

The Standard,

OR FRONTIER GAZETTE.

Volume VIII

No. XXVIII

Price 15s.]

SAINT ANDREWS, NEW BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY MORNING, JULY 16, 1841.

[17s. 6d. by Mail.

THE EXTRAVAGANT WIFE.

BY MISS E. A. WARE.

"This is the happiest moment of my existence," said Edward Meredith, as he pressed his lips to the fair forehead of his beautiful bride, and seated her upon a couch in a most elegantly furnished apartment. "Long have you been mistress of my heart, and the hour that makes you mistress of my mansion is to me one of great happiness."

His wife returned her cordial greeting to his home with her sweetest smile, and assurance that she would make his home a happy one.

There were few beings in the world happier than Edward Meredith. He had commenced business under the most favorable auspices. His father died while he was yet in boyhood, and entrusted his education to the care of a bachelor uncle. His uncle's fortune was ample, and he bestowed all his care and affection upon his orphan nephew. There was one thing in which he never ceased to advise him; that was in regard to a matrimonial alliance. He himself had been so exceedingly cautious that thus far he had enjoyed single blessedness. He regarded it as one of the greatest risks a man could run to select for himself a partner for life. He would sit from morning till night and tell of ill-assorted pairs. Of the extravagance of his early friend such an one's wife, or the ill humor of another. How this man, had been worn into a decline, another took to intemperance. In short there was scarcely a match made but that Uncle John was ready with a long list of objections. You need not wonder then, that our hero, however enamored he might be of his lady love, feared to reveal his passion, being unwilling to listen to the long lecture of Uncle John. He had been smitten by the unequalled beauty of Maria Ellsworth since he had sought an introduction and from that hour had dreamed of nothing but a union with her. Mr. Ellsworth, her father, did a very extensive business, was reputed to be very wealthy, and the style in which he lived would indeed have warranted such a supposition. Maria was an only child, spoiled through excessive indulgence. She possessed rare beauty and very amiable qualities; but they were so completely buried in selfishness that a slight acquaintance would not detect their existence. But notwithstanding this there was an easy familiarity in her manner which when accompanied by so perfect beauty is always fascinating. Edward Meredith had yielded his heart without the least consideration. He fancied that were she his own he should be happy, and consequently paused not to inquire whether she possessed those qualities calculated to ensure happiness. Maria on the other hand knew not that to keep the flame of love burning brightly she must be ever active. She had been accustomed to having every one sacrifice to happiness, and dreamed not that it would ever be her turn to make the sacrifice. It would be unjust to say to her, did I say she did not possess real love for her husband. She lacked judgement in the exercise of it.

John Meredith had for many years been extensively and favourably known as a merchant. His credit had been preserved good through every fluctuation, and his name upon a note was enough to secure a ready pass. A few weeks before the marriage of his nephew, taking him aside he said to him—

"Edward, for many years I have been engaged in a safe and profitable trade, I have accumulated wealth more than sufficient to ensure a competency the remainder of my days. Now I am growing old, and I am weary with the perplexities of business. I shall give it into your hands." Edward eagerly grasped the old man's hand and spoke his gratitude in fervent expressions. That only thought that crossed his mind, was that now he could support Maria, in a style worthy of her. "But stop," and I will tell you to what I attribute my prosperity. In the first place, I have always attended to my business myself, and that closely too. That is, I have always been my own head clerk. I have seen too much evil resulting from trusting business to clerks. In the next place, I have never participated in any of the extravagances common to young men. My style of living has always been plain and simple. Though I would not attempt to measure your style of living by what mine has been, for a married man must necessarily incur more expense, yet I would earnestly recommend prudence in every thing: it is an indispensable requisite in a young man. And now I will say to you so long as you abide my advice, I will always be ready to assist you, but the moment you disregard it, or run into ten thousand fashionable follies of the day, I shall withdraw my aid. In regard to your marrying nothing will give me more pleasure, than to see you well settled in life. I myself have often felt the loneliness of my condition, and wish for a sharer in life of my joys and sorrows. But have often told you that it was a difficult thing to make a wise selection of a wife. And were I going to select for you, Maria Ellsworth would be the best person my choice would fall upon."

