

MARTHA PHILLIPS.

She was dead; an old woman, with silvery hair brushed smoothly away from her wrinkled forehead, and snowy cap tied under her chin; a sad, quiet face; a patient mouth, with lines about it that told of sorrow borne with gentle firmness; and two withered, tired hands, crossed with a careful look. That was all.

Who, looking at this sleeping form, would think of love and romance, of a heart only just healed of a wound received long ago?

Fifty years she had lived under that roof a farmer's wife. If you look on the little plate on her coffin lid, you will see "Aged 70" there; and she was only 20 when John Phillips brought her home, a bride.

A half-century she had kept her careful watch over duty and labor, had made butter and cheese, and looked after the innumerable duties that fall to the share of a farmer's wife. And John had never gone with buttonless shirts or undressed socks; had not come home to an untidy house and scolding wife. His trim, tidy Martha had been his pride; and though not a demonstrative husband, he had boasted sometimes of the model housewife that kept his home in order.

But underneath her quiet exterior there was a story that John never dreamed of, and would hardly have believed possible had he been told. She did not marry for love. When she was 19, a rosy, happy girl, a stranger came on a visit to their little village, and that summer was the brightest and happiest she ever knew. Paul Gardner was the stranger's name; he was an artist, and fell in love with the simple village girl, and won her heart; and, when he went away in the autumn, they were betrothed.

"I'll come again in the spring," he said. "Trust me, and wait for me, Mattie dear!"

She promised to love and wait for him till the end of time, if need be; and, with a kiss on her quivering lips, he went away.

Mattie Gray did not tell her father and mother of her love, for they had no liking for London folks, and had treated Paul none too hospitably when he had ventured inside their house.

Spring-time came, and, true to his word, Paul returned; he stayed only a day or two this time.

"I am going away in a few weeks to Italy, to study," he said. "I shall be gone two years, and then I shall come to claim you for my bride."

They renewed their vows, and parted with tears, and tender, loving words; he put a ring on her finger, and cut a little curly tress from her brown hair; and, telling her to be always true, and wait for him, he went away.

The months went by, and Mattie was trying to make the time pass as best she could, to improve herself, so that she might be worthy of her lover, when he should return to make her his wife.

"It must be about the time he is to start," she said to herself one day.

And by and by, as she glanced over a newspaper, her eye was attracted by his name, and with white lips and dilated eyes, she read of his marriage to another.

"Married! Taken another bride, instead of coming back to marry me! Oh, Paul, Paul! I loved and trusted you for this!"

She covered her face with her hands, and wept bitterly.

An hour afterwards, as she sat there in the twilight, with the fatal newspaper lying in her lap, she heard a step on the gravel walk; and, looking up, she saw John Phillips coming up the steps. He had been to see her often before, but had never yet spoken of love, and had, of course, received no encouragement to do so. He was a plain, hard-working farmer, with no romance about him, but matter-of-fact to the core. His wife would get few caresses or tender words. He would be kind enough—would give her plenty to eat and to wear.

Now, he seemed to have come for the express purpose of asking her to be his wife; for he took a chair, and, seating himself beside her, after the usual greeting, he rose, and, with a look that told of earnestness, he said, "John, I have come to take breath, began, in his business-like way, to converse. There was no confession of love, no pleading, no hand-clasping, no tender glances; he simply wanted her; would she be his wife? His manner was hearty enough; there was no doubt he really wanted her—would rather marry her than any other woman he knew; but that was all.

Her lips moved to tell him she did not love him; but as she let fall her eyes from the crimson-hearted rose that swung from the vine over the window, she caught sight of those few lines again.

"Married!" she said to herself. "What can I do? He doesn't ask me to love him. If I marry him I can be a true wife to him, and nobody will know that Paul has left me."

The decision was made. Her cheeks were ashy pale as she looked up, straight into his eyes, and answered quietly, "Yes, I will be your wife."

Her parents were pleased that she was chosen by so well-to-do a young man; so it was all settled, and they were married that same summer. People thought she sobbed down wonderfully; more than that, nothing was said that would lead any one to suppose any change had taken place.

Yes, she was sobbed down. She dared not think of Paul. There was no hope ahead. Life was a time to be filled up with something, so that she might not think of herself. John was always kind, but she got so wearied of his talk of stock and crops, and said to herself, "I must work harder; plan and fuss, and bustle about as other women do, so that I may forget, and grow like John."

Two years went swiftly by. A baby slept in the little cradle; and Martha—now called her Mattie but still—sat rocking it with her foot as she knitted a blue woollen stocking for the baby's father. There was a knock at the half-open door.

"I have got into the wrong road; will you be kind enough to direct me the nearest way to the village?" said a voice, and a stranger stepped in.

She rose to give him the required direction, but stopped short, while he came quickly forward.

"Paul!"

"Mattie!"

His face lighted up, and he reached out his arms to draw her to him. With a surprised, pained look, she drew back.

"Mr. Gardner, this is a most unexpected meeting."

