

Wait and See.

('Cottager and Artizan.')

There was unusual excitement to be noticed in the pretty village of Hipwood.

And no wonder, for two weddings were taking place in the old church on that bright spring morning. The avenue in the churchyard was lined with villagers waiting impatiently for the service to be over.

'Here they come!' Eager faces pressed forward, children began to scatter flowers, and rice was held in readiness.

Bella, the village beauty, was the first to appear. With head erect, and a look of triumph in her sparkling eye, she walked beside Philip Herne, her tall and well-dressed bridegroom.

Her brightest dreams were realized—she, the blacksmith's daughter, had married a 'gentleman,' whom she had met at a theatre three months before, and they were to live in London.

Ah, Bella! have you forgotten your broken engagement, and that young lover who, in this your hour of triumph, is on his way to America, full of bitter disappointment?

'What a lucky girl Bella is! she will be so rich!' exclaimed one.

'Yes,' said another, 'by breaking her word, and by marrying this man against her parents' wish. Depend upon it, money badly come by always brings trouble. Wait and see. The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.'

Every one has been gazing so intently at Bella and her smart clothes, that Nelly, the second bride, met with little attention.

'How nice she looks!' some whispered, as she passed with downcast eye and happy smile.

Nice! As Frank Saunders looked at his modest bride in her grey dress, he thought her beautiful beyond all others, and his heart throbbed with his great love to her, and fervent gratitude to God, who had given him a wife whose price was far above rubies.

Their affection had been of long standing. For seven years Frank had made a home for his widowed mother, and had used much self-denial that his wages as under-gardener might provide her with the comforts that her failing health needed. She died blessing her son with her latest breath; and a few months after, Nelly left her situation, where for years she had been a devoted nurse, to marry Frank, who had won her warm and unchanging love.

* * * * *

It is evening; and the fifth anniversary of Bella's wedding day.

In a shabby upper room of a crowded lodging-house in London she sits. Can this miserable woman, with mean, untidy clothing, be the same proud Bella who was so much admired five years ago? Her faded face is buried in her hands, and before her lies an open letter.

Oh, the agony of shame and indignation that letter has caused her! It is from the man she thought until now was her husband, although a heartless one, and a confirmed gambler; but the writer tells her that she is no wife of his, as he had one living when he married her under a feigned name, and that it will be useless for her to try and find him, as by the time she receives that letter he will be on his way to a foreign land.

Suddenly Bella starts up, and clasping her little daughter in her arms, tells her that they will go right away from London, and ask grandfather to let them live with him. The little one is pleased, for she knows not the misery that has befallen them.

Poor Bella! she has brought her troubles on herself, but they are not easier to bear on that account. Let us hope that she will listen to that dear Saviour who died for her, and who, in His infinite love and pity, has said, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

In the afternoon of the same day, the sun was shining into Nelly's kitchen, between some plants that stood in the lattice window.

Very bright and comfortable the room looked too, but not more so than Nelly herself. She was at the oven, turning a cake that she had made for tea in honor of her wedding-day, and it certainly smelt most tempting.

Baby and a fine little boy of four years were playing on the floor. Suddenly baby threw down her toy, and toddled to the door, calling "Daddy!" just as Frank Saunders opened it.

'I declare baby knows your step already, Frank!' said Nelly; 'did you ever know such a child?'

'Never,' answered Frank, catching up the little one, who put her arms round his neck, and rubbed her rosy cheek against his; 'except our Tom,' he added, as he patted the head of his little boy, who was hugging his father's leg.

'How is it you're so nice and early, Frank?' asked his wife.

'The Squire thought I'd better come home at once and tell you the news,' replied Frank, with a sly look at his wife.

'The news! Oh, Frank, what is it?' cried Nelly.

'That's just the way with women, they're so eager after a bit of news,' said her husband, spinning out his enjoyment.

'Don't be tiresome, Frank! Do tell me at once, there's a dear,' she added, coaxingly.