Mr. Meredith witnessed the color rise to Edward's brow. "I do not doubt," he continued, "that she may possess qualities amply sufficient to win love—but does she possess

those to keep it? I do not say what I am saying from any wish to break the alliance. No: far be it from me to vitiate your choice; but I do it for you may not expect more than you will obtain, and to prepare you to meet with firmness, and mildly to correct those mistakes in judgement, which she, young and inexperienced as she is, will be liable to commit. Never let your love for your wife tempt you to gratify her for the moment in what will tend to injure both your interests. You must remember that you are but a young merchant, and that there is no business which requires so much caution; and never be led to ape the style of men whose established credit warrants it. I will furnish your house in a style worthy the lady who is to be mistress of it; and I shall wish it for my home—There are very few merchants who commence business under such favorable circumstances. I will do all for you that lies in my power, but you always may expect to be chided by your uncle, for negligence, extravagance, or any of those vices which ruin the young merchants."

"And I will ever thank you for it," replied Edward warmly. "May I never be so ungrateful as lightly to regard anything that comes from my best earthly friend?"

Edward loved his uncle with filial affection, but yet in regard to Maria, he deemed him far once mistaken. She might be inexperienced, but she would learn to deny herself many of those little elegancies which are so expensive, and which from infancy she had been accustomed to having. She cannot expect, he thought to himself, to have every wish gratified as she has been accustomed—she will realize it and spare me the pain of denying her."

But having ascertained Edward's expectations in regard to her, we will inquire what were hers in regard to her future course of life. We will look still farther back, to some of her earlier impressions which she had received from her mother who had filled that youthful mind with desires for usefulness. But instead of that she had been taught to set a value on everything just in proportion as it was useful to her. And if her father at any time, embarrassed by pecuniary affairs and weighed down by anxiety, was prompted to refuse her an extravagant request, her mind was led forward to the time when she would be the mistress of a mansion of her own and have everything she wanted. She was taught to regard married life, not as one that required all her efforts to make it a happy one, but a state of perfect freedom and independence. She fancied that, but to make her wants known to her husband was to have them gratified. She admired the manly figure, rich voice, and elegant manners of Edward Meredith, and she resolved to marry him. Not dreaming that she who had abundance, ever could suffer the inconvenience of poverty. Not so however with Mrs. Ellsworth; she carefully considered the advantages and disadvantages of the match, and it was his uncle's large fortune which recommended Edward Meredith. She fancied that his influence over his uncle would be as perfect as she believed Maria's would be over him; and thus she suffered her daughter to enter in one of the most solemn contracts without hinting to her of the numerous duties which would devolve upon her thereby.

The wedding passed off with great eclat, and the commencement of our story witnesses her introduction into her mansion as the bride of Edward Meredith. But as the beautiful bride is not always the faithful wife, we will break the link in our narrative, and after an interval of two years, again introduce our readers to Mrs. Edward Meredith. And has the change in her whom we last sitting upon the same couch where we now find her. If so she is still very beautiful. Her complexion yet retains its brilliancy—her sparkling black eyes have lost none of their animation, and as she rises we witness the same graceful elasticity of step. Uncle John sits by the fire, with his feet upon the fender, with a book in his hand looking very demure. Ever and anon he would cast a look almost of reproach upon the beautiful woman before him. The door opened, and Edward Meredith entered. The two years which have elapsed, have wrought more change in him than his fair bride. The forehead which was then so fair and open, has here and there a line which looks as tho' it had been furrowed by care. But the slight frown which was visible upon his countenance as he entered, and which no doubt had been caused by some business transaction, disappeared as he took his seat beside his smiling wife. Uncle John rose abruptly and left the room. Edward looked around as soon as he was gone, and asked—"Where has Uncle John gone so suddenly?"

"I don't know," replied his wife, "but what a miserly old fellow he is," she continued, "he has been giving me a long lecture on prudence, because I told him of my determination to purchase a shawl like Mrs. Wenville's."

