SHUT THE DOOR.

(To Good Things.)

Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore—
Do doubtless you have heard the name before—
Was a boy who never would shut a door!

The wind might whistle, the wind might roar,
And teeth be aching and shoes be sore,
But still he never would shut the door.

His father would beg, his mother implore,
"Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,
We really do wish you would shut the door!"

Their hands they wrung, their hair they tore,
But Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore
Was deaf as the buoy out at the Nore.

When he walked forth the folks would roar,
"Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,
Why can't you think to shut the door?"

They rigged out a shutter with self and cat
And threatened to pack off Gustavus Gore
On a voyage of pleasure to Singapore

"If you will!" said his parents; "then keep on
Once!
But mind you do! For the plague is sore
Of a fellow that will never shut the door,
Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore!"

(Exemplified according to Copyright Act of 1868.)

A SIMPLETON;

A Story of the Day.

BY CHARLES READE.

CHAPTER XIV.

Rosa fell ill with grief at the hotel, and could not move for some days; but the moment she was strong enough, she insisted on leaving Plymouth: like all wounded things, she must drag herself home.

But what a home! How empty it struck, and she heart-sick and desolate. Now all the familiar places were a mere aspect; each little yard, where he had so walked and waited, became a temple to her, and she came out sobbing in it, and never lifted to the full how much he had suffered there—with what fortitude. The open door, the house, and kissed the chair he had sat in, and every much used place and thing of the departed.

Her shallow nature deepened and deepened under this bereavement, of which, she said to herself, with a shudder, she was the cause. And daily in the course of nature, there is nothing like suffering to enlighten the giddy brain, widen the narrow mind, improve the trivial heart.

As her regrets were tender and deep, so her vows of repentance were sincere. Oh, that a little while make whether he came back! how thoughtful, how prudent! how loyal! and never have a secret. Then he had once said, "What is the use of your writing? nobody will publish it," now collected and pasted every written scrap. With simple affection, she even locked up his very waste-paper basket, full of fragments he had torn, or useless papers he had thrown there, before he went to Plymouth.

In the drawer of his writing-table she found his diary. It was a thick quarto; it began with their engagement, and ended with his leaving home—for then he took another book. This diary became her Bible; she studied it daily, till her tears hid his lines. The sadness was very misadhesive, perhaps exact; it was a map of their married life. But what she studied most was his observations on her own character, so scientific, yet so kindly; and his scholarlike and wise reflections on life, and, above all, an unconscious picture of a great mind she had hitherto but glanced at. Now she saw it all plain before her; saw it, understood it, adored it, and mourned it. Such women are shallow, not for want of a good, upright character, but for of attention. They do not really study anything; they have been taught at their schools the bad art of skimming; but in their hearts compel their brains to think and reason, the result is considerable. The Greek philosopher never fathomed a character more thoroughly than this poor child of simplicity her philosopher, whom she had read his journal ten or eleven times, and bedewed it with a thousand tears.

One passage almost cut her more intelligent heart in twain:—

"This last day I have done a thing incredible. I have spoken with brutal harshness to the innocent creature I have sworn to protect. She had run in debt, through inexperience, and that unhappy timidity which prevents her confessing an error till it is made, by concealment, into a fault; and I must scold and rave at her, till she actually faded away. Brute! Ruffian! Monster! And she how did she punish me, poor lamb? By soft and tender words—like a lady as she is. Oh, my sweet Rosa, I wish you could know how you are avenged! Talk of the scorpion—she cat! I would be thankful for two dozen lashes. Ah! there is no need, I think, to punish a man who has been cruel to a woman. Let him alone. He will punish himself more than you can, if he really is a man.

From the date of that entry, this self-reproach and self-torture kept cropping up every now and then in the diary, and she prepared to have been not entirely without offence in making a husband so happy, though the main reason he gave was that his Rosa might have the comfort and luxuries she had enjoyed before she married him.

One day, while she was crying over this diary, Uncle Philip called; but not to comfort her, I promise you. He burst on her, irate, to take her to task. He had returned, learned Christopher's departure, and set down the reason in his own mind; that uxorious boy gone to see by a natural resolution his eyes were open to his wife at last, and he was sated of her folly; he had left home distinct illness, or he would not, that could?

"So, ma'am," said he, "my nephew is gone to see, I find—all in a hurry. Pray may I ask what he has done that for?"

"It was a sudden impulse, yet it did not elicit a very plain answer. She only stared at this abrupt inquisitor, and then cried, piteously, "Oh, Uncle Philip!" and burst into sobbing.

"Why, what is the matter?"

"You will hate me now. He is gone to make money for me and I wished he rather have lived on a crust. Uncle—don't hate me. I'm a poor, bereaved, heart-broken creature, that repents—"

"Repents! heigho! why, what have you done to me, ma'am? I'm quite in the dark. I'll be bound. Flirting a little—with some *fools*, I suppose."

"Flirting! Me! a married woman."

"Oh, to be sure; I forgot. Why surely he has not deserted you?"

