaries, with their quilted-flannel nest in the corner of their family cage; or your brood of young turkeys, spotted brown, black, and creamy-white, like Paul Potter's cattle, and hectored and protected by the bullying turkey-cock; or your downy yellow ducklings, so soon waddling to the willow-fringed pond; or the litter of puppies which your brother Harry is so glad that the covetousness of his friends enables him to permit Juno, poor lass! to please her soft heart by bringing up, though they are only to weary and harass her. Get acquainted with every leaf in your garden, every stone in the mossy wall. You have great precedents. A French philosopher made a walk round his garden fill two wonderful volumes. An English painter caused a brick wall to occupy

his canvas for three entire months. But do not fail to regard them in a humble, human spirit.

Have pets, as your great-grand-aunt and great-grandmothers owned them in store. They may be profitable pets, as cows, goats, hens, pigeons; or unprofitable, as love-birds, Java sparrows, Italian greyhounds, Russian cats. It was very refreshing to find an accomplished professional man writing the other day a delightful chapter on domestic dogs and their merits. Don't fear the waste of food—unless, indeed, you are conscious of starving some human being. What! would you presume to stint the lavish stores of the great Creator? Remember, He created all these creatures you are so ready to call useless; and if human beings were condemned by that same criterion of apparent uselessness, woe is me; how many of us would be left? No massacre in history would be equal to that great immolation of women and children, and men thrown into the bargain. Don't listen to that bitter or foolish saying, that they will die one day and grieve you. According to that selfish, morbid argument, you would not love your brother, for, alas, alas! he will die one day, and your heart will be wrung, though the parting be but for a season. Believe, it is something very near the truth—

“He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.”

The writer remembers well a poor woman telling how her daughter was won back from the sullenness of madness, by watching every morning, from

the back windows of the lunatic asylum, the fond gambols and caresses passing between a goat and her kid.

Harriet Martineau has a sensible, lively hint to girls in the country on the impossibility of their wanting objects of interest and amusement, if they are only intelligent and active. Happily much of the ridiculous affectation of being ignorant of common rural objects is on the wane in the broad light of our day; and we are more likely to meet with an extreme, exaggerated enthusiasm for colts and heifers, donkeys and goslings, than to be troubled with a high-flown scorn of their very existence. All that is untrue is bad, but, at least, we may receive the assumption of superior knowledge as the evidence of a more ample and genial standard of worth and beauty.

One word, in addition, to those young persons who may be disheartened by having grown up with only a vague general sense of enjoyment in the world of nature; a pleasant notion of blue skies and green fields, and pretty weeds in the hedges, but no intimate acquaintance or close communion with any of them. Do not be discouraged. This is a taste which it is possible to begin to cultivate sedulously and successfully at any period of life, even to old age. The writer speaks from experience. Brought up in a treeless district of the country, the commonest distinctions between the crisp, shining leaves of the beech and the leaves of the elm "rough as a cow's tongue," were long

unknown to her by sight. She was as full of her lush growth of fancies and feelings as any one. She was as blind and deaf as most girls to any but the dimmest perception of nature's holy influences. The opening of her mind to these influences was not the least of the debt which she owed to the dear, wise, patient friend who taught her a cottage child's acquirements leaf by leaf; who stretched her own knowledge to make her pupil distinguish the hues and lines on the bird's burnished wings and breast; who went on with her listening to the roll of the waves, periodically peeping into a hedge-sparrow's nest, lifting reverent eyes to the flaming comet, hearkening to the blackbird's melodious song over the primroses and polyanthuses in the cold spring twilight, and the robin's cheerful note among the scarlet-streaked apples and dark-green mottled pears of the russet fall, until something of the richness of earth's colors, and the deep but gentle symphony of her tones was forced upon the heedless, inattentive heart and brain.

Nature is God's book, in which we are to read our Father as in his written word; and she who neglects and turns her back on the study, will be ill-furnished in some respects for that consummation to which we are all devoutly looking.



III.

FRIENDSHIP.

IN one of Miss Edgeworth's tales there is an instance of a lady deciding her selection from her suitors, by the happy man's being able to prove that he possessed a faithful friend; and the test was by no means without its merits. In a former paper I alluded to the fact that long before, Miss Edgeworth's day, novels, biography, and essays laid much stress on evidences of friendship as indications of excellence. A heroine, like Harriet Byron, had a host of friends, and although she may tempt us to think of "the hare and many friends," and we may feel that she must have been in some sort a victim to her popularity, still it would do no harm to a heroine of the present day, to ask herself whether she could call forward a grandmamma to bless her, an Uncle and Aunt Sedley to approve cordially of each stage of her career, or even a set of cousins to sing her praises, after the faintest copy of the kindred of the incomparable Harriet; and if not, what is the reason of the failure. Granting, indeed, that the man or woman with a multitude of friends is a paragon, a

phoenix, and has his or her own peculiar danger from the chivalry and devotion of the individual's court, the man or woman without a friend is surely singularly unfortunate, or singularly reprehensible.

It has been said that women are incapable of true friendship; but, like many other glib speeches, this is an assertion not only without foundation, but made in the face of a mass of proof to the contrary. There may be difficulties in the way of a calm, clear, steady, unexacting friendship between man and woman, from the nature of the relation between them, though such friendships have existed by thousands; but friendships between woman and woman, with which we deal here, have flourished by tens of thousands. Those who believe the contrary, are no better than Turks in their estimate of women.

Possibly, one reason for the charge of women's being incapable of friendship, is that their friendships are more domestic, hidden, and retiring than those of men. Of course, we do not speak of the pathos of school-girl ecstasies, but of the strong, satisfying regard between modest, earnest, often-tried women. Men go out into the world, and frequently form their friendships far beyond the family circle, and quite independent of the ties of blood. Of the best women, it may be said that their friendships are those of their own households; with them, friendship but adds its evergreen crown to a blood relationship. Sisters and cousins—at the farthest, old schoolfellows and neighbors—are

generally the Davids and Jonathans, the Damons and Pythiases. But within these limits, examples of as enduring, long-suffering, tender, noble friendship as ever knit together hearts, offer their manifold records. Madame Sévigné and her daughter, Fanny Burney and her sister Susanna, Anne Grant of Laggan and her former youthful companions, the Ewings and Harriet Reid, have left vivid, indelible traces in black and white of the great volume of their affections, and its faithful flow to death.

Suffer young girls to make friends, and keep them as their best human stay. They need not fear that they will prove false, if their own love be without dissimulation; if they can cleave to their chosen companions in their adversity, and not love them one whit better because of their prosperity; if they will choose them like that hackneyed wedding-gown of Mrs. Primrose, because of qualities which will wear well. They need not fear, if they themselves will try to be humble, reasonable, and forbearing, will resolve not to expect too much of their friends, will not be very angry with them because of errors, will not refuse to forgive them even when they commit faults, will always strive to bear in mind that "the true friend is a brother," and that the end of true friendship is to go on hand in hand—each raising the other, each supporting the other—ever upwards and onwards to the brightness and the peace of the better home in the many mansions of the Father's house.

Honest friends, fond friends, constant friends

they must be, my girls; and after that proviso, care little whether they are fashionable friends, or distinguished in any way; even be willing to lend them a portion of your own superior wisdom and goodness, if they are deficient, but well disposed and sincere in their esteem for you. Much progress in worth has been accomplished under the shelter and countenance of a friend; here, "freely you have received, freely give." Be willing, in a secondary sense, to "spend and be spent" for your friends; don't meanly grudge your love and pains, and cautiously weigh every grain of the return. Bestow thorough respect and sympathy; lively, considerate, affectionate attention in health; devoted care and self-abnegation in sickness; and without doubt or denial, be you wedded wife or solitary spinster, you will not fail in any circumstance to have and hold a tender and true friend.

In the world there are two opposite corruptions of friendship, which are glaringly conspicuous. The one is the selection of high friends, who may pull us up, not in morals, but in power, or place, or fashion; the other the taste for low company, where we may reign queen, be flattered instead of flattering, command rather than obey, indulge in all our ugly habits without censure. But human nature is the same; these two abuses of friendship have their origin in the same source—vanity and pride; and sometimes the poles meet curiously in one person. As human nature⁴ is the same, young girls will, at least, coast these shoals; but I surely need

not say to good girls, to avoid them as contamination; do n't let them, if they can help it, pollute the name of friendship, if they would not lose their reverence for all that deserves reverence.