It pleased not Edward to hear his wife call his uncle and their kind benefactor by so hard an epithet. But he turned and looked upon her and he saw affection for him beaming

from her eyes, a sweet smile playing upon her ruby lips, and all displeasure vanished. "Perhaps he wanted to remind you," he said half playfully, "that you were a poor merchant's wife."

"Or rather," she added, softly reclining her head upon his shoulder, "that I was a poor wife for a merchant."

Edward pressed her fervently to his bosom and thought to himself, "Yesterday, Uncle John told me I did not behave she would ruin me—but even ruin would be tolerable if caused by thee," he mentally exclaimed, as he stroked back the dark tresses of her hair.

The shawl was not referred to again that night, but on the ensuing morning, tastefully dressed for a walk, Mrs. Meredith encountered her husband in the entry. "Well, my dear," she said in a laughing manner, "shall I draw on you, for the money for my shawl?" "How much do you want?" he enquired hastily.

"Five hundred," was the reply. Edward paused and almost frowned.

"I never have asked you for an elegant article, and shall I be refused the first time?—You think with Uncle John, it is no matter what I wear," and she placed her hand upon the door.

Edward was going to speak but found himself unable, and taking her hand from the door, he bade her stop while he counted out the money.

All clouds were instantly dispelled from her countenance, but as Edward stopped to kiss her he observed a tear trembling on her long lashes, and blaming himself for a moment's delay, he no longer regretted the indulgence. He bent his steps towards his place of business, and when he arrived there the first thing that recurred to his memory was, that that day a note for a large amount became due. He remembered too, that he had suffered hours of anxiety to obtain the sum. And did no other thought crowd in? Yes, there was one, bitter indeed it was. It was, that she who should have forgiven to have added to the weight of anxiety had broken the sum to purchase an extravagant article of which she stood in no need. But then he would excuse her, for she knew not that he needed it. And then again would he repine that her judgment did not teach her.

But leaving him we will follow his wife as she trips lightly from shop to shop in vain endeavouring to make a selection. At last it was made and the shopkeeper suggesting that it could probably be carried better on her shoulders than elsewhere, she left the one she wore, and most pleased left for home. She thought to herself as she tripped along, "I will just call on Mrs. Wenville, to let her see that I can have an elegant shawl as well as she." She stepped up to the door and rung.

She was ushered in, and the first thing that struck her, was that Mrs. Wenville's entry was much more elegantly furnished than her own; and indeed she thought within herself, "Edward must make some improvements in that line." She seated herself in the parlour waiting for Mrs. Wenville, and had plenty of time to draw comparisons between its style of furniture and her own. Till at last she forgot her triumph in the shawl, thinking of the meanness of her furniture. Soon Mrs. Wenville entered, delighted to see her, could not imagine why she had not called before. After the usual ceremonies had passed off she began to admire her shawl. Indeed, her shoulders were formed admirably for wearing a shawl—just the figure for it. Miss Wenville, a young lady of about eighteen, joined her mother in her flattering notice of the shawl, till Mrs. Meredith began to feel her triumph. As it was near dinner hour she made her call short. As soon as she had departed, Mrs. Wenville looked at her daughter with a most expressive curl of the lip, and uttered, "What extravagance! Who would have thought of her purchasing a shawl like ours? Well, I do pity her husband, but he ought to have known better than to have married her, she always spent more than her father's income."

"I wonder what Mr. John Meredith thinks, rejoined the younger, "to see his property wasted?—Well, every body knows she is not able to dress like us."

"That is very true," satisfactorily replied the other.

In the meanwhile, Mrs. Meredith, unconscious of their remarks, and only intent on having her house furnished in a style that would equal theirs, hurried home. It was so near dinner hour that her husband and her uncle were both seated upon the sofa when she entered. Uncle John lifted his glasses and looked at the shawl, then with pity at its possessor, and turning fixed his eye upon his nephew with a look of mild reproach. Edward felt it, and the color rose to his face. His wife noticed it.

"I don't think you like my shawl, Edward," she enquired.

"Yes," he replied, "but it is near dinner hour now I will talk it over another time." The fact of it was, he was unwilling to have Uncle John know the cost, and was fearful she should betray it. But Uncle John could not be deceived.