"My Christopher desert me! He loves me too well; far more than I deserve, I feel not more than I will. Uncle Philip, I am too confuted and wretched to tell you all what has happened; but I know you love him, though you had a tiff. Uncle, be kind on you, to make him know and soothe your grievous, poor fellow! He was so sorry you were away. Please read his dear diary. It will tell you all, better than he can, poor wife can. I know it by heart. I'll show you how you and he quarrelled about me. There see. And she showed him the passage with her finger. "He never told me it was that, or I would have come and begged your pardon on my knees. But see how sorry he was. There see."

"And now I'll show you another place, where my Christopher speaks of your many acts of kindness. There see. And now please let me show you how he longed for reconciliation. There see. It is the same through the book. And now I'll show you how grieved he was to go with out your blessing. I told him I was sure you would give him that, and him going away. Oh me! will he ever return? Uncle dear, don't hate me. You are his only uncle; and what shall I do, now he is gone, if you discard me? Why you are the only Sta nce left me to love."

"Disown you, ma'am! that I'll never do. You are a good-hearted young woman, I find. There, run and dry your eyes; and let me read Christopher's diary all through. Then I shall see how the land lies."

Rosa complied with this proposal; and left him alone while she bathed her eyes and tried to compose herself, for she was all trembling at the unknown fate.

When she returned to the drawing-room, he was walking about, looking grave and thoughtful.

"It is the old story," said he, rather severely; "young people and their elders and our ancestors were that first used that word to mean a quarrel for look into twenty quarrels, and you shall detect a score of misunderstandings. Yet our American cousins make yes and substitute the unidiomatic word 'difficulty,' that is wonderful. I had no quarrel with him: delighted to see either of you. But I had called twice on him; so I thought he ought to get over his temper, and call on a tried friend like me. A mere misunderstanding! Now, my dear, let us have no more of these misunderstandings. You will always be welcome at my house, and shall often come here and look after you and your interests. What do you mean to do, I wonder."

"Sir, I am to go home to my father, if he will be troubled with me. I have written to him."

"And what is to become of the Bijou?"

"My Christie thought I should like to part with it, and the furniture—but his own clothing-desk and his chair, no. I never will and his little clock. Oh! oh! oh! But I remember what you said about agents, and I don't know what to do; for I shall be away."

"Then, leave it to me. I'll come and live here with one servant; and I'll soon sell it for you."

"You, Uncle Philip!"

"Well, why not?" said he, roughly.

"That will be a great trouble and discomfort to you, I'm afraid."

"If I find it so, I'll soon drop it. I'm not the fool to put myself out for anybody. When you are ready to get out, send me word, and I'll come in."

Soon after this he bustled off. He gave her a sort of hurried kiss at parting, as if he was ashamed of it, and wanted it over as quickly as possible.

Each day her father came, condoled with her politely, assured her there was nothing to cry about; husbands were a sort of functionaries, that generally went to see at small part of their career, and no harm ever came of it. On the contrary, "it knocked under the heart grow fonder," said this judicious parent.

This sentiment happened to be just a little too true, and set the daughter crying bitterly. But she fought against it. "Oh, no!" said she. "I mustn't. I will not be always crying in Kent Ville."

"Lord forbid!"

"I shall get over it in time—a little."

"Why, of course you will. But, as to your coming to Kent Ville, I am afraid you would not be very comfortable there. You know I am supernaturated. Only got my pension now."

"I know that, papa: and—why that is one of the reasons. I have a good income now; and I thought if we put our means together,

"No carriage; no Rosa; no footman; no luxury of any kind, till our fortune comes back. I abhor dress; I abhor expense; I loathe everything I once liked too well. I detest everything that has pained us; and I hate myself worst of all. Oh! oh! oh! Forgive me, papa, for crying so."

"Well, I daresay there are associations about this place that upset you. I shall go and make ready for your coming, dear; and then you can come as soon as you like.

He bestowed a paternal kiss on her brow, and glided loosely away before she could possibly cry again.

The very next week Rosa was at Kent Ville, with the relics of her husband about her; his chair, his writing-table, his clock, his waste-paper basket, a very deep and large one. She had them all in her bedroom at Kent Ville.

Here the days glided quietly, but heavily. She derived some consolation from Uncle Philip. His rough, friendly way was a tonic, and cared her. He called several times about the Bijou. Told her he had put up enormous boards all over the house, and puffed it finely. "I have had a hundred agents at me," said he; "and the next thing, I hope, will be one customer; that is about the proportion."

At last he wrote her he had hooked a victim, and sold the lease and furniture for twenty-five guineas. Staines had assigned the lease to Rosa, so she had full power; and Philip called, but not to comfort her, I promise you. He burst on her, irate, to take her to task. He had returned, learned Christopher's departure, and set down the reason in his own mind; that uxorious boy gone to see by a natural resolution his eyes were open to his wife at last, and he was sated of her folly; he had left home distinct illness, or he would not, that could?

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