My own opinion is, that a perfectly developed friendship can scarcely exist, or at least attain its full free expression, between those of widely different ages and stations, in spite of Wordsworth's lad, and his "Matthew seventy-two." It may be a very beautiful, beneficial, independent looking up and bending down, and in that light it ought to greet us continually; but it is another connection altogether from close friendship. When a young girl makes a friend of one above her station, she is hardly likely, altogether to escape at once experiencing and inflicting pain, which would not occur among her equals. Her grand friend will unavoidably appear to overlook her sometimes, or will mortify her, or haply provoke her to envy by narrations of "springs" of adventure and interest, travel, pictures, music, books, cultivated society, which may be entirely beyond the so-called inferior's reach; and at the same time, the better born, or more richly endowed of the companions will feel hurt by her friend's coyness, stiffness, pride, when she herself only meant to be kind and social. Again, with the humble friend the girl in the middle class will run the very same risks, only changing the checkers; and with greatly increased peril of effecting something seriously detrimental to the permanent wellbeing of the other, because a simple,

scantly-educated girl is not by many degrees so well armed against an injury to her native dignity, self-respect, contentment, and her just balance of social advantages, as a well-taught, well-read, thoughtful girl in a station above her.

Therefore judicious parents and guardians are chary of unsuitable intimacies for their children, unless under their own eye and within certain bounds. Yet these intimacies are safe enough, even for the thoughtless and weak, if the heart be but wholesomely set on duty and salted with grace.

The writer, after having stated her general objection to these friendships, would like to record her conviction, that occasions are constantly occurring which defy our ordinary standards, when such half-proscribed bonds become strong and tight, and bind soul to soul in danger and trial with true love-knots, which death only will unloose for a higher life to tie again firmly for ever. Without question, such accidental alliances (as these are apt to be considered) have often proved providential unions, calculated to confer mighty blessings, and to survive the artificial obligations which forbade them.

People say truly, it is a respectable thing to see an elderly couple surrounded by old-fashioned, well-kept furniture, according much better with the tear and wear of years than bran new upholstery of a higher cast, and more elegant material and manufacture. Our mothers' gray hairs, and stout or lean persons, become their matronly though sober and rather quaint caps and shawls a thousand times

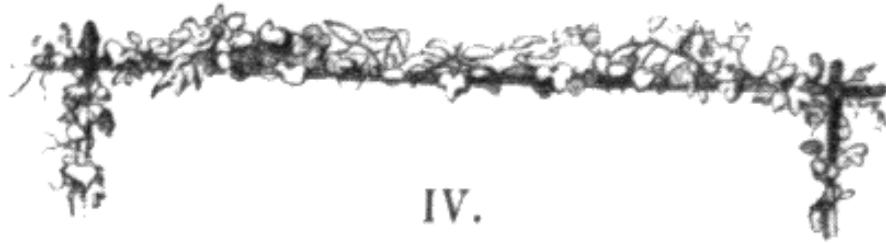
better than they become an elaborate travestied edition of their youngest daughter's wreath of flowers and lace mantilla. In the same way, family friends are respectable, albeit sometimes troublesome institutions. A long-established house, with only recent guests, varying with each varying phase of the household, is a very sorry sight. "Your own friend, and your father's friend, forget not," is a very gracious proverb of the wise man.

We would have our girls put up with some inconvenience, be capable of some self-sacrifice, to maintain their own friends, and their fathers' friends, intact. Be sure the one true friend, the invaluable counsellor, the joyous confidante, the loving consoler, is mostly to be cut out of such tried and trusty stuff: not out of the slight, dignified acquaintance of yesterday, the facile superior, won by base flattery or material gain to be the reluctant abettor of follies, the yawning spectator of vanities, and the sneering satirist of absurdities. Your mother's contemporary may be narrow-minded and dogmatic, but she will tie on her bonnet with trembling fingers to run to your sickbed; she will be all the same to you, or rather far more cordial and warmer-hearted because your father has lost money in an unlucky speculation, or even been compelled, with bowed head and aching heart, to read his name in the bankrupt list. She may find fault with you to your face; but she will sternly rebut cruel, cowardly scandal, which attacks you like an assassin behind your back. Will you not bear, then, with a few

truisms, and certain tiresome or aggravating peculiarities, were it only for the sake of her last kiss, and her "God bless you! you've been mindful of old friends, my dear; I trust we'll meet again"?

To have lightened a solitary hour, to have brightened a homely lot, to have cheered for one afternoon an invalid's depression, is worth a good deal of self-gratification. Reflect that you yourselves, in the march of the future, with its innumerable chances and changes, may be destined to misfortune and adversity. Certainly, even though you continue in reasonable affluence of health and wealth, you will at some time or other grow prosaic if not peevish, old-fashioned if not obsolete. Then, even if for no more exalted motive than doing as you would be done by, show yourself generous to those who have lost your advantages, if they ever possessed them.

Deserve friends among your equals, and cherish them, for better, for worse, as God's gift, among the very first of gifts after His own presence; be conscientious towards friends of another degree; and be gentle, very gentle to your own friends, and your father's friends, of other days.



IV.

LOVE.



THOUGHTFUL, kindly writer has spoken of the three great facts of life as birth, love, and death; and again, of the common instinct by which everybody listens to a love story of any kind. If young girls would treat love as one of three serious facts, and all false representations of it as lies, and like all lies, base and degrading, their best friends would be saved a great deal of fruitless trouble.

It is hard to deal with young girls when, according to their different dispositions quite as much as their different bringing up, they begin, under the classes of fanciful, forward, foolish children, or matter-of-fact, prudent, bashful, blithe young women, to ponder "love's young dream."

My thought is that love, more than marriage, is made in heaven; that it is an inspiration which descends upon us without our knowledge, and often without our consent. Therefore, I would never presume to dictate the when, how, and whom of love. I would only presuppose that no good girl will consciously indulge and consummate by matrimony, a love for one who, she is forced to see, is

an utterly unworthy man. Granting this great barrier, true love will be its own best defender and avenger. I believe there is not half the danger incurred by its presence, that is risked by its absence. I believe that if the multitude of warnings against love in general were addressed solely against false love, it would be more for the moral benefit of society; that is, if society would listen to the advice and lay it to heart. It is against spurious love that I would warn girls. I would disabuse love of all but its individual mystery, delicate, hidden, and sacred as the religion of the soul.

With regard to the universal existence of a consecrated passion, human yet partaking of the divine, and which reaches forward ever into eternity, why not openly acknowledge it; talk with reverence of it; accept it as a matter of faith, and often of example? Why make a forbidden topic of that which caused Jacob to serve fourteen years for Rachel, and count them but as so many days, for the great love which he bore her; Isaac, to be comforted for the loss of his mother, when Rebekah rode forth to meet him in the glow of the eastern twilight; faithful Elkanah to say to weeping Hannah, "Am I not better to thee than ten sons?" proud Michal to place the image in her bed, and speed young David's flying footsteps? Rather gather and cultivate all its noble heroism, its patience, its fortitude, its tender mercy, and nurture yourselves in them. If you have been accustomed to regard the holy fire, you will be the less tempted to fill the censers of

your heart with unholy fire, Greek fire, scattering destruction on all around.

There is nothing we have more need of in our luxurious, bargaining, scoffing days, than the preservation of the belief in all Christian heroism; and let us humbly thank God that we have lived to see abundant testimony borne to it in the horror of "the blood and flames and vapor of smoke" of the Crimean and the Indian wars. Once believe, in your deepest natures, that true love is an embodiment of this heroism, and you will revolt at its idle mockery in the shape of trifling, interested, vain flirtations. You will shrink from exposing it, rendering it hard, coarse, petty, and mean, through the incessant, bold, unblushing chatter of pert, irreverent, sordid, shallow, brainless, heartless, unhappy young people. You will loathe coquetry; you will reject with contempt all the low models of queens of routs and promenades, all the wretched praise of haughty, insolent, unfeeling, untrue women, with which the bad side of our literature furnishes you: you will turn eagerly and gladly to Milton's Eve, and Shakespeare's Desdemona and Cordelia, and Sir Walter's Alice Lee and Catherine Glover, or even to his frolicsome, warm-hearted Catherine Setoun, his defiant, candid Die Vernon; to Mrs. Gaskell's noble Margaret Helstone, and her erring, repentant Mary Barton; to Miss Mulock's Dora Johnstone; and Miss Manning's Princess Leonara, and her still more queenly, modest, pitiful Mrs. Clarinda Singleheart. You will have your own lawful, chivalrous,

Christian romance, and will shake off as the very dust from your feet, worldly society and false gods, and shameful heroes and heroines.