"Mr. Gardner?" he repeated. "Mattie, what do you mean?"

"I can't call me Mattie, if you please," she replied with dignity. "My name is Phillips."

"Phillips?" he echoed. "Are you married?"

"Those are strange words from you, Paul Gardner; do you think I was waiting all this time for another woman's husband?—that I was keeping my faith with one who played me false so soon?"

"Played you false! I have not. I am come as I promised you. The two years are but just past, and I am here to claim you. Why do you greet me thus? Are you indeed married, Mattie Gray?"

She was trembling like an aspen leaf. For

answer, she turned and pointed to the cradle. He young and stood before her, with white face and folded arms.

"Tell me why you did this! Didn't you love me well enough to wait for me?"

She went and unlocked a drawer, and took out a newspaper. Unfolding it, and finding the place, she pointed to it with her finger, and he read the marriage notice.

"What of this?" he asked as he met her questioning, reproachful look. "Oh, Mattie! you thought it meant me. It is my cousin. I am not married, nor in love with any one but you!"

"Are you telling me the truth?" she asked, in an eager, husky voice.

And then, as he replied, "It is true," she gave a low groan and sank down into a chair.

"Oh, Paul, forgive me! I nearly broke my heart! I didn't know that you had a cousin by the same name. I ought not to have doubted you; but 'twas there in black and white—and this man, my husband, came, and I married him!"

With bitter tears, she told him how it all happened. With clenched hands he walked to and fro, then stopped beside the cradle, and bent over the sleeping child. Lower he bent till his lips touched its forehead, while he murmured softly to himself, "Mattie's baby."

Then he turned, and, kneeling before her, said, in a low voice, "I forgive you, Mattie; be as happy as you can." He took both her hands in his, and looked steadily, lovingly, into her face. His lips quivered convulsively as he rose to his feet. "I have no right here; you are another man's wife. Good-bye—God-bless you!"

He turned, as he went out of the door, and saw her standing there in the middle of the room, with arms outstretched. He went back, and, putting his arms round her, pressed one kiss on her cheek, then left the house, never looking back.

And she went down on her knees beside her sleeping baby, and prayed for strength to bear her great trial. They never saw one another again.

Seventy years old! Her stalwart sons and bright-eyed daughters remember her as a loving and devoted mother, her grey-headed husband as a most faithful wife.

"Never was a woman more patient and kind, and as good a housewife as ever was," he said, as he brushed the back of his old brown hand across his eyes while looking down on the peaceful face.

And not one of them ever knew of the weary heart and broken hope that had died in her breast, nor ever dreamed of the sorrowful load she had borne through life.

A JAPANESE ROMANCE.

Our cosmopolitan age, so eager for new commercial outlets, will also eagerly seek sources of intellectual interest. Our European literature will lose nothing by issuing from its somewhat restricted horizon. Already the contemporary poetry of Germany has been enriched with many a jewel drawn from the inexhaustible stores of Persia and India; but the extreme Orient still an untouched mine. From the little that has been given to the world, we take the following Japanese story, which is quoted by a Dutch author, Dekker, in his "Max Havelaar."

THE STONE-CUTTER.

Once upon a time there was in Japan a poor stone-cutter, a simple workman in the quarries. His life was rude, he worked much, gained little, and was not at all contented with his lot. "If I could only be rich enough to rest, to sleep on thick matting, wrapped in a kimono of soft silk!" Such was the sigh he breathed to heaven. An angel intercepted it.

"It shall be according to thy desire," said the angel to him. And he at once became rich, and he rested, slept upon thick matting, and wrapped himself in a kimono of soft silk.

It happened that the emperor, passing by, was preceded by heralds on foot and horse back, followed by a brilliant escort of cavaliers, and surrounded by persons who held over his head an immense parasol resplendent with gold.

"What good does it do me to be rich?" murmured the man, "as long as I have not the right to go out with an escort, and my head protected with a golden parasol? Why am I not the emperor?"

"Thou shalt be," said the angel.

And, indeed, he became the emperor. He had an escort of cavaliers before and behind him, and people who held above his head an immense parasol resplendent with gold.

However, the sun with his ardent beams dried up the country, and the dusty road quivering with his brightness, fatigued his eyes.

"It is no great advantage to be emperor," cried the man, "when the heat of the day exhausts you, and the sun never ceases to make you feel his power! But if one could be the sun!"

"Behold! Are you satisfied?" the angel asked. For he had become the sun, and he darted his beams up and down, right and left, and all around him. And he scorched the herbage of the earth and the faces of princes upon the earth.

But now a cloud thrust itself between the earth and him; it held back the rays of the sun and prevented them from falling upon the earth's surface.

"There is strength," cried the sun—"a cloud capable of resisting my power. It would be better if I were a cloud!"

"Very well!" said the angel.

And the transformation was at once accomplished. The new cloud placed itself laughingly between the sun and the earth, and so thoroughly intercepted the rays of the sun that it saw the earth covered with its shadow. Then it caused big drops of rain, and pouring showers and water-spouts to fall on the lands, so that the torrents burst their bounds and the rivers spread over and devastated the fields.

