Sister's Games.

No! all ye history sons of mothers,
Who think your sisters worth no others,
Who fill the mouth with trifling lies,
And gaze with little wonder
On those who have no better beauties!
Whose loveliness is learned
With everything to match the sight—
And now comes Hebe's second.

Your ravished lightning to your ears
Your plighted word for jumping,
And both are very prone to jars
Where there is no accounting:

And yet, with prospects of a row,
A reckless heavenly rover,
Who promises to keep you out,
And no new prospects cover,

And still it's possible that may
With wisdom's power for plunder
May try to grasp its tail, and when
The vault assails, and rainbow chase,
They'll seek the stars and rainbow chase,
And cry, with dreadful malice,
That you've paint which tips
And you've powder which lips
Across the cheeks.

A love unquestioning me make,
Love free from claims before you,
Love that no favor seeks to take
To let this one-at-one you:
Have-thy protection all complain,
Have-thy defiance all disdain,
And if the thing drops in your beat,
Put out the monkey sense.

A Guide to Matrimony.

The right kind of candy; the right kind of nerve;
A sweetheart handy; good dancers to serve;
A theatre party; the jeweler's gold;
A little lifting and hearty—a trifle too bold;
The right kind of chafing; the right kind of
The right kind of laughing; the order in
These with these little trifles say man can
Win love—if he's really the right kind of man.

—*Chicago News.*

LADY CARAVEN;

Or Married Above Her Station.

"Have no fear," she said sarcastically; "it is not of myself that I wish to speak."

"I was just going out," he told her hastily.

"Lord Caraven," she said gently, "I promise that I will not detain you long. Will you come with me to my room?"

She had thrown up his eyes with an expression of resignation. Only Sir Raoul saw it and felt annoyed.

"I will follow," he said to his wife; and she led the way to her boudoir. It was a pretty octagon-shaped room; the ceiling was painted, the walls were beautifully decorated, the hangings were of rich rose silk and lace, a profusion of flowers perfumed the room.

"Lord Caraven," she said, "I have a favor to ask from you—a great favor. Will you grant it?"

"I will hear first what it is," he replied.

Then she told him. Her heart sank as she saw his face grow dark and angry.

"Which of the servants told you that woman was here?"

"Will you tell me why you wish to know, Lord Caraven?"

"Yes; the moment I know I shall dismiss him without a character for disobedience."

"If he disobeyed you," she said, "I am sorry for it. But pray do not allow that to influence you against my petition."

He turned around angrily.

"Plainly speaking, Mildred," he said, "I have quite enough annoyance with my tenants without interference from you, and I cannot allow——"

"Lord Caraven," she interposed, eagerly, "do believe me—I have not the least wish to interfere; but this poor woman—if you had seen her pale, hungry face and sad eyes!"

"It is easy enough to look hungry," he said, impatiently.

"You do not mean that. I know you have pity and compassion for the unfortunate—I have seen you kind and generous to them; and this poor woman's husband—and she loved him, mind—her husband, Lord Caraven, died to save your birds. Think—a man killed that a few birds may live!"

"That is your way of looking at the matter. Do you know that you are addressing the very base of society?"

"W[illegible] attacking in this case?" she asked.

"[illegible]me Laws—the most glorious part [illegible]sh Constitution. John Woodruff [illegible]ce of the Game Laws, not for

"[illegible] will," she said gently. "You [illegible] things of this kind better than [illegible]only know how sorry I felt for the [illegible]woman, who loved her husband—loved [illegible] and lost him."

"Mildred, you must not ask me to inter[illegible]. It does not do to give way to one's [illegible]ings always. I cannot interfere [illegible]my tenants. They must pay their [illegible]s."

"Will you let me pay the rent for her then?" she asked.

"If you do, we shall raise it to three hundred a year. Seriously speaking, Mildred, you must not interfere—it will not do. It would be a fatal precedent. I must absolutely forbid you to say any more."

She turned from him, her face growing pale, her lips quivering with anger. He saw and felt almost sorry.

"I regret to refuse you, Mildred," he said, trying to quit the room. "It is the first favor you have asked of me, and I should have liked to grant it. But I promised Blantyre faithfully that I would not interfere. We must make what we can of the estate, and we shall never do it if we interfere with Blantyre."

She raised her head with a charming air of pique and disdain.