'Well, it's only that the Squire is going to make me head gardener.'

'Oh, Frank!'

'And we're to live in that pretty house with the big garden you like so much.'

'Oh, Frank, it's too good! but I always thought you'd do something grand some day.'

'I did something grand five years ago, when I married you, Nelly.'

'How good God has been to us,' she said, reverently.

'Yes, indeed He has,' replied her husband. 'We prayed for God's blessing on our marriage, and I'm sure He gave it; and we'll pray for His blessing on my new work. Nelly, and surely He will give it.'—Fanny Waller.

The Social Game.

'Don't go, girls, don't,' said a silver-haired friend of my mother's, who visited us occasionally, when we were talking about attending a card-party.

'Don't go, girls, don't,' she repeated.

Why, aunt Mattie, we asked, why not go, Do you think card-playing just for amusement wrong?

I do think so.

Why, everybody plays now. Just a few evenings ago we were at Professor Ball's; cards were brought, and we all played. The professor's son and daughter both engaged in the amusement, and all the best families do the same.

Even if all those you speak of permit and help in card-playing, does that alone make it right?

No; but if such families think it right, I would not like to set myself up, as a pattern of goodness, and refuse their invitations, and

thus tell them that I thought their actions wrong, I answered impatiently.

Aunt Mattie's face flushed a little, and I noticed her thin, white hand tremble as she brushed back a silver lock from her forehead. She looked at me a moment with a blending of pain and tenderness; then she said:

Mina, if you will listen, I will tell you something of my past life.

I told her I would be glad to listen, for she was a pleasant talker and I loved her society. She continued:

A long time ago I was the mother of a darling little boy. My husband died when my child was but three years of age. After that, all my care, all my ambition was for that boy. I tried to teach him to be manly, to be honest, to do right under every circumstance. I had means sufficient to give him every advantage he needed for education and position. At the age of twenty-one he had graduated in a university of standing, was a large, fine-looking man. I looked upon him with feelings of motherly pride and deep affection. I expected to see him rise and fill some honorable and useful position.

Then, as now, it was the habit of some to play cards for amusement. I tried to persuade Joe not to play, for I always had a strong aversion to that kind of a pastime. For a time he heeded my wishes. But one evening a young lady whose society he loved, and who had a strong influence over him, persuaded him to play his first game with her. What a pity that woman's hand should ever lead astray! He, like many others, thought there was no wrong in it, and that it could never in any way do him any harm. But cards had a strong fascination for him. In those parlor games where prizes were offered he was usually successful; the fact stimulated him to play in other places and for money. In less than a year from the time he played his first parlor game he was a confirmed gambler.

One night, playing, he lost, and lost heavily. He lost not only all his own money, but some he held in trust. When the last dollar was gone, being wild from his loss and heated with wine, he arose from the table, drew a knife, and buried it in the body of his antagonist. He was sent to prison for life. For ten long, dark years I was the mother of a murderer; then a change came. He was taken sick; he tossed on a bed of pain for many long weeks. One night he stepped out from his prison bed, and went into the great unknown future. For long years the grass has been growing upon his grave, but no time can make me forget my great sorrow nor the cause of it.

Now, girls, don't do to card-parties. Don't engage in that kind of amusement. Don't be the means of giving to some young boy a knowledge which may lead to ruin. Woman should lead to purity and good. She will never do it by card-playing.—'Western Advocate.'

A Little Every Day.

Just a little every day—
That's the way.
Seeds in darkness swell and grow,
Tiny blades push through the snow;
Never any flower of May
Leaps to blossom in a burst;
Slowly, slowly at the first—
That's the way,
Just a little every day.

Just a little every day—
That's the way.
Children learn to read and write
Bit by bit and mite by mite;
Never any one, I say,
Leaps to knowledge and its power.
Slowly, slowly, hour by hour—
That's the way,
Just a little every day.

—Ella W. Wilcox.