Do not fear, too, to have the comical side of love and love-making touched upon. True humor no more destroys soundness, dignity, sweetness, and pathos, than it soils our precious old ballads, our more precious old human life. There are very few grave and lofty elements in our manhood or womanhood, which, as they are worked out in flesh and blood, have not their ludicrous balance. It is recorded with honor to us, and on sufficient testimony, that the more entire our trust in our fellows, and the fonder our appreciation of their fine qualities, the more readily we begin to play with what strikes us as whimsical and grotesque in their composition. Thus friends bandy jests; thus there is nothing pleasanter than to see loving children merrily stroking against the grain certain odd hairs in the coats of indulgent parents, who submit to the process (which they know they can end by a glance or a word) with the exceeding satisfaction of well-conditioned tabby-cats, whose kittens will sport with their whiskers; or of benevolent ewes, whose wayward lambkins will lie down beneath their mother's chins.

Then let old and young fire off their brisk battery of harmless time-out-of-mind jokes on courtship and matrimony; their sly observations, their provoking sagacity, their diverting cross purposes. Only don't think that the whole affair is a joke, else

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you may awake one black morning to find it very sad and earnest, and be compelled, in sorrow and despair, to turn affrighted faces to the bitter contrast :

“ There was singing in the parlor,
And daffing in the ha' ;
But they canna dight the tears now,
So fast they down fa' .”

A whipped syllabub all froth would be a very light dish indeed. Nothing but trifle would make a most unsatisfactory, unrefreshing meal. Take, then, both the shade and the sunshine; the deep, cool strength and purpose which lie in the belt of shade, and the joy which glints in the beam of sunshine.

If our girls are busy performing their duties, cultivating their talents, thankfully and gratefully indulging in a thousand fresh, healthful pleasures, they will scarcely be betrayed into the pure folly, the spurious sentiment, the jaded love of excitement, the noxious excesses which every now and then sprout out into the notice of the world, and shock and distress pure minds that have the fear and the love of God before their eyes. It is, in almost every case, our disengaged girls, the gadders on our streets, the flaunters before society, the showy, frivolous, arrogant, reckless gamblers for matrimonial stakes, who thus fall under just condemnation. We need not dread over much this miserable end for those who have grown up and continue to dwell in safe, pure, religious homes;

and we can pray for them, that they may be delivered from the sudden, overwhelming rush of temptation and violent passion, which we grant, with sad awe, it is just possible may overcome and engulf the wisest and best of our corrupt humanity.

An evil bulking far more largely in our ordinary circles, and among the girls who compose them, is the unreasonable and exaggerated view which is taken of the promotion obtained by marriage; and the temptation thus presented to a girl of being fairly dazzled by the first opportunity of occupying this eminence among her sex, and investing herself with this matron's crown. The peril is greatly increased by the stolid silence which is preserved in many families on the highest of human affections, or the derision with which the lightest allusions to the most prevailing of human influences is received. A young girl grows up in ignorance of what is likely to be the mightiest motive power of her destiny; excepting, indeed, what she learns by instinct, or rather from her giddy schoolfellows. Perhaps novels in general have been forbidden to her, and she has lost not a little of thoughtful instruction from those good novels, which paint the actual drama of life under many different hues and draperies, and illumine the workings of the heart: those touches of nature which make the whole world kin, and lend us an insight into our own troubled, tender, immortal souls. She has merely read a few indifferent or bad novels, which she has not been enabled by a better standard to reject.

In this state of inexperience and immaturity of character, some man of her acquaintance, lately introduced to her, or long known to her in a superficial way, pays her the compliment of selecting her from the girlish circle in which she has been comparatively obscure, distinguishing her by his attentions, and soliciting her to stand to him in the nearest and dearest relation of life. Girls are mostly sensitive; they are impressed by an honor; they are clinging, and fond, too; and they instinctively turn to a guide and ruler. And, as if all this were not quite enough to overbalance this girl's judgment, she is immediately hailed with a perfect chorus of acclamation, not only from her companions, but from her whole little world. Her mother, with all her relations at a greater distance, if the match appears unexceptionable, is filled with pride and gladness. The centre of this excitement—call her volunteer or victim, but call her not conqueror—is petted, praised, caressed, envied on every hand, until she must be a good and wise girl indeed if she be not raised on the noisy turbulent wave of popularity, and floated quite off her feet. Poor little woman! many a struggle and scramble and wound she is fated to encounter, ere she be disabused of her foolish self-importance, and recover the lost humility and contentment of what ought to have been the heyday of her life.

Now all this is wrong and cruel. It is no joke; it causes thousands of women to shed salt tears; it is at the bottom of thousands of miserable homes.

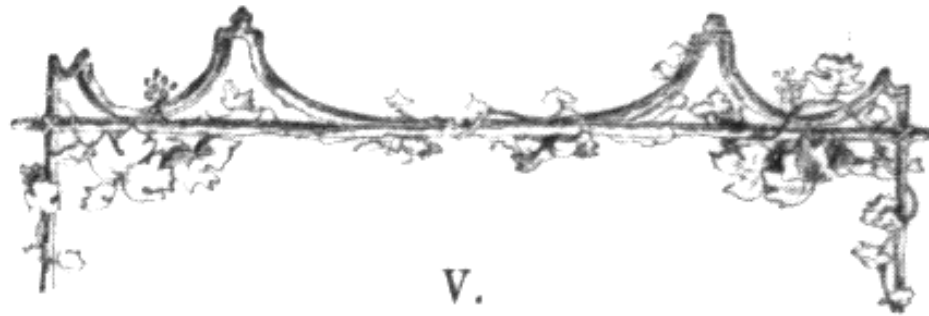
To be a good man's choice for his wife, is a crowning honor to any woman, but there the matter ends; there is no further exaltation. Until we recognize other prizes for women than the prize of matrimony; until we openly and broadly teach and preach, as the greatest satirist of the age has represented it to our girls, that the temple of matrimony without a shrine is no better than a sepulchre; until we teach our girls that a self-interested marriage, a marriage of pride and vanity, a marriage of convenience, or even a marriage of flighty inclination, is of all shams the greatest sham to a woman; we shall have pining faces, weary spirits, failing health and happiness on all sides of us. We shall have those loud, conflicting complaints of incompatibility of temper. Why do the couples not examine into that probability beforehand? take into consideration the three hundred and sixty-five breakfasts a year, to be eaten in company with one and the same individual, when both body and mind are apt to be in dishabille? May we be mercifully preserved from those ghastly violations of solemn ties, those ghastly falls into vice and crime, those triumphs of the evil lusts of the flesh which have sometimes prevailed in the higher class of our countrywomen.

There is yet another view of this old question of love and lovers, which the writer would wish to take up before dismissing the subject. There are those who have loved, there are those who will love, fruitlessly. Very tenderly would a friend

approach them; very reverently, very hopefully. All gentleness and honor to those who bear the scars of battle. They have evidenced that they have hearts, and heads too, possibly; they have felt, and thought, and fought their hard contest; and so that they have done it modestly and bravely, uprightly, and stanchly to the end, it will not mar them—never. Better, a thousand times, to have loved in vain, to have been jilted, pitied, derided even, than to have made a comfortable, worldly marriage. Let our girls neither scorn nor shrink from such results. Let them be sure that their Maker did not give them their fervent spirits, their kindly affections, to be blasted by the breath of one disappointment; to be in the power of any man, however selfish, guileful, or unfortunate, to crush and annihilate. They will bloom again, these old fields, and the herbs of grace on them will but shed more fragrance for being bruised. Noble ranks, in the sight of the noble, are those armies of single women who have made no covenant with man, but whose oath of allegiance is sworn directly to the Lord. We are, in general, losing something of our strong, outward, artificial tendency; and it is only the very coarse, now-a-days, who “roast old women,” tease the weak, and despise old maids. Rest assured, everything may be borne, with God’s help, by the good and true. Mortification and anguish, that wistful yearning which, like hope deferred, maketh the heart sick, have but their day. Endure them, lift them up, and carry them as a daily bur-

den, permitted by the Master, though, perhaps, consummated by the fellow-servant; have faith in heaven and earth; forget yourself in others; pray, work, enjoy—it is wonderful how many enjoyments are left to the smitten—and the new dawn will rise sooner or later, the calmer, broader dawn, which will only set on the cloudless morning of eternity.

