

THE ANTIDOTE

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OUR PRIZE LIST

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MARRIAGE.

Shakespeare tells us that "there is a divinity doth hedge a king," and in like manner there is a sort of halo, half sacred, half romantic, with which marriage is invested by right minded people, of every civilized nationality.

Far be it from us to attempt to dispel or destroy that general feeling, for happy marriages not only bless the individuals and families directly interested, but spread the blessings to the whole community. We fear however that all marriages are not made in heaven; there is something beyond mere love required to make wedlock happy in this matter of fact world. We do not live in Arcadia and billing and cooing will not fill the larder. Cupid may be a bold archer, before the knot is tied, but, as has been often said, he is afterwards very apt to beat a hasty retreat through the window, when poverty peeps her grim visage in at the door. In novels we have all read how the hero and heroine are shown to be completely above all worldly considerations, and in marrying without a dollar, how they nobly struggle for a brief spell, with hands clasped and hearts entwined, until towards the close of the third volume, the fairy godmother, in the shape of a rich uncle or aunt, suddenly appears, and the curtain descends upon a scene of ecstatic bliss. We lay down the book exclaiming: "What a charming

story!" but is it real, and are there fairy godmothers in this life, who arrive in the nick of time to save those from the sad punishment of an imprudent marriage? We can simply answer No; and when a young girl on being urged by her lover to wed without delay, has the sense to enquire what his means and prospects are, we applaud her prudence and should like to know the parents of a daughter so well brought up.

This may be condemned as worldly by romantic people, but after all we live in the world where butchers and bakers have to be paid. Suppose Jack and Jill marry with little but their love to support them. When the rent and taxes come in, no amount of bravery sealed with kisses will meet such. Jack is but mortal, and a bad dinner usually provokes a bad temper, while Jill, who has been slaving all day, at the hopeless task of reducing the expenses, can no longer call up a smile to greet him. There is no money for amusement or relaxation, and the children appear to come as troubles rather than blessings. What a joyless existence! And still we defy anyone to prove our picture of an imprudent marriage over-drawn. Indeed we might have made it more tragical and been within the bounds of truth.

We do not mean to argue from this foregoing, that riches are to be the sole measure of married happiness. Love there must be first of all, for without it the "stalled ox" will bring more misery than even the most meagre dish of herbs, but before Jack and Jill are tied together irrevocably, the former should have enough to make a comfortable home for her who gives up one for him. He should also insure his life, be able to lay by a trifle, and have fair prospects before him, according to his station in the world. This is the prudent marriage to which no good parents will object. It is the blossom which will not wither on the stem, but ripen into fair fruit, and though there may be trials,—for who is without them—they will not be unbearable; his smiling spouse and laughing children will gladden his home, while society and the country will be the better for his having lived.

THE EDITOR'S FYLE.

"Poeta nascitur non fit." This quotation struck the Editor with full force the other day, as he took from his file a few verses descriptive of a seaside idyll. Our fair contributor—for he will presume the lines were penned by one of the gentler sex—no doubt deemed that poetry consisted of rhyme pure and simple—very simple—so as "sea" ended one line, "tree" was made to terminate the next, without any thought as to whether pines, are usually to be found rearing their trunks upon the wave-washed beach. "Shore" was matched with "o'er," and as the rays of the moon were said to fall upon the former, the Editor concluded that in all probability the "ore" would be silver not golden. The lunar orb is—so the verses gave one to understand—a "shining light," very much so for it shone two or three times in as many lines, but the Editor regretted that in his judgment the term could not as yet be applied to the authoress, whose tender age he should suppose would be somewhere about ten or twelve years. It is pleasant for "you" to be rhymed with "true," even if you have doubts as to its being strictly correct, but after all poetry is something more than this and maids sighing and youths dying are not of themselves sufficient to remind one of Tennyson or Byron.

Poor little girl, thought the Editor, she has wasted half a minute of his valuable time, and he does not know how much of her own, but—here the Editor was interrupted by the second mail delivery, and in glancing over the various letters, observed one addressed in the same handwriting as that of the verses. Opening the missive he read:—"Dear Mr. Editor,—Please do not use the poetry I left at your office; I only sent it in fun, indeed I did. Oh pray do not insert it and oblige. Yours, Dorchester Street." The Editor smiled, for there was not the slightest occasion for the alarm expressed by his young correspondent. He mentally pledged his word not to inflict the idyll upon his readers, and in this instance at all events his word will be as good as a bond.