"Pray, my lord," she said, "may I ask if you have left your conscience in Mr. Blantyre's hands?"

"I—I would not have much [illegible]," laughed the Earl. "My conscience would go into a small space."

Her face flushed, her eyes shone brightly.

"Let me ask you, my lord," she said, "have you ever remembered that all this wealth was given to you, not for your own especial self-indulgence, but for the poor and the needy?"

"I should like you to tell Blantyre that," sneered the Earl.

"I have never remembered anything of the kind."

"Then let me tell you it is true. I would sooner be the poorest beggar turned from your door than I would be you, with your title, your estates, your wealth, your dead conscience, and your dead heart. Good-morning, my lord."

And with an air of dignity the young Countess swept from the room, leaving him dumb with rage.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Lady Caraven was not naturally prone to anger, but now she trembled with rage that she should be so cruelly insulted, denied the first favor she had ever asked—denied because she took a generous interest in surely the loveliest creature on her husband's estate. It was unheard of. She did not give vent to her anger by any loud outburst of emotion. She did not pace up and down the room, clenching her hands; but she stood silent, her face pale as death, her eyes filled with angry fire. That he should have listened with that satirical smile on his face, perhaps laughing at her in his heart? She shrank from herself.

"Heaven help me," she said, "but I am afraid that I hate him!"

Her hands trembled slightly.

"I am in a passion," she said to herself—"and no wonder. Was ever wife refused such a trifle?"

While she stood trying to stem the wild current of anger and to cool the fire that seemed to burn her heart and brain, a servant, her own maid, entered.

"My lady," she said, "the Earl is seeking you. Shall I tell him that you are here?"

"If you please," she replied.

She neither moved nor stirred when the Earl came in. She neither turned her beautiful head nor raised her proud eyes. He looked at the tall slender figure, so unbending, so defiant.

"Mildred," he said sharply, "I wish to speak to you."

"I should like to ask you," he said, "why you dislike Mr. Blantyre so much. You have seen little of him, yet you distrust him."

"I do," she replied quietly. "I did the first time I saw him. He commits positive cruelties in your name, and then lays all at your door. 'It is the Earl's orders,' he says; "and under the sanction of your name—a name that ought to be honored and revered—I say that great cruelties, acts of great injustice are committed."

"How am I to know that it is true?" he asked.

"Go yourself among the people and ask. You will see men with large families and [illegible]fteen shillings a week to support them [illegible] have been raised one [illegible]r rents, not their wages; [illegible]re employed on your [illegible]od and drawers of [illegible]st wretched class [illegible]'s faults. You would [illegible]he said, interested [illegible]s passion of her [illegible]Blantyre's faults [illegible]

If one of the children of a household goes wrong, it is not the kind servant who is to blame, but the father and mother. I know it is not Blantyre's fault; but at the great day, when the wasted lives and the broken hearts of those people cry for vengeance, I shall know whose fault it was."

He shrank from the clear gaze of the glowing eloquent eyes.

She did not wait to hear what reply he [illegible]; she swept from the room.

It was a humiliation for her when Mary Woodruff came again, to tell her that she had failed in her mission—that even at her solicitations, the Earl had refused the little boon she asked. She would have given much if she could have shown even this poor widow some proof of his desire to please her—but she could not.

She was one of those people who never defer a disagreeable duty. She sent that same day for the poor creature, who came trembling for the fate of herself and her children. Lady Caraven received her very kindly, but entered at once into the matter.

"I am very sorry to tell you," she said, "that I have failed. Lord Caraven does not feel inclined to forgo the rent."

"It is not my lord," cried the woman. "I know it is not. It is Mr. Blantyre's fault; he said I should and must pay. But I cannot, my lady; I have not the means."

"I have thought it all over," said Lady Caraven. "I cannot get the cottage rent-free for you, but I can pay the rent. I will give it to you every month, but it must be on the condition that you tell no one. Lord Caraven might be displeased if he heard it."

It was humiliating at first to her to give charities unknown to her husband, and then to beg that they might be kept secret. The gratitude of the poor woman in some measure compensated her, and made her feel less miserable.

One of the Earl's most intimate friends—one indeed who knew all his affairs—was Sir Arthur Oldys; and Mildred overheard him, quite by chance, one day laying a heavy wager with the young Lieutenant. She looked at him calmly.