Is any one lovesick? Do n't deny it, or stifle it, or trample upon it, to your own conscience. Keep it a dead secret from all others, if you will. That "the heart knoweth its own bitterness," that "a stranger intermeddleth not with its sorrows," are sacred, wholesome sentiments; but do n't stretch the concealment to yourself, and grow sour and hard under the perpetual silence. Look the truth steadily in the face, and then say to yourself; Thus and thus must love be purified of its passion, and robbed of its sting. Be up and doing in this world; be in the spirit, remembering another world. For a plain, practical prescription, be busy from morning till night. Inasmuch as is possible, lay your own individuality down, and take up the claims and wants of others; identify yourself with them, look at life through their thousand gleaming eyes, and their thousand craving hearts. Never fear; peace will come, joy will come; peace which cannot pass away, joy whose fruition is bliss.



GODLINESS.

AMONG gifts I reckon a long list: some of these may be ours for a time; some may be, in a great measure, from first to last denied to us; all may be taken from us. We may have them, or we may want them, and, terrible as the blank appears, we may certainly, in the light of another world, do without them.

Of studies I reckon only two. These we must run after, if we are faithful, to our dying day; these, without reservation, are our actual possessions, ours to foster, develop, mature here; ours to practise and enjoy hereafter.

The first is godliness. Without godliness, there can be no sure virtue, no firm principle. All excellence, not built on the foundation of the conception of God, the fear of God, the love of God, is the foolish man's house on the sand—the wind blew, and the storm rose, and great was the fall of it. Even irreligious men and women have a dim, restless, inconsistent perception of this fact. A woman without God in the world, is an awfully sad and strange

spectacle. By woman came sin and death into the world; the Seed of the woman bruised the serpent's head; the Lord was born of a woman; women followed his footsteps; women ministered unto him, women were last at the cross and first at the sepulchre. And of the Master's exceeding tenderness for women, we have a proof in his generous, mindful, touching speech, even, on the Dolorous way, fainting under his own mighty sorrows and humiliations, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but rather weep for yourselves." A woman's heart, unsoftened by that divine love, unmelted by that incomparable sacrifice—we repeat it, an unbelieving, reckless, crafty, vain, light woman is an awfully sad and strange spectacle.

But just because the livelier feelings and softer temper of women render them usually more open to impressions, there is the more need that these impressions should not prove flighty, fickle, spurious, or morbid. To women particularly applies that verse of the parable of the sower which represents the seed sown and germinated, and sprung fresh and fair; too quick and ready of promise, as it were, without depth of earth; and so when the sun shines, when persecution or tribulation comes, it withers away. Women are liable to be made up of impulses; they require ballast; even those of them who have comparatively strong, deep natures require discipline, constant discipline, to break and train the rebellious womanly nature.

Now, do not mistake me. Godliness is a divine

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grace. No man can come unto God, except the Spirit of God draw him; it is a spiritual effort; they who worship God "must worship him in spirit and in truth;" but for all that, godliness is a study carried on by human perseverance and action, and the use of material means. Though it is our hearts which we lift to God in prayer, yet we also do him the homage of the body; and while we are in the body, with this mysterious double nature of ours, if we deliberately and wilfully lay aside the outward homage, I would dread the non-continuance of the inward reverence. We speak to our Father in heaven in articulate sounds, because these are now the expression of our living souls. So our godliness must have not only a creed and a worship, but a regular acknowledgment in our day. Far be it from me to wish to fetter any free spirit, to dictate a channel of grace, to constrain to a course of duty; but writing to young girls, I would ask them affectionately to keep in mind the good, lowly, wise truth:

"Little things on little wings
Bear little souls to heaven."

The act of eating and drinking seems to us a very small, irrelevant, commonplace, contemptible business, and we are often guilty of presumptuously slighting the process; but it is a serious one, nevertheless, for it is this which preserves, or rather restores, the flesh and blood and bones of this mortal framework, in which it has pleased our Creator to place for a season our immortal soul, and which it

is certainly not his will that we should destroy before its time. So our godliness must be fed at stated intervals; it must be refreshed and replaced by fresh aliment; and although we do not see here the connection of cause and effect—though the first may often, to our grief, be distasteful to us, as our natural food in ailing states of the body—we must humbly and perseveringly con our day's lessons, and strive to win from them their germ of pure vitality. I love the word "lesson," which the Episcopal church gives to the morning and evening readings of its people.

I have read the advices of good men on many kinds of daily spiritual diet, and have been honestly struck, again and again, sometimes with their impracticability, sometimes with their austerity, sometimes with their spasmodic vehemence, but I have never doubted that they contained their own indestructible seeds of excellence; indeed, that no excellence could well exist without them. On the other hand, I have heard good people, in private life and in public, coldly despise, or pitilessly attack the simpler practices as the merest hypocrisy or superstition. I am not speaking of worldly people, who would have rather denounced them as pharisaical. I am thinking of good people, who have grown stern or savage over an active young man still feeling it somehow a comfort to read a psalm before he flung off his coat to prepare for rest, or a lively young girl experiencing a sedate gladness in reading and pondering her chapter before she tripped down

stairs, to show the first and the brightest face at the breakfast-table. I have heard a preacher speak of the sense of contentment and security which a man or woman experiences after he or she has *said* his or her prayers, as if it were about the most worldly, hardened, and hopeless state of mind. What would they have? Are we not to say our prayers? Are we not to search the Scriptures? And can there be a more becoming, reasonable, reverent period for these exercises than in our mornings and evenings? And does not our reconciled Father himself, who knows the exigencies of our constitutions and has bestowed their instincts, allow us this sense of happiness in a void supplied, an obligation fulfilled? Will he thus despise his children when they "feel after him," gropingly, still loyal in their darkness and dulness? And will he not rather bless them, and give them more and more light? We must know that the letter killeth, while it is the spirit which maketh alive; and that without repentance, faith, holiness, and charity, our prayers and readings are but as so many dead ceremonies condemning us like our other abused privileges. But in the name of simplicity and modesty, how are we to advance in repentance, faith, holiness, and charity, otherwise than by a manlike, womanlike, childlike adherence to rules and orders: like Arnold, not being ashamed to say our prayers; like our wisest, mightiest philosophers, never doubting our gain when we regularly read our Bibles.

"Be good, my dear, and read your Bible," said Sir

Walter to Lockhart; and the great genius had the tenderest human heart, as well as the most sagacious mind. Read your Bibles, if not absolutely impossible, every morning and evening, in verses or chapters, according to your discretion; use your reading and do not abuse it. That is, think of it as a blessing, a consolation, a direction, and a support; be unassuming and unexact; look for teaching from the Spirit of all wisdom; take up your own private interpretation in a lowly, liberal temper; beware of judging your neighbor whom you fancy careless in her devotions; be not browbeaten by your other neighbor who, independent, mystical, or bigoted, censures you as at once childish and bold in your safeguard and in your freedom. Trust grace, sure in its promise, no less sure in its performance, and read your Bible, wishing and striving to do its behests. Look upon it as your storehouse and your armory, and when times of "refreshing," or of trial, of life and work, or of decay and death, arrive, do not question but it will supply you with spiritual food and weapons. Try the practice sincerely, unassumingly, and lovingly, and you may perhaps marvel at its power.

Prayer is so lofty a subject, so private and intensely personal an interest, that a writer, who is not a commissioned servant of the Lord, may well shrink from obtruding an opinion on her fellows in a matter which is between them and their Maker. And yet who can dwell on godliness, and from delicate scruples omit the mention of prayer? After

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the Divine model of prayer, see that you pray your own prayer, and no other man or woman's; and consider the two invaluable suggestions you have received—that your prayers are to be still and secluded communion, and that you are not to be heard for your much speaking. Let them be very real prayers, cries for help, grateful thanks, adoring praise. Our Father in heaven, your Father and mine, as well as the Almighty God of the universe, will not be impatient of our little fretting troubles, our trifling attainments, our feeble, faltering worship. He who cares for the sparrows and the ravens will heed the aching or the bounding heart. He will have our own words and not another's; our own pleadings, wrestlings, and rejoicings, rather than the experience of even a David or a Moses second-hand. Blessed be his name! He does care for our struggles and our victories, our weal and our woe; and our Elder Brother cannot, either on earth or in heaven, lose his fellow-feeling, his entire and exquisite sympathy with his race.