The dinner passed off quietly, and Mrs. Meredith thought it extremely impolite of her husband to say nothing in favor of her elegant

shawl. But she resolved to wait till she was rid of Uncle John, and then ask his opinion; for she was really anxious he should admire it. After Uncle John had retired, she drew her chair to her husband's side and looking affectionately in his face said—"You did not commend my choice of a shawl to-day."

His gaze was bent downward and he resolved to tell her the whole cause. But he paused to look upon her. O how sure was the sight of that countenance to unman him and break down all his resolutions. Can I mar thy happiness by telling thee of my perplexities? he thought within himself as he looked upon her beautiful face. He looked smilingly upon her as he replied, "I will own, my dear, that I was more obedient to the calls of hunger than the laws of politeness, but if you will bring it forward now I will endeavour to appreciate its merits."

The shawl was produced and an examination of it by her husband took place, during which Mrs. Meredith marked every expression. When he had finished she threw it gracefully over her shoulders. It was indeed, peculiarly becoming, and she marked with evident satisfaction, the look of pride which her husband cast upon her.

(To be concluded in our next.)

Dr. Chalmers' Opinion of the Corn Laws.—In a note to his work on Political Economy, he says: "For the sake of its moral benefit, we know of no achievement more earnestly desirable than that of a free corn trade. There is not more fertile topic of clamor and burning discontent all over the land, and were it but effectually set at rest, we are aware of nothing which might serve more to sweeten the breath of British society." And again, after dwelling with eloquence and ingenuity on what may probably be the ultimate effect of the abolition of the corn laws on the interests of the landlords, and on the industry and prosperity of the country, and showing that the loss of the land owner is much exaggerated, he proceeds to say, "Yet in the face of all this uncertainty, we feel no hesitation in affirming the expediency and the rightness of a free trade in corn." When considering the probable effect on revenue, he says, "We should not object to a slight duty, such as 5 shillings a quarter, on imported corn, to be remitted only in years of scarcity; and finally in winding up our remarks on the whole matter, he says, that the real good, the comfort and prosperity of the people, the proper end of all legislation, is less dependent on material resources than on moral restraints and right principles."

Marvellous.—The New England papers are making a great fuss about a baby that happened to be born on board a steambot, on its passage between Boston and Portland. Such doings are so frequent on this way, on our western waters, that the papers hardly ever pretend to notice them. At least four occurrences of the kind have happened on boats in which we have been travelling; and it is a rare thing to take up a steambot cabin bible on the Mississippi or Ohio rivers, without seeing under the proper head of the Family Record, the announcement of a new comer into this world of politics and perplexity. Here such produce is christened after the name of the boat. There—in the region of Cape Cod—the baby was called Miss Steamboat.

John Hankey.

A surgeon at Lincoln having lately been much annoyed by mischievous boys ringing his door-bell, and thundering at the knocker, hit upon a capital expedient for detecting the runaway playes; getting his electrical apparatus into order, he charged the Leyden jar rather powerfully, and communicated it with the bell-wire. Scarcely had he done so, when the bell rang, and on opening the door a juvenile delinquent was found prostrated all his length, by the shock, and calling out lustily, "The young rogue was frightened out of his senses, and after a sound lecturing, he was permitted to depart without further punishment."

Amusement.—People should be guarded against temptation to unlawful pleasures, by furnishing the means of innocent ones. In every community there must be pleasures, relaxations, and means of agreeable excitement and if innocent are not furnished, resort will be had to criminal. Man was made to enjoy as well as to labour, and the state of society should be adapted to this principle of human nature. Men drink to excess very often to shake off depression, or to satisfy the restless thirst for agreeable excitement, and these motives are excluded in a cheerful community.

Dr. Channing.

TO THE FREEHOLDERS OF THE COUNTY OF CHARLOTTE.

Gentlemen—In 1837, during the administration of Sir Archibald Campbell, a committee of the whole House of Assembly passed the following unanimous resolution, "Resolved, that the allowance of £300 sterling for contingencies having been excluded from the established charges on the Civil List, both by Lord Glenelg and Lord Stanley, there is every reason to

infer that the amount was not considered necessary to be appropriated, and that therefore, such exclusion on both occasions was intentionally made by His Majesty's Government; and further resolved, as the opinion of this committee, that no such grant is necessary."