"Sir Arthur," she said, "I do not consider that is quite fair; Lieutenant Hilstone has no chance. You know more than he does when you lay such a wager—you know that you will win it."

She never forgot the sneer with which he greeted her.

"Lady Caraven," he said, "permit me to offer my congratulations. You understand money matters almost as well as your talented father."

CHAPTER XXVII.

Without replying to Sir Arthur Oldy's insult, without a word of comment, Lady Caraven instantly quitted the room, her heart burning with hot indignation. How well her husband's friends must know that he did not love her! They would never dare to speak to her as they did but for that knowledge. How well they must know it, when they dared to try to insult her through her father!

The pleasures must have been constructed by some one who knew how human nature longed for rest. Few of the Ravensmere people knew of its existence—the visitors did not. Some of the servants were in perfect ignorance as to its whereabouts. It was constructed for the sole and exclusive use of the Ladies Caraven. Rumor told stories of one of the daughters of the house who had been born with a deformity in the face so terrible that she was unfit for human eyes to gaze on. The Earl, her father never permitted her to leave the house, and this garden had been constructed entirely for her use. It was enclosed between four high walls, and those wall were covered with a luxuriant growth of ivy. No windows, no tower overlooking the garden. The paths were broad and straight, the whole place was a wilderness of flowers.

The young Countess bethought herself of this retreat. She had one key—the dark-green door that led to it; Sir Raoul had another. She would go thither, she said to herself, and look her life in the face, and then decide what to do with it. It was slowly dawning across her that she would not be able to bear her trials much longer; that she could not and would not endure them; that there was a brighter life somewhere which she was determined to find out; that she could not sacrifice her whole life to a shadow of duty; that, in fact, she would go forth free.

She went to the pleasance. If she were interrupted there, it could be only by her husband or Sir Raoul; there was no fear of other intruders. A sense of relief came to her when she found herself between the four high walls. The blue sky smiled down upon her, the languid air stirred faintly, the scent of roses came to her on the wind; it was like a reprieve to enter that quiet retreat and feel alone.

It was a dreary tangle, a miserable disappointment. She was tired and weary. Looking back, she thought she must have been mad to sacrifice herself as she had done; married for her money, sold for a title, her own will, her own womanhood had never asserted itself. Her handsome, indolent husband did nothing but treat her with indifference and contempt. She could do nothing for him. He was on the way to ruin. How could she arrest him? His whole life was a round of senseless pleasure from which she could never divert him. He had all that he wanted—her money. Now surely she could go free—free to lead a more congenial life, where she would not live in the midst of annoyances and vexations.

She would go and live in France or Italy—anywhere away from England. Her father might be angry. She would not heed it. He had shown but little love for her; she would not consider him. The only regret she felt—and it was a deep one—was for Sir Raoul. Sir Raoul, the only human being who cared for her—what would he say when he knew that she was going! He would miss her so terribly; but, even for his sake, dear as he was to her, she could not stay. He would miss her, by he loved her with a true, loyal love; but she would tell him how wretched she was, how utterly miserable, and then he would see that she must go.

She sobbed out the words. It was a relief to say them—a relief to say even to herself that she was miserable; she had been so proudly reticent, so self-restrained.

Suddenly a hand was laid upon her shoulder, and, looking up, she saw Sir Raoul standing by her side. In his pale face, worn with pain and suffering, she saw infinite pity, infinite love; compassion and tenderness shone in his eyes. He had never looked so true and so noble as he did just then. He bent over her.

"Hildred, poor child, is it so bad as this?" he asked.

"It is so bad," she said, "that it could not be worse, Raoul—nothing could be worse. I am tired of it. I am going away."

"Going away," he repeated slowly. "That is what I feared. Has your patience, your forbearance, come to an end at last, Hildred?"

"Yes," she replied truthfully, "it has, at last."

He was silent for a few minutes, and then, as she looked up at him, a great awe stole over her. His eyes were raised to the clear skies, his lips moved. Surely in a picture she had seen a figure something like his, with a serene light on the brow. Her anger, her impatience, her bitter contempt and dislike seemed to fall away from her, even from that one look at his face. She rose suddenly into something nobler than a weeping, vengeful, unhappy woman.