After the reading of the Bible and prayer, and keeping that day in seven, which is given us to float as far as we can from worldliness, selfishness, and malice, and as near as we can to adoration, peace, and love, I believe that any other aim to this end of godliness is minor and relative. I take it for granted that no honest, good girl will wilfully and deliberately commit a known sin, however often, alas, she may stumble and fall unawares in her career. What is not in itself sinful, is so far lawful. No

doubt all that is lawful is not expedient. An apostle has said so, and we are bound to try to be enlightened on this expediency with regard to our own welfare, and, above all, for our neighbor's sake, because the question of expediency seems to refer principally to our influence over our neighbor. But I think, generally, whatever is lawful is not only allowable, but under due limits and proportions beneficial. I do not agree with those who would introduce a system of monachism into our social life, who regard God's world as the wicked world, God's kingdom of art as the devil's kingdom, and the deep, tender affections which our great Father has implanted in our bosoms as so many cords of idolatry.

I would be a ransomed woman; and then, while performing the work which has been given to me to do, I would not fear to relish all the comforts, pleasures, and joys which he has set in my path; believing that God is well pleased with our contentment and gladness, that he asks and accepts the praise and thanks of our merry hearts, as well as the confessions and petitions of our mourning spirits. The church in my heart should have its festivals as well as its fasts.

Thus, as minor and relative, would I regard all other religious reading after the study of the Bible. At the same time, I think a girl in earnest about godliness will have her eye on its promotion in some part of her general reading. I would recommend her in this search, as an advice which cannot be re-

peated too often, (so much are we tempted to adopt a parrot-like imitation of each other,) to read what she feels applies to herself and profits herself. Not to insist on drugging herself with another person's medicine, too strong, or it may be too weak, or otherwise totally unsuited to her constitution and ailment.

While frankly taking what God in his providence sends, and joining in the toil and the recreation of the work-a-day and holiday world, many good people are distressed by a sense of disruption between their spiritual and their natural life. Probably nothing but experience, growth in Christianity weaned from selfishness, and a higher, closer, and clearer comprehension of and communion with the divine life will overcome this discord. John Wesley recommended short ejaculatory prayers, if no more than "The Lord direct me!" "The Lord help me!" and this corresponds literally with the apostle's "pray without ceasing," "be instant in prayer." Others have chosen a verse in the morning, to be as it were blended and intertwined with their day's occupations and enjoyments, so as to leaven them throughout. Certainly, when prone to covetousness, the admonition, "Let your treasure be in heaven," ought to be an aid to us: when driven to unrest, so should the meditation on the peace which was his bequest; and when entangled in ambitious effort and its accompanying strife, so should also the recommendation not to desire vain glory.

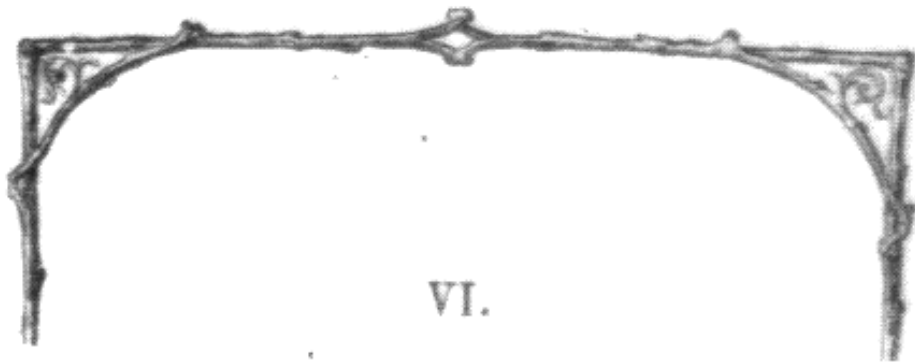
Another habit, whose acquisition is frequently pressed upon us, is to review at night our day's transactions, and humbly acknowledge their success while we lament their failures, in order to have our conscience always clear and in working order. To this has been added the glancing over, in the morning, a rough plan of what the day's duties, trials, temptations, pleasures, pains may be, with the intent of a consequent preparation for them; guarding, at the same time, lest this should interfere with taking no heed for the morrow, and casting our cares on one who careth for us.

But let me reiterate, these are minor and relative obligations, and must always depend very much on the temperament, condition, and surroundings of the individual concerned. They may be easily erected into eleventh commandments, and twisted into will-worship and bodily exercise. If held tenaciously, doggedly, in a spirit of self-conceit, fussiness, or intolerance, they may not only be very injurious to the girl and woman relying on them; but to all those with whom she comes in contact, causing false inferences, unjust judgments, and inflicting grave wounds in the broad humanity of the gospel.

I cannot find, that in the wide or concentrated laws of the Bible, there are any express injunctions to formal acts in the promotion of godliness beyond "search the Scriptures;" "be instant in prayer;" "forsake not the assembling of yourselves together;" "do good and communicate." The mantle is a wide


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one ; preserve its simple integrity, and its folds will fit the shape of youth and age, rich and poor, those whom the north gives up, and those whom the south keeps not back. Do not confine and cut it for mankind, according to your own poor taste and figure, at your peril.



VI.

KINDLINESS.

ODLINESS without kindness I believe to be a delusion, and, like all delusions affecting religion, baneful both to those who are blinded and to those who are revolted by it. "He who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" is a question which admits of no exception. As there is no sound, enduring kindness without godliness, there is no godliness without kindness. Kindness is an integral part of godliness: "pure religion and undefiled is to visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world."

In one sense kindness must also be a work of God's grace; but like godliness itself, it is to be nourished, strengthened, ripened by human energy and constancy exerted on means. Kindness must be a study to a good girl. But, in case of misconception, understand kindness as standing for goodwill, benevolence, mindfulness, and mercy; which may exist in company with plainness, stiffness, starchedness, seriousness, and even an exterior of

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sternness; and which is quite irrespective of a soft temper and a caressing address. . It is curious, and a little vexatious to find how matter and manner are confounded; how so many honeyed words from a plausible, crafty woman, and so many sharp ones from a true and tender one, are carelessly allowed to reverse the world's estimation of their character, and are received even by those who ought to know better, as correct indices of the individuals.

Sweetness of manner is so notorious a varnish, as to become the butt of the corroding acids and scraping-knives of many of our writers of fiction. Nowhere is it more extensively displayed than in the inordinate love of children and children's society, affected by some of the women of our day; and in the exaggerated estimation of childish worth displayed largely in some departments of the world of letters. Because our Master taught us to reverence little children by reminding us that their helplessness and ignorance of fraud and violence, rendered them, and all who are like them, especially the charge of his Father's angels, one-half of the world professes to regard these little people as angels outright. This extravagance has even been pushed, in the face of a thousand examples of childish meanness and tyranny, to the daring extent of a denial of original sin. It strikes me that this foolish notion of which men and women are so proud is but a rag of spurious humility; for you see it is actually easier for your arrogance and headiness, your sloth and obstinacy, your desperate covetousness and turbu-

lence to bow, half skeptically, half laughingly, to a child's sceptre of rushes, than to pay a modest and womanly homage to a man's authority.

Kindliness, then, never consisted or even lay to any extent in "becks and bows, and wreathed smiles," though real pleasantness is a great element in winning the favor of our fellows. Neither is it by any means engrossed or fully expressed by alms-deeds, though without question, if we do feel tenderly to our neighbor at all, we feel with peculiar tenderness to our neighbor in any suffering and wretchedness which we can comprehend. "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, I am nothing." This kindliness is charity, liberality and generosity of spirit, fairness and impartiality of judgment, mildness and meekness of heart rather than of tone, kindly affectionateness in all ties and relations—tendèrest in the nearest, mellow and sympathetic in the most removed. It is of the very essence of Christianity; and the neglect of it has inflicted more injury on the cause of Him who is love divine, has wounded him more sorely in the house of his friends than the absence of any other quality or faculty whatever. I would urge it the more imperatively that it is (but certainly by no means to the same extent as formerly) overlooked, or understated, or in some respect slurred over in many lessons for young people. Kindliness is only second to godliness. On one occasion an apostle accorded it the precedence: If we do not love the brother whom we have seen, how can we love him,

in whose glorious image that brother was originally created, the God whom we have not seen?

