

WIVES WORTH HAVING.

That "maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives" is not always true, but there are scores of cases to prove the truth of the old proverb, "He that would thrive must first ask his wife." As we have seen, many men have thriven in spite of bad wives, but more have because they have had good wives. Good wives, like bad ones, are drawn from all classes of society. It has been very ungenerously stated that domestic servants make poor wives, but the wife of the founder of the great Crossley family was of that class, and she is described as "the backbone" of the family. She only received 1s. 3d. a week wages for two years, and 1s. 6d. from then to the end of the eighth year, but managed to save £30 by mere thrift. Truly a girl worth having for a wife.

Showy girls, too, and girls on the stage, are generally set down as bad material to make wives of, but Sir Walter Scott and David Garrick both proved there are exceptions. Prior to marriage Lady Scott was a wild, gay girl, "fond of show," but when her husband's circumstances were narrow she conformed to them with excellent good sense. Garrick married a dancer, who proved an estimable woman, and was never left by her husband a single day in twenty-eight years of their married life.

Some men have owed their eminence to their wives. Galvani was first led to investigate the science of galvanism through his wife's quick observation of the leg of a frog placed near an electrical machine becoming convulsed when touched by a knife.

Dr. Buckland, the eminent geologist, was blessed with a wife who found time to assist him with her pen, prepare and mend his fossils, and furnish many of the drawings and illustrations in his works, besides educating a large family.

William Blake's wife worked off the impressions of his plates, and coloured them beautifully with her own hand. Lavoisier's wife also engraved her husband's plates in his famous "Elements."

Sir William Napier was a wretched writer, and his wife assisted him constantly with her pen, in addition to translating an immense mass of original documents for him, many of them in cipher.

Tom Hood was likewise helped in his writings by his wife.

The work done by Huber, the Geneva naturalist, would indicate keen eyesight on the part of the executor, but Huber was stone blind from seventeen years of age, and it was only through the untiring assistance of his wife that he was able to study and completely master a branch of his science requiring the keenest observation.

Lady Hamilton, wife of Sir William Hamilton, Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at Edinburgh, wrote and corrected her husband's lectures, consulted books for him, and was his general amanuensis after he was stricken with paralysis. Sir William was naturally so indolent that, but for his wife, much of his work would have been left undone.

In other ways, too, have great men received help and consolation from sensible and brave wives. Everybody knows the story of Lady Rachel Russell, who took notes for her illustrious husband while he was on his trial.

Sir Walter Ralfeigh found in his wife an uncomplaining and noble sharer of his adversity. She lived with him twelve years in prison of her own accord.

Richard Baxter, the Nonconformist divine, was likewise nursed in Clerkenwell Gaol, and accompanied, when hunted up and down the country, by a wife, whom it intensifies her nobility to say he married as much for convenience as love.

As an example of wifely devotion no case stands out with greater prominence than that of Lady Sutherland, who during her husband's illness never left his room for twenty-one days, and never took any rest during that time. Her devotion cost her her life, and she was interred with her husband. The world will never forget, either, how Livingstone was accompanied in many of his travels by his wife, and how Lady Franklin heroically tried again and again to discover the remains of her husband in the Northern lands.

All these are examples of wives who have truly been worth having. And the list might be amplified to an indefinite extent. Geo. Fox, the founder of the Friends, Sir Thomas More and Thomas Graham all formed happy unions, although More married a woman whose sister he would have preferred. Poets have notoriously been badly matched but Wordsworth may be taken as an exception, for after three years of married life he described his wife as "a phantom of delight." "John Stuart Mill spoke of his wife as the author of all that was best in his writings." Faraday said his marriage was "a source of honour and happiness far exceeding all the rest." Edmund Burke supplied splendid testimony to the satisfaction his choice gave him when he said "every care vanishes the moment I enter under my own roof." Luther, speaking of his wife, said, "I would not exchange my poverty with her for all the riches of Cræsus without her."

The story is well known, too, of the wife of Lord Beaconsfield, who had her finger jammed in the carriage door as she was driving to the House of Commons with him, when he was about to make an important speech, but did not cry out or show any sign of pain for fear she would disturb the current of his thoughts.

His Life's Value.—"It was a brave act, young man," said the grateful father with deep feeling. "At the peril of your life you rushed into the burning building and saved my only child. How can I ever repay you?"

"Would half-a-crown be too much?" suggested the brave rescuer in response.

Tom (to his sister): "Ethel, if you will give me a bit of your cake I'll spoil the piano so that you won't be able to practise scales for a fortnight."

Master: "How would you correct the sentence, 'He sat there quiet and listened to the bagpipes' music?"

Pupil: "I would scratch out the word music."

"Osmond, have you attended any of the fall openings?"

"Yes, last night I stepped into a coal hole."

Mother: "Harold, you've disobeyed me and played football again!"

Harold (earnestly): "No, mother, I haven't. I—I've only—only been in a fight."

"Oh," he sighed passionately when he had concluded his request for her hand, "do not say 'Nay!'"

"I won't," she replied.

"Thank you very much."

"I wouldn't think of such a thing. Plain, old-fashioned 'No' is good enough for me."

Johnny (in tears)—Boo-oo-oo!

Father—What's the matter with that boy now?

Johnny—Oh, father, I've swallowed one of the cartridges of your revolver.

Father—You little rascal! And I can't even thrash you for fear of exploding the cartridge.

Jones—Bother it all! Somebody's taken my hat and left this filthy, beastly, shabby old thing instead.

Brown—A—I beg your pardon, but it's mine.

"Why, Johnny, you and your visitors are doing nothing but sit about and look miserable. Why don't you play something?"

"We are playing."

"Playing what?"

"We're playing that we are growed up."

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