

## OUR TABLE.

### THE OGILVIES—A NOVEL.

IN this age of novels and novel-writers, of mawkish twaddle and demoralizing trash, it is really a pleasing task, if task it can be called, to skim over the pages of a story like the one before us. Not that it is altogether free from the faults and foibles that stain and disfigure the great mass of the light literature of the day. A criminal attachment, for instance, is interwoven throughout with the main incidents of the tale, and although the wretched victim of this unholy passion, in her fearful and resolute struggle against its influence, sinks, broken-hearted, into an early and untimely grave, thereby affording, as the author doubtless intended, another instance of the truth of the moral apothegm, that "sin brings its own punishment," yet such warning lessons are never productive of any salutary effect; on the contrary, they always disgust when they do not contaminate.

Proceed we now, to the more pleasing task of briefly adverting to a few of those numerous portions of the work in question, which have led us to award to it all but our unqualified approbation.

In the first place, the style is good, and, saving a very few exceptions, quite correct. It is a first attempt—the author tells us so—and, as such, it is entitled to no common praise. These exceptions are so trifling, that we can hardly advert to them more particularly without subjecting ourselves to the imputation of being hypercritical. But we must let the work speak for itself.

The following passage is worthy of Charles Dickens, and not unlike him:—

Yet, there is a wondrous might in loving—a might almost divine. May it not be, that there are those around us whose whole spiritual being, transfused with love, delights to aid where our human affection fails, unable to fulfil its longings—who stand in our stead, and give to our vain blessings, our almost weeping prayers, our wild lonely outpourings of fondest words, a strength so omnipotent that our beloved may feel in their souls the mysterious influence—and drawn thence comfort and joy?

And if so, when, as poor sick Philip watched the creeping sunshine along the dusky wall—the blessed, thoughtful sunshine which in London always visits most the poverty-stricken attic—or when, during his long, restless nights, the pure moonlight came in like a flood, and in his half-

delirious mood he thought it was the waving of an angel's wing—who knows but that the faithful love which rose up to heaven in an unceasing prayer for him, may have fallen down again on his spirit in a holy dew of blessing and of peace?

We would earnestly recommend the following beautiful passages to the reader's particular attention. We need not say a word as to the appropriate application of some of the sentiments they contain; it will be quite obvious enough without. One might almost imagine that the unknown author had lived among us, but we fear the world is pretty much the same every where:

Katharine alone—for the first time in her life present at a wedding—was grave and silent. She trembled as she walked up the aisle; she listened to the solemn words of the service with a beating heart. "*To have and to hold \* \* until death us do part.*" And this vow of almost fearful import, comprehending so much, and in its wide compass involving life, soul, and worldly estate, either as a joyful offering or as a dread immolation—this awful vow was taken lightly by two young creatures, who carelessly rattled it over during the short pause of jests, and compliments, amid lace and satin flutterings, thinking more of the fall of a robe, or the fold of a cravat, than of the oath, or of each other!

Katharine divined not this, for her fancy idealized all. The marriage scene touched her pure, young heart in its deepest chords. She saw not the smirking bridegroom—the affected bride; her thoughts, travelling into the future, peopled with other forms the dim, gray shadows of the old church where she had worshiped every Sunday from a child. She beheld at her side the face of her dreams; she heard the deep, low voice uttering the troth-pledge—"I, Paul, take thee, Katharine;" and bowing her face upon the altar-rails, the girl suffered her tears to flow freely.

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"It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting." And better, far better, to stand face to face with the struggling, the sorrowful, nay, even the dying, than to dwell entirely amidst a world of outside show. More precious is it to trace the earnest throbs of the most wounded heart, than to live among those human machines to whom existence is one daily round of dullness and frivolity. Looking on these, Youth, with its bursting tide of soul and sense, shrinks back aghast—"Oh, God!" rises the prayer—"Let me not be as these! Rather let my pulses swell like a torrent, pour themselves out, and cease—let heart and brain work their work, even to the perishing of both—be my