On woman, by natural constitution, and time-out-of-mind institutions, kindness is so imperative, that the want of it brings down express scandal on godly women, or rather on women professing godliness. I need not allude to the satires, deserved and undeserved, by some of the strangely neutral, some of the still more strangely and sadly antagonistic, and some of the merely smart and pungent writers of the day. This defect is generally seen where our very instincts should have pointed out to us the flagrant outrage, by our own hearths and in our own homes. Domestic duties, always holy and dear, are often monotonous—have often their wearing irritations and carking cares; they are unseasoned by excitement; they claim no renown. The self-sacrifice they involve, although it is often very complete, is so subtle, that it becomes no cause of pride; in fact it is made almost inadvertently and insensibly. Therefore stragglers and adventurers are won from these still, shady, simple paths by vanity, by the restlessness of craving, unemployed energies, and also (to do them justice) by a mistaken sense of duty. To enter upon public services, they desert their private posts, and they are thus guilty of a double infidelity; they have forsaken their first love, and by taking upon them engagements for which they were not free, they have also done despite to and brought shame upon what was in itself fair and honorable, pure and lovely, and of good

report. This evil is so very grave, that it needs the strongest protest against its existence and recurrence. But, on the other hand, to those who are disposed to insist on "busy-bodies," "showy professors," "ill-ordered, ill-balanced enthusiasts," we would state respectfully and good-humoredly that it is the scum and froth of the pot which rises to the surface; that the sound hearts and true, the deep hearts and tender, the sensible practical women, the cheery patient women, the constant, untiring, unassuming asserters and maintainers of righteousness and love, work everywhere unseen, unheard of, until the day shall declare it. And our generation has proved sufficiently that great deeds of mercy can be done by women, whose household names have never been spoken without a blessing.

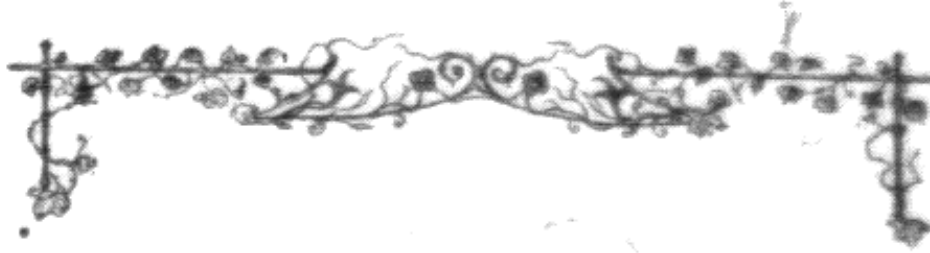
Kindliness is thoroughly opposed to meanness, to malice, to mischief of every description. It bids us have faith in one another; it bids us bear long with one another; it tells us to be obedient, respectful, and tender to our elders; firm yet indulgent to our juniors; reasonable and gracious to our equals; just, thoughtful feeling, and helpful to our inferiors. It negatives mere human ambition and selfish rivalry; it altogether forbids slander, talebearing, and backbiting; it even cries oh, fie, fie! against ridicule, when ridicule verges on levity and cynicism.

Our Bible has at least this superiority over the Hebrew Talmud, that we have the one in a moderate compass, so that we can all read it from end to end, without any stretch of application, every year

of our lives, if we choose; while the other consists of such a mass of writing, and host of saws, that a youth's entire education is spent in becoming "ready at the law." Here are only two studies for you girls, Godliness and Kindliness; master them, and you may be what you will, intelligent or stupid, learned or ignorant, a belle or a dowdy, it will signify wondrous little either here or hereafter.

How we toil and scheme and strive for our young ones, and see how simply they may be furnished with all that is absolutely necessary for the battle of life! We would give our beloved—what would we not give our beloved of rich and rare, of exultation and ecstasy? But God gives his beloved sleep; rest in his tabernacle from the strife of tongues; the rest which remaineth in the green pastures and by the still waters.





VII.

FASHION.

THE customs of society in Christian countries, if not altogether just and good, are generally moderately commendable. Communities, even in heathen times, seem to have been endowed with the faculty of deciding, candidly and creditably enough for the masses, if they could only have adhered to their decisions. Therefore, to act in violent contradiction to established laws and precedents, to set at defiance the fashion alike of time and place, is not, unless in a case of strict necessity, a wise, far less a modest proceeding. It is particularly senseless and aggravating in women, whose power, like that of the old Roman tribunes, is that of quiet, steady vetos. But the sinners in this respect are comparatively few and far between; and they are those to whom arguments on moderation, the relative importance and non-importance of great things and small, the advantage of open-hearted concessions and good-tempered submissions, would mostly savor of lukewarmness. On the contrary, the stumblers from the offence of fashion are legion.

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The amount of activity misdirected, time and means wasted and tempers spoiled, and sources of usefulness lost by fashion, is so enormous, that it would be ludicrous, if it were not lamentable. Remember, I do not refer to women of high rank, whose responsibilities are on an exaggerated scale, but to women of the middle class, who are bond-slaves to this shifting, intangible, potent system and power. So wedded are they to the bondage, that there is not a point on which the writer has approached the reader with such a hopelessness akin to despair—only Christians have no warrant to despair.

To name the degree of absurdity and error to which fashion carries the women who are not steeled against it in every light, would fill not a paper but a volume. And, with regard to women of the middle rank, there is one light in which fashion seizes them with an engrossing supremacy which it does not affect in the case of women of wealth and station. It robs my lady flagrantly of her money, and incidentally of her health and peace; but, from my plain though pretentious mistress it pilfers in addition, without scruple, both her time and her talents. The hours she spends in contriving; the cleverness she unfolds in bringing to bear; the fortitude she evinces in enduring counter-checks; the self-denial, the toil she undertakes for such a wearing out, fickle, ungrateful idol, would be incredible, were it not proved by a multitude of cases every day. The labor of a working man, a slave, a pack-horse, is not

greater, by comparison, than the groaning efforts, the address, the stoicism of a poor woman running after fashion, keeping up appearances, or rather deluding herself and her neighbors into believing herself a fine lady, and her family a dashing, luxurious household. Luxurious household indeed! they are as far from attaining to this as they are from possessing the dignity, repose, honest hospitality, and loyal brotherly-kindliness which were originally within their reach.

I am anxious to state, that in these remarks I do not at all refer to the womanly desire to have all things at home, furniture and apparel, nice and pleasant; to the sense of the beautiful and the graceful, which cultivation supplies; to the tender pains, the genial, joint efforts by which family-life is unspeakably gladdened and brightened; to the trouble and energy by which a frugal mother has her children respectable, neat, smart. No, no; these are the sweet blossomings over truth, affection, self-respect, and faithful regard for kindred. What I inveigh against is the senseless waste, the tasteless, vain show, the pinching behind backs and the profusion before faces, which has no husband's comfort, no child's happiness, no brother's or sister's enjoyment as its object—whose beginning and end are in pride and vanity, and whose fruit is unneighborly strife in the race of extravagance and ruin. Even when there is a little sense to hold back in time from this common conclusion, such lives are fertile in falsehood, deceit, unlovely calculations

and speculations, and barren in all nobleness, gentleness, and generosity.

In the case of girls, the stumbling-block of fashion scarcely extends yet to having houses like the squire's, or to dispensing dinners like the lord mayor's feast. What principally concerns girls is fashion in dress, and in spending their time, especially the early portion of their day, which is peculiarly their own.

Dress might have a long homily, and yet a few sentences may sum it up. Much must be left to individual circumstances and tastes. Dress within your means, handsomely if you will, becomingly if you can. Dress affectionately (I cannot think of a recommendation which can render dress more productive of real, permanent pleasure), to gratify papa and mamma—with a lingering adhesion to some rather wornout, rather exploded article of attire, because it was Mary's or Willie's thoughtful gift! Ah, yes, there is much more sentiment in many a faded shawl or old-fashioned gown than in the newest, glossiest, most elegant, most graceful, and captivating acquisition to the toilette, fresh from the showroom of Madame Duval herself.

Dress as you choose, if you will but attend to the following restrictions. Do not give to dress more than a modest portion of your hours and ideas. Do not bestow upon it all, or all save a fraction, of any allowance of pocket-money which you may obtain, so that you have next to nothing for works of affection, benevolence, and charity,

and are ashamed to give such a veritable widow's mite out of what was originally much more than the widow's store. I would ask you, some quiet Sunday evening, some day when you are recovering from sickness, some still hour succeeding the palpitation of great joy or great sorrow, if these are not habits of self-indulgence unbecoming a Christian girl—if, while you were by no means dressed like a fright or a nun, you might not at the same time have been simple and economical.

Do not be feverishly anxious to be more "stylish" than your companions, and feverishly elated when you attain your end. "Stylish" has replaced our old word "genteel," and I doubt if it is much to our advantage. I have heard "stylish" used by pure, sweet, sensible lips, when it did not sound amiss; but if it ordinarily means to be out of your rank in costume, or so conspicuous and singular in the shape and trimming of your wearing apparel, as to cause people to gape and stare when they encounter you in the streets or in society, then stylishness is simply very bad taste. Whatever is unsuitable to your station offends the judgment, and the judgment guides every eye but the eye of a fool. To be notorious for the cut and color of your garments, has been in every age the temporary ebullition of eccentricity, or the sign of a weak, low, or giddy mind.