"You are going away, Hildred—you can bear it no longer? Poor child! This reminds me of an hour I spent once with a soldier who was determined to desert his post and fly."

"I am not a soldier," she said, with a more pitiful smile.

"We will talk it over," he replied, and he seated himself by the crimson carnation at her side. "I will tell you all I think," he said, "and we will talk it over; then you shall decide."

She was trying to harden her heart against him, to say to herself that, so much her what he thought, urged or said, it should make no difference—she would go away. He was sensitive and proud, he was tender of heart, but how could he understand her case? That which tortured her was nothing to him.

He looked at her with the same sweet, noble compassion that seemed to her almost more than human.

"Hildred," he said in a low voice, "will you [illegible] me wholly? Will you tell me the true story of your marriage?"

"Do you not know it, Raoul? It seems to me so shameful, I have no wish to repeat it."

"I know something of it," he replied, "but not the whole truth. I know that you will tell it to me. I ask you as a physician asks. I must know the whole truth before I can advise. Tell me one thing. Did you love your husband at all before your marriage?"

"No," she replied; "not in the least."

"Will you tell me again why you, a woman naturally noble, naturally tender and true—a heart, married without love?"

She glanced at him, her beautiful face full of perplexity; she had gathered a crimson carnation, and was holding it between her slender fingers.

"I will tell you, Raoul. I asked my father if love were necessary for happiness, and he said 'No.' I believed him; hence my mistake."

"Your father deceived you."

"He did deceive me," she replied.

He looked at the downcast face.

"Hildred," he said gently, "I do not remember that I have ever seen a more thorough woman than you. You have all a woman's tenderness of heart, quickness of instinct, fertility of imagination, grace of mind—your ideas and thoughts are all womanly and true. How could you be so false to your whole nature as to believe that, even when your father told it to you?"

"I cannot tell. As you say, my own innate perceptions ought to have told me that it was false, but they did not. One reason is that I had thought so little of the matter. I loved study and books; romance seldom, if ever it came into my thoughts. I had no girl-friends to converse with. The very thought of love as all, it was as of some bright fairy-land that all the world sought, but few ever reached. I asked my father if one could live happily without love. He told me 'Yes'—even more happily—that love was a fever which burned and festered. He said that the calmest, the most peaceful of lives were those in which love had no share."

"And you believed him!"

"Yes, I told him what poets and novelists said—how a great poet had said it was better 'to have loved and lost' than never to have loved at all. He declared it was all nonsense, 'the poet's trade, the writer's art,' until—believe me, Raoul—I half thought it a noble thing to live without love. Then—let me be quite frank—the notion of being a countess pleased me. Let me be even more frank. I saw Lord Caraven, and I liked him. He looked handsome and fascinating—he seemed to differ from the German professors or the city men with whom I was familiar. I liked him, and I made a great mistake."

"Will you tell me what the mistake was, Hildred?"

"Yes. I knew nothing of money matters—I did not even know that I was a great heiress—and I was foolish enough to think that he must have seen me somewhere and have liked me—that he must have admired me, or he would not have wished to marry me."

"Poor child!" he said, with a grave, pitying face.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"I could not understand it," she continued; "no one was ever so puzzled. I could not help noticing his indifference and his reserve, but I thought that would all die away. Every day I was expecting to hear that he had had some reason for his coldness—some reason that had pulled down the barriers. I hoped against hope—you see how frankly I am speaking, Sir Raoul—and then I awoke to the sure and certain conviction that he not only did not love me, but that he absolutely disliked me."

"Poor child!" said the grave voice again.

"I do not like speaking of it," she began. "You must see, Raoul, as well as I do—you must understand. How could any one help despising and disliking a man who lives for himself, who cares for nothing but his own pleasure, and leaves every duty neglected? How can I love a man who married me only for my money, despising me the while—Who has not since marriage shown me the ordinary civility that a gentleman never fails to show to a lady? He is selfish, indolent—oh, Raoul, I do not like saying this, but if you saw his cruel neglect, his cruel oppression, if you knew how carelessly he leaves everything to John Blantyre, how heedless he is as to the claims of justice, you would be sorry for me!"

"You have borne your fate bravely as yet, but now you have tired of it; your courage and patience have failed—you have told me so, and I can plainly see in your own mind you are seeking some means of escape. Is it not so?"