Nothing relaxed the force of the inundation; only a rock dotted it, perfectly motionless. In vain the bellowing waters bent it in their fury, the rock yielded not, but the foaming water died at its foot.

"A rock, then, is my superior," said the cloud; "I would rather be in its place."

"You shall be," said the angel.

And he was transformed into a steep, unshaken rock, insensible to the rays of the sun, indurated to the torrents of rain and the shock of the tumultuous waves.

Nevertheless, he distinguished at his feet a man of poor appearance, hardly clothed, but armed with a chisel and a hammer; and the man, with those instruments, struck off pieces of the rock, which he dressed into stones proper for building.

"What is that?" cried the rock; "has a man the power of rending pieces of stone from my breast? Shall I be weaker than he? Then it is absolutely necessary that I should be that man!"

"Have your will," said the angel; and he became again what he had been—a poor stone-cutter, a simple workman in the quarries. His life was rude, he worked much and gained little, but he was contented with his lot.

SCIENTIFIC ITEMS.

A distinguished Paris physician says:—"I believe that during the twenty years that I have practised my profession, twenty thousand children have been carried to the cemeteries as a sacrifice to the custom of exposing their dead. But the bulk of a thermometer into a baby's mouth, and the mercury rises to ninety degrees. Now carry the same to its little hand; if the arms be bare, and the evening cold, the thermometer will rise to a hundred, and all the blood that flows through these arms must fall to forty degrees below the temperature of the heart. Need I say, when these currents of blood flow through the veins, what a violent and more or less compromised? And need I add that we ought not to be surprised at its frequent recurrence of the tongue, throat, or stomach. I have never more than one child with habitual cough or hoarseness entirely relieved by simply keeping the hands and arms warm."

Among the most useful aids to those engaged in scientific research are well-digested catalogues of all the books and memoirs bearing upon the subjects of their inquiry. Nearly all branches of science have such indexes, which, indeed, are indispensable sources of reference. Among the most important of such works is one undertaken several years ago by the Royal Society of London, and which, now, is published in the first volume, an encyclopaedia of the sciences. This is intended to contain a list of all scientific papers or articles published in the last century, and to be the basis of a dictionary of the sciences. The names of authors have been arranged in alphabetical sequence, with the titles of their works, and the names of the volumes in which they are published. The work is a volume of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica," and has already been published, and the sixth and last is now in press, and will appear in the course of the coming year.

Prof. J. G. Thompson, assisted by a number of men, for the great polar expeditions of 1872 and 1873. Among the points to which special attention is to be directed are, in the region to the west of Nova Zembla, first, the determination of the distance and relations between the Murman coast and Nova Zembla; second, to decide the southern limit of the polar ice, and to take measurements of the deep seas; third, to ascertain the nature of the ice, and what becomes of it when it melts; the polar ice, to learn especially the distribution of the Gulf Stream along the coast of Nova Zembla; fifth, to fix accurately the extension of certain parts of the coast of Northern Asia towards the east.

To the east and northeast the points to be inquired into are, first, the expansion of the Kara Sea, and all that portion of the sea nearest to it on the east; second, to penetrate northwards to the limit of the polar ice, third, at least to make an effort to get as far as possible to the east, and to explore the regions along the mouths of the Siberian rivers; fourth, to make accurate measurements of the distance between the known portions of the Siberian coast; fifth, to prosecute studies in regard to the hunting grounds of the Norwegians and Russians in Nova Zembla. These two regions of country will be entrusted to two different expeditions, each with a different commander, a competent commander, a specialist in physical geography, and a zoologist. The experience gained by these expeditions during 1872 is to be utilized still further in a more extensive and more completely equipped expedition in 1873, in which the same persons will take part.

Recent Progress in Chemistry.—I wonder what Sir Humphry Davy would have said to any one who told him that the elements of chemistry were now being discovered in a new way. London, in its daily life, is a vast laboratory, and the chemist, whether he be a student or a professional man, is now able to make his experiments in a more complete manner than ever before. The elements of chemistry are now being discovered in a new way, and the chemist, whether he be a student or a professional man, is now able to make his experiments in a more complete manner than ever before.

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FARM ITEMS.

FROM MY FARMING.—Joseph Harris, of Rochester, says that a griststone, set true, and run by horse-power, for grinding tools, axes, spades, and such like, will pay for itself in a month. He makes his own grindstone, and has a workman to grind a stone in the field to sharpen them when they become dull. His men think it extravagant to grind away the horse, but he can buy a dozen horses for less than he can buy a griststone, and he can get nothing in comparison to labor. It does not pay to give a man a dollar and a half a day to load manure, a third of a dollar to carry it, and a fourth to haul it, and the horse will do the work in a week, and a griststone will do the work in a month. A man and team cost about \$400 a year, and it is not worth while to pay \$800 in the original purchase and loss \$500 yearly in the amount of work done.—*Examiner*.