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THE GIRL'S CHOICE.*

BY E. M. M.

There is a Calm the poor in spirit know,
That softens sorrow and that sweetens woe;
There is a Peace that dwells within the breast,
When all without is stormy and distress'd;
There is a Light that gilds the darkest hour,
When dangers thicken and when tempests lower.
That Calm to faith, and hope, and love is given—
That Peace remains when all beside is riven—
That Light shines down to man direct from Heaven!

ANON.

AND now the morning of Lady Marley's *déjeuner à la fourchette* arrived. There had been much rain on the previous evening and during the night, but every cloud had disappeared, and the sun shone forth in resplendent brightness, while the trees and flowers sparkled as if adorned with a thousand gems.

Many a young heart fluttered with delight, at the promised pleasure of the day which had occupied every thought for weeks before. As the season was rather advanced the repast was spread in the drawing-room, consisting of every delicacy that could be procured far and near; the windows were all thrown open, and the Band of the Regiment stationed on the lawn. At twelve o'clock the guests began to assemble, and were received at the door by Sir James and Lady Marley, who, as they stood together, formed an unpleasing contrast: he a little shrivelled old man, and her ladyship in all the bloom of health and beauty; a lurking anxiety might be traced occasionally on her brow, but this would pass away as she met the admiring eyes that ever and anon were cast upon her, and listened to the remarks made purposely to feed her vanity and gratify her dotting husband.

Mrs. Cobb, in her gold turban, followed by four of her daughters, and accompanied by Mr. Cobb, formed very conspicuous figures amidst the crowd. Captain Warburton was one of the last arrivals—he had come to the party contrary to the advice of his medical attendant—looking

rather pale from his recent illness, but, in the estimation of the ladies, handsomer than ever. The countenance of Lady Marley lightened up the instant she beheld him,—pleasure sparkled in her dark eyes, smiles played around her lips, —a few words passed between them, when he left her to talk to others. Mr. Wilkins, dressed in a claret-coloured coat, velvet collar and basket buttons, fluttered about talking nonsense, and boasting that all the arrangements for the day had been made by him; frequently his sister turned an impatient glance upon him, as some vulgar expression would meet her ear, when she wished him in his own surgery at home. Another, also, she regretted having invited—our friend the spinster, who was a kind of Argus watch upon all her movements.

"Why did you not bring your beautiful lady to eclipse all these belles?" asked Miss Sykes, as Captain Warburton was passing her.

"I could not prevail on her to come," he replied; "she has made laws for herself and will not depart from them."

"Others make laws also," rejoined Miss Sykes sarcastically, "but I fear that, to fulfil them, they burthen their consciences."

Captain Warburton coloured, bowed his head to the lady, and walked away.

The guests now took their seats round the table; some placed next to those they wished, others disappointed, and looking very cross upon their unlucky neighbors. Mrs. Cobb appeared perfectly

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