If, again, stylishness in its better sense merely indicates a craving after personal distinction, you are surely old enough to observe that this peculiar-

ity, like beauty, is a gift, a grand attractive gift; but no more to be won by you in its details, (the bend of the head, the inclination of the shoulders, the freedom and elasticity of motion, which lends such a fascination to the bonnet, such a charm to the folds of the mantle, such a something unsurpassable even to the sweep of the skirts,) than are the pearly skin, the rose-leaf bloom, or the Grecian, Roman, or clear composite Saxon features which have not been granted to you. If you do possess them, they need little embellishment; if you do not possess them, why hanker after them in your silliness, now that you have given up the paint-pot with which your ancestresses, in the reigns of Anne and the first Georges, daubed their sallow cheeks "a fine red"? Renounce also the peacock's feathers, which will not transform you, my poor jay! which will only render you ridiculous, and exhaust your capacity for a thousand other enjoyments. Rise up in your native dignity, equal and sometimes superior to my lady swimming or tripping along. Love to contemplate my lady in nature with an honest, unenvious admiration, and love to regard her also in art from the brush of Sir Joshua, Gainsborough, or Sir Henry Lawrence. But whether you are a dumpy or a scarecrow, be so without a sigh; there is something as good if not better for you; yield my lady her sphere and assume your own—be sure it exists for you somewhere, if you will only have the patience to hunt about for it, or quietly await it. This attempt to be

all equally elegant and graceful, and not what many of us must be content to remain, merely unobtrusive, unassuming persons, is a monomania among women.

With regard to the fashionable waste of time, perhaps the abuse exists most notoriously in towns and great towns. There, no one can pass along the streets on business or pleasure without being struck with the crowds of young girls who are promenading neither for the one purpose nor the other. No one can enter a public exhibition without being harassed, well-nigh persecuted by the multitude of idle women, who are there openly and ostensibly to see and be seen; to meet their acquaintances; to lounge, lunch, gossip, and to do any thing but look at the pictures, or suffer others to look at them. One might be driven to desire that societies should make a little sacrifice, and inscribe over their doors, "Only for the lovers of art and science; no loud greetings, no standing about, or planting of bodies for hours on convenient benches; no continuous chatter allowed."

This is only the public side of the nuisance. How many daily inflictions there are in the shape of dawdling visits, where there is nothing to say, nothing to hear, and where the outward presence is a mere pernicious habit, we dare not attempt to register.

Now, there is no cause for this idle expenditure of time, for really, in consequence of it, days and weeks slip from you in the most unprofitable manner imaginable, you know not how; and if you are

not vivacious, you get into such an indolent habit of sailing with the stream, that you lose all independence and originality of character. If you have performed the duties, developed the talents, cultivated the cheap, blithe pleasures we were describing, you have no such superabundant leisure to throw away. Remember, though your bountiful Father allows you a million of innocent enjoyments and delights, to wanton trifling you are not free. It is demoralizing, and it is destructive; it saps your earnestness, and it spends your strength for naught. For "every idle word," you will have to give account; that is very solemn. Do not let it frighten you from your innocent joyousness; but do let it check you from a deliberate waste of many hours every day in unmeaning gadding, and loitering here and there and everywhere but at home. Of course, if you follow such pursuits with other motives and purposes, at the request of parents, for the benefit of friends, the case is altogether different. It must be very worthless company, indeed, which a good intent does not justify and ennoble. But, speaking of the practice in its purely primitive aspect, I would warn you against it. It is no reason why you should gad, that it is the fashion; it is very little excuse for your frivolity, that other girls are not sensible and serious at proper times. Set the example, and act like the little boy at Rugby, who said his morning prayers, though the other boys slyly threw boots at his head. Who can tell whether your companions will not be drawn by

your courage and wisdom, until gadding and trifling and dropping in upon each other at all hours, without sound friendship, without strong sympathy, without anything but vacuity of heart and brain, will be the exception instead of the rule?

No doubt, there may be great idleness at home and in retirement; great pecking, like a bird, at a thousand occupations, but an applying of ourselves to none of them. We all know the process—trying over this piece of music, putting a stitch into that bit of work, interfering for a moment with the cook or the housemaid without affording either any available assistance—plenty of this, but nothing like business or steady work during the whole morning, and that for morning after morning. Still there can be little question that the temptation to dissipation is far less at home than abroad; and I have wished to offer, to any who will use them, suggestions, which may help them to avoid this shallow, superficial course, and to adopt another walk—that of being in earnest in all their ways.





VIII.

A LIFE OF PRIDE AND LEVITY.

THERE has been always a tendency in the world to withdraw pride from its place among the deadly sins, and that in spite of direct denunciations against it. "Pride cometh before destruction." "God hateth a high look." This favor seems to arise from two causes. Pride itself is a hard, selfish, and actually mean temper in its narrowness and arrogance; but no other disposition has such a faculty of clothing itself like an angel of light, putting on the garb and showing the features of dignity, nobleness, magnanimity. For a second stronger reason, other qualities are habitually mistaken for pride. Shyness, for instance, which is often found in company with its opposite, humility; self-respect, which is an honest man's inheritance; independence, which is a brave man's portion; bluntness, which we cannot, for the life of us, dissever from truth.

Call pride insolence, whether superb or vulgar, and you will make no mistake. The impatience of interference with your plans, the loud or dogged assertion of your will, the slighting or sweeping

condemnation of all beneath your sovereign notice; these are very unlovely and unloveable. But this tone, like that of mock ignorance of household work and rural economy, is, we are glad to say, much exploded. Few girls hector in a shop, or storm over a servant, before their associates, because they are very well aware that in so doing many eyes will be fixed on them in censure. They have learned at last that it is not like gentlewomen to be imperious and tyrannical. Where they can undoubtedly command, and where they feel a strong call to be insolent, they are merely languid, supercilious, and sneering. But it is in that "debatable land" which a good, earnest writer has classed as "the missing link" in the social chain, that insolence remains rampant. Among acquaintances a shade removed in rank and refinement, inferiors by an inappreciable degree which no mortal would take the trouble to reckon—it is towards the commonplace, the tiresome, the shabby, that insolence still flourishes in full bloom. It is by what are called "Cuts," by shades of cordiality, varying far more suddenly and violently than our weather-gauges, that simple, sincere folks are tried.

"Really the way that girl bowed to me in the Crescent was insufferable. I can bear a good deal of nonsense from girls, having had girls of my own; but for a child like that to think it a fit thing to recognise a staid old woman like me, by simply lowering her eyelids!" complains the respectable mother of a family; "and it was only in spring she sent

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her love, and could I give her some bramble-jam for her cold; nothing did her good like my bramble-jam, and I am sure I did not grudge it. I was delighted that she should have recourse to me; but I must say I expected a little livelier sense of my existence."

"They are all the same, mother," answers a little bitterly the somewhat worn eldest daughter, at the same time much more indignant at the slight put upon her mother than at any neglect to herself. "If you had seen how reluctant Agnes Jones was to see me to-day, because she was walking with the Stephensons. I shall be blind enough the next time I meet her, though it should be before her admirer, Mr. Forester, who was so much obliged to my brother George."

No, no, Agnes, you will forgive and forget; you will warm your sometimes weary heart by the consciousness that you have not done any thing to spoil Agnes Jones' fine prospects, little as she thanks you for it; and long after this small vexation is past and gone, you, who are so candid and loving, will understand to the full that verse of the psalm, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased."

But in our day the life of pride, of strong domineering self-importance, has generally accepted also the cue of the life of levity—the life which finds a joke in every thing, which laughs at all reverence, earnestness, and romance. It is one of the hardest and most hostile aspects of the human mind which

you can encounter. Talk to a young lady who aspires to be "fast"—who quotes the broadest slang, and must have "larks," if not "sprees"—talk of self-sacrifice, of high, pure thoughts, of lives happy in their holiness, and she will vote you "slow," shrug her shoulders, remark upon your neck-ribbon or your bootlace, be witty at your expense, and have nothing more to do with you. She may have too much passive principle to denominate your conversation humbug, but she will think you old-fashioned, prudish, sentimental, superannuated, officious, intrusive. She will jeer at you unmercifully, or be seriously incensed if you provoke her further. All the while she may pay respect to the outward forms of religion, to churches, prayer-meetings, Sabbath-schools, benevolent societies, private devotions, and far be it from me to say she is insincere; but there is surely the oddest incongruity in her conduct.