This was before the responsible system, alias the harmonious legislative era commenced in this Province; Sir Archibald Campbell was not popular with a majority of the representatives of the people, no grant of money for government contingencies was then considered necessary; and it appears that the House of Assembly held the same opinion in the ensuing year 1838, as no grant of the kind was made at the session of that year, and in fact, during the whole six years of Sir Archibald Campbell's administration the sum of £400 only was allowed to him for Provincial contingencies. But in 1839, at the second meeting of the Legislature under Sir John Harvey, so much unanimity of feeling and harmony of sentiment was found to prevail throughout the several branches of the Legislature, that all at once the representatives of the people changed their minds as to the necessity of a grant to Sir John Harvey for government contingencies, and accordingly they granted the trifling sum of £1000 to His Excellency for Provincial contingencies during that year. At the next session in 1840, the like trifling sum of 1000 was again granted to Sir John Harvey for the same purpose, and in 1841 at the last session a further sum of £1000 was likewise granted expressly for the purpose of meeting the contingent expenses of the Government for the present year. And as this was the avowed object of the grant it was naturally supposed that His Excellency Sir William Colebrooke would have the command of this £1000 to apply in payment of any contingent expenses that might arise between the last and the next session of the Legislature, because Sir John Harvey left the Province immediately after the last prorogation of the House of Assembly, and no contingency or contingencies had time to occur requiring the expenditure of this money by him. But to the astonishment of many, and the actual dismay of some unsuspecting persons among you, it is reported to have been discovered that about the time Sir John Harvey departed from the Province, this £1000 contingent money did take unto itself wings and flew away, and that not a stir of it remains to be expended in pursuance of the object for which it was avowedly granted. I as one of your number would vainly hope that such an iniquitous transaction could not be possible, but the statement has been actually published as a fact, and been nowhere contradicted.

With respect to these annual grants of money for contingencies, you will observe that no account whatever has ever been given of the manner in which they have been applied, or whether they or any portion of them have been expended for Provincial contingencies or not, and the sum of £2000 thus granted in the years 1839, '40, and '41, has in point of fact been so much money improperly taken from the people and gratuitously presented by the members of Assembly to their admired and esteemed friend, Sir John Harvey; in other words the intention seems to have been covertly to give to the Governor, leaving the people to suppose the grants were bona fide and legitimate appropriations of money necessary for the public service.

It is your duty to observe that in this way alone the sum of £3000 has been absolutely thrown away during the three last years by your consistent and economical representatives, and in the face of their declaration made in 1837, that no grant of money whatever was necessary to be appropriated for any such purpose.

In 1839 the harmonious system was found to work so well that the members of Assembly began with a bonus to the Govr of £1000 called contingent money, in 1840, the harmony still continuing, they voted in addition to the £1000 contingencies for that year, the further sum of £500 per annum as an increase of salary, which amounted in the four years of Sir John's administration to the unimportant amount of £2000 more, but even this was not enough, for we find recorded on the journals of the same session, the following resolution:—"On motion of Mr. Partelow, Resolved, unanimously, that the Commissioners of Government House be authorised to purchase Coal to the extent of a sum not exceeding One Hundred and Fifty Pounds, for the public rooms and offices at Government House, for the present year, and that this House will provide for the payment of the same at its next session." And in 1841 they presented His Excellency at the people's expense, with the additional sum of £1500 sterling equal to £1800 currency, as a testimonial of their esteem and in commemoration of his wise and harmonious administration.

These few sums alone, (not referring to others that might be named) £3000 contingent money, £2000 addition to salary, £150 for Coal, and £1800 for extra, when added together exhibit the respectable total of £6350 given by the Representatives of the People, to Sir John Harvey, in the short period of four years, over and above the salary of £3000 sterling per annum fixed and determined up-

P. Inglis, John S. Finley use names, are signed to they are gentlemen of repute, and each full credit of certificate. We hereunto set my hand and seal, to be affixed, to the order, &c. THARTON, Mayor. Saint Andrews.

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THOMAS SIMS, 1841.

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