"Yes," she answered, "I must go away."

"That would be a commonplace ending after all, running away from your trouble. Hildred, I can see how you may make yourself a heroine—how you may rise from this, your girlish, dissatisfied life to the grandest heights of heroism. I see it, and I think I am greatly interested in my estimation of your character, you will do it; it is better to die on the heights of heroism than in the depths of despair."

"I thought," she said, "that men affected to despise the influence of women?"

"Not true now. You may take it as a safe rule for guidance that when a man rails against women he is no gentleman. He may be a parvenu, a snob, an ignoramus; be sure of one thing—he is no gentleman. The first instinct of a gentleman is chivalry. The man who has none should lay no claim to that title. Believe me, Hildred, most great and wise men owe the greater part of their wisdom to the influence of good and noble women. It is the grandest influence in the world"—and the soldier raised his noble head proudly—"I need not quote history to you—you are better versed in it than I am. I need not quote biography or poetry, nor point to the man who said that he owed all his success in life to his mother, nor to the man who owned that he owed all his goodness to his wife. It is the same story. I feel inclined sometimes to think that the grandest of God's gifts to this fair earth is the influence of good and noble women."

His eyes brightened; his face flushed, he spoke like a knight of old. She looked at him with wondering awe.

"You may run away and leave your home, Hildred; but that will be a commonplace ending. Do that which is nobler, higher, better, resign yourself, submit to your fate and make the best of it. As a handsome and noble woman use your influence with your husband to rouse him from his slough of despond into a higher life."

She was looking at him in sheer wonder.

"How can I influence Lord Caraven?" she asked.

"You can do it by patience and perseverance. Say to yourself that the task of your life shall be to make him a good man. Instead of running away from it, devote yourself to it. There is much said of a woman's mission—let that be yours; and surely there can be no higher or holier mission than to rouse an indolent man to a sense of his duty, a selfish man from his self-indulgence."

"It would be a noble task," she said thoughtfully. "Could I accomplish it, Raoul?"

"With perseverance and self-control that would amount to heroism you might," he replied. "You must be the sculptor who from a mass of qualities, good and bad intermixed, must try to produce a perfect character."

"But," she said, half doubtfully, "he does not love me."

"That does not matter. I prophecy that he will love you in the end—that when you have roused his soul from its sleep it will turn to you naturally as the sunflower turns to the sun. Do you not foresee it, Hildred?" And an almost saintly enthusiasm shone on his face.

"It is possible, Raoul, but——"

"Nay, be brave. You must not even think that word 'but.' You must be enthusiastic over it—nothing can be done without enthusiasm. You must give your self up to it as a missionary does to conversion of the heathen, as a martyr does to his death. You must work for it, live for it, die for it. Have you the courage and the constancy for this, Hildred?"

The light was deepening on her face, the fire in her eyes. The passion of his words was beginning to tell upon her.

"I have both the courage and the constancy," she replied.

"Think of the difference in the ending," he said. "Imagine the Earl on his death-bed, tortured by the ghosts of those whom he has neglected, by the ghosts of duties left undone, ready to curse the young wife, who, by flying from him and leaving him to his own devices, had hastened his ruin, body and soul—picture that. Then fancy to yourself the Earl on his deathbed, blessing the dear wife, the noble woman who saved him from ruin, who woke his soul from its long sleep, who taught him how to live and to die. Could you hesitate for one moment between these two pictures?"

"No, not for one moment, Raoul. I do not hesitate—I will not hesitate. I will do my life's work."

"That is well said. You must resolve to overcome all difficulties—you must say to yourself from the beginning that nothing shall daunt you. You will think that I am preaching to you; but, although I have been only a rough soldier, I have seen a great deal of life, and I have come to the conclusion that if woman, instead of studying medicine, quarelling over votes and attending public meetings, would devote themselves to cultivating the best qualities of their husbands, the world would be better than it is."

"Is it not unwomanly to seek for love when is not offered to you, Raoul?"

"It might be so in the case of a girl, but I think you should aspire to win her husband, to make him love her with all his heart."

"Lord Caraven will never love me," she said. "I do not think that he has one heart to give; it is all wasted—he has had a long career."

"But not one real one, Hildred. If you win his heart, take my word for it, you will be his first love. We will take our parable from the garden. You have planted

[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] [illegible]