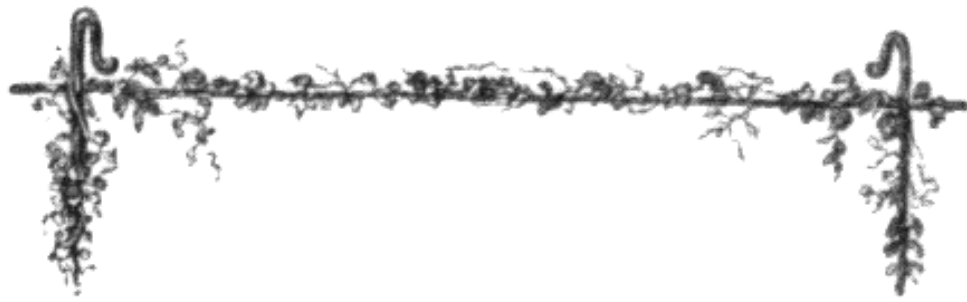
Now a good laugh is an excellent thing, and the most of us firmly credit it is enjoyed in its perfection by the best men and women in the world. We can set our seals to the description of such sick-rooms as George Wilson's, where the good and patient not only lie in an attitude of meekness and resignation, but spread around them a clear, sunny atmosphere of humor and fun. Who should be happy but those who are at peace with God and man? But this incapacity for viewing any thing under a serious aspect, this incredulity of all high duty, sustained effort, generous self-abnegation, and growing unworldliness is, we should venture to say,

very far from what our worthiest humorist contemplates.

If I recollect aright, a son of Legh Richmond spoke severely on his death-bed against the former merry cast of his conversation with a young sister; but the young will gambol in mind as well as body. Their Maker gave them this early buoyancy, and we may well shrink from taking it from them. I would never object to its use, only to its abuse. I am aware there are some kindly spirits who retain this blessed buoyancy to old age. I know there are constitutions whose deep feelings almost always speak half jestingly, with a touch of the comic for ever relieving the tragic side of their natures. There are those who would be sombre without this tendency, and whose sense of pathos is so quick and keen that they are glad to weld it with laughter, to take off, as it were, the piquant edge of its pitifulness, and they generally preserve the characteristic to the last. I am not sure whether it is not a healthful counterbalance to save them from moping melancholy or desperate despair. But this is quite another thing from that cold levity which regards all life as a joke, and whose desire after sport is as keen as any hunter's or fisher's. The zest with which such girls follow amusement, in the shape of practical jokes, and making butts of weak acquaintances, has been before now exposed. But a good girl will hold back from such a course; "her delicate sense of honor" will prevent her from being a party to any modified version of the frolics which form a

distinguishing feature in some circles. Her fuller, richer nature will reject with aversion the emptiness of laughter which has no strong background of thought and feeling. She will not live a life of rushing here and there, and giggling violently. Her quiet perception of propriety will revolt at the personal notoriety which captivates other girls. For you will find that the great desire of the poor girl, born and bred to the life of pride and levity, is to make you stare, to confound your sober senses, to strut before you, to push you out of your place, to tread on your skirts, and finally to eclipse your view with her high, vain head, and to raise a noisy clamor which shall effectually drown all grave discussion, considerate forethought, and tender memories and anticipations.





IX.

PERSEVERANCE IN WELL-
DOING.

AS youth disheartened or discouraged by these papers of advice and warning? Come, then, we will walk in a shady wood on soft turf, under the pale sweet flowers of the woodlands, more delicate and more graceful than the bright hardy blossoms of the downs.

What should a young girl ask for more within her grasp and capacity, more essential, desirable, and delightful, than the fulfilment of the injunction to perseverance in well-doing and patience of hope? You will observe that it is not to violent effort or extravagant ecstasy, strange to her constitution or faculties, that she is invited. No, in quietness shall be her strength. She is called to a steady, sober adherence to her faith; a meek, wistful clinging and following of the star in the east—the star of Bethlehem—which she is humbly conscious, with God's help, she may attain. Often when we are addressed on some admirable performance, our hearts sink in despair. We cannot do it; we feel it

is not in us. But our God knows our frames, that they are dust. He does not set us a task which we cannot with his blessing and guidance accomplish. He leaves us a wide margin. Perseverance in well-doing—our own particular power and mode of well-doing; patience of hope—whether glad assurance, lowly trust, or tremulous submission; all are according to our natures. We are not summoned to the sudden achievement of a miracle, we are not asked to dis sever ourselves from our individual tempers, tastes, and habits. Over our imperfections is flung the mantle of his perfections till we awake after his likeness. He knows us in the relations in which we stand, in all their perplexities and complications, and he is merciful to our poor womanly shrinkings and yearnings. Who was such a friend to women as He whom Mary called not Rabbi, like her brethren, but Rabboni?

Day by day, by little and little, in spite of short-comings and downfalls, by watchfulness, by earnestness, by constancy, we are to mould our pursuits, to train our inclinations, to grow in grace, and reach that love which casteth out fear—that service which is perfect freedom. Could we seek an easier yoke, a lighter burden, one more fit for us to bear, or which promises us a richer reward?

“But what is my vocation? In what particular way am I to be useful and happy?” That is just what no one can tell you. You must find that out for yourself, and probably you will not arrive at a

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certainly about it for years and years to come. Do not be troubled on that account; you have only to persevere in well-doing. The kind of well-doing may be shifted; it is often shifted for you sadly against the grain; still it does not matter.

“Poor wanderers of a stormy day,
From wave to wave we're driven;
And fancy's flash and reason's ray
Serve but to light our troubled way:
There's nothing bright but Heaven.”

And in no quarter upon earth can I read the charter and title-deeds of happiness more legibly written than in the words “love, joy, peace.” What else can we desire? What else do we pursue? In a million elements, varying as our million characters; in youth and age; in health and sickness; in nature and art; in literature; in domestic duties; in philanthropy, in the many-friended house, in the house of few earthly friends; where dispositions are simple and homely, where they are lofty and refined; in poverty, and riches—everywhere, everywhere love, joy, and peace may be met and hailed.

This “love, joy, and peace” which is at once our crown and our shield, is within our reach. It is not like beauty, accomplishments, eminence, power—a doubtful, deceitful chance. It is, although the fruit of the Spirit, our own; for the great, good Holy Spirit, the earnest and consummation of all blessings, is to be had by our prayers.

Although you have your plagues, your doubts, and your distractions, are you to be distressed

when "love, joy, and peace" may be yours? In your day-dreams and castle-buildings, tell me did you ever imagine anything more perfect? "Love, joy, and peace" are the better, brighter, and surer that they are not dependent upon a finite hand or a fallible will. I leave you to think of them, confident that whatever obstruction of your material schemes may await you, whatever confusion or transformation of your spiritual ideas may befall you, they are yours both here and hereafter.

Some may declare that these arguments are very good for health and happiness; but in sorrow and sickness, in sore and peculiar affliction, when the providence of God is all dark to us, when we are stricken, smitten, and afflicted, when we do not feel as if we could grasp anything, when we lie stretched on our death-beds, then even this "love, joy, and peace," which surely requires a healthy frame of mind to receive it, is not enough for us. We want something for the swelling waters, the howling winds, the awful loneliness, the still more awful call to meet our God in judgment. And there is something to meet this extremity, for "man's extremity is God's opportunity," and this is the extremity of human ill. There is a rod and staff reserved for the most perilous expedition, for the last journey of all. "Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the world." "I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also."

Can you hear that and attend to it? The Sa-

viour is near, at your side ; the everlasting arms are underneath you.

“ My eyes are watching by thy bed,
My blessing is around thee shed,
My arm is underneath thy head ;
’Tis I, be not afraid.”

The same Saviour who had a human mother, who taught the Samaritan woman, who answered the Canaanitish woman for her devil-possessed daughter, who gave back to Martha and Mary their dead brother, who pardoned Mary Magdalene, who spoke on the Dolorous way and hanging on the cross itself, in reply to the sorrows and necessities of women, and who appeared on his resurrection first (first of all—think of that!) to one of his Marys—the wisest, kindest, and best friend^s whom women ever possessed, left them this assurance. Do not regard him as a doctrine, but as a person. Do not fear him in that sense of fear which repels and crushes love, but cling to him, hold him by the feet. He will say to you as he proclaimed the good news to the women of old, and made them his messengers, “I go to my Father and your Father; to my God and your God.” He will add, in the pitiful tenderness which brought him down from the high heaven to take upon him our pains and penalties, “and where I am, there shall also my servant be.”