

GENERAL READING.

THE LOTTERY OF LIFE.

BY MRS. HENRY WARD BEECHER.

"Think not, the maiden gained, that all is done: The prize of happiness must yet be won."

If young people more truly interpreted the obligations and responsibilities of marriage they would not so thoughtlessly assume its relations. If parents, or less indulgent friends, could induce them to think with less excitement, and more soberly of the duties as well as the pleasures, how much more of unfading brightness would glorify this fair earth; how much more of the true home—it rest, its joys, its unselfish love—would bless and abide it. But with little thought and less realization of its true meaning, hundreds rush into marriage as if only preparing for a picnic or a pleasure excursion. They are so sure they love one another; and seeing life only in rosy tints, they laugh at any prudential caution and repel any earnest effort to teach them to understand the mutual responsibilities that the contemplated union will bind upon them.

The lover sees only perfection, sweetness and beauty in the maiden whom he imagines has every qualification to make his home a little heaven; and in her estimation his love is to be her tower of strength—a safe refuge from every storm; and thus surrounded and guarded by his tender care she fears no evil, shrinks from no hardship. In his present ecstatic state he cannot imagine that her estimate of what his devotion is always to be can possibly be overdrawn.

Now what do they really know of each other? During courtship and engagement, with perhaps no intention to deceive or wear a holiday face, all the best points of their characters are in the ascendency. Ah! If lovers would bring a little common sense to their aid! They are aware that it is folly to expect perfection; certainly they must know that in their own individual selves they have not such desirable qualities to offer. They know that the best and noblest have faults; that friends of every degree have some traits and peculiarities that call for kindness and charitable construction; and, in the new life they contemplate, above all others, they should understand how necessary it must be to bear one another's burdens, neither expecting nor desiring that the forbearance should be all on one side.

In the halcyon days of love, before marriage, how important for the young to keep in mind that they are "not embarking on the smooth surface of a summer sea," but are to take life together as it comes to all—with its sunshine and its shadow—heartily enjoying the summer, but brave to meet the frosts and storms of winter. In every vicissitude, if they love and honor all the good each finds in the other, and bear with loving patience such mistakes as may arise, conscious that they are about equal on both sides, what a change would be at once seen in the fearful records that are served up to the community in our daily papers!

Both men and women are of the earth, earthy, subject to such infirmities as are born of earth; but we honestly believe a husband has more influence in shaping the character and life of a true loving woman than she can possibly have over his. Woman has more to suffer, more of those cares and perplexities which naturally tend to develop irritability, impatience and similar infirmities, than men are liable to, and therefore she has more need of tender forbearance and loving guidance.

But fault-finding or silent disapproval, exacting obedience under the guise of unconditional surrender of all a wife's taste and judgment to his, is not a husband's best mode of weeding out her faults or leading her into a new and more perfect life. A woman can be easily influenced and moulded by gentleness and love, but it is not easy or safe to attempt to drive her either by sternness, studied neglect or disapproval silently manifested. Ah! this wretched mode of ensuring by solemn silence! A good round scolding, or a sharp quarrel, even, and then a loving reconciliation—bad as such a course is, would be far less disastrous.

Having made a choice of a companion, young people look forward to marriage as a step that settles all uncertainty

and gives to them a life of unbroken happiness. And yet how vague are their conceptions of what will be necessary to insure any portion of their anticipated bliss.

"We are married, they say, and you think you have won me. Well, take this white veil from my head and look on me. Here is a matter to vex you and a matter to grieve you. Here is doubt to disturb you or faith to believe you. I am here, as you see, common earth, common clay. Be wary, and mold me to roses—not rue.

"Ah! shake out the filmy thing, fold after fold, And see if you have me to keep and to hold. Look close at my heart, see the worst of its staining—It is not yours to-day for the yesterday's winning. The past is not mine—I am too proud to borrow—You must grow to new heights if I love you to-morrow.

"We're married! I'm plighted to hold up your praises, As the turf at your feet does its handful of daisies; That way lies my honour—my pathway of pride. But mark you, if greener grass grow either side I shall know it, and keeping in body with you Shall walk in my spirit, with feet in the dew."

If one could look into the many aching hearts, made sore by the sudden vanishing of imaginary perfections, what a revelation that would be! Because "That way lies their honour—their pathway of pride,"

how many appear outwardly happy, or at least content, who have waked from their dream of anticipated bliss to a life of vain longings and repinings. Seeing what to them look like fresher, happier lives all about them, they venture "in spirit, with feet in the dew" on unsafe grounds. Hence we hear so much of broken homes, divorced hearts, and sin and sorrow, where there should have been abiding peace.

"We're married! Oh, pray that our love do not fail! I have wings flattened down and hid under my veil. They are supple as light—you can never undo them. And swift in their flight—you can never pursue them. And spite of all clasping, and spite of all hands, I can slip like a shadow—a dream—from your hands.

"Nay! call me not cruel, and fear not to take me. I am yours for my lifetime, to be what you make me."

To wear my white veil as a sign or a cover, As you shall be proven my lord or my lover; A cover for peace that is dead, or a token Of bliss that can never be written or spoken."

HOW TO DISARM AN ENEMY.

It is said that bees and wasps will not bite a person whose skin is imbued with honey. Hence those who are much exposed to the venom of these little creatures, when they have occasion to hive bees, or to take a nest of wasps, smear their faces and hands with honey, which is found to be the best preservative. When we are annoyed with insult, persecution, and opposition from perverse and malignant men, the defense against their venom is to have our spirit bathed in honey. Let every part be saturated with meekness, gentleness, forbearance, and patience; and the most spiteful enemy will be disappointed in his endeavors to inflict a sting. We shall remain uninjured while his venom returns to corrode his own malignant bosom; or, what is far better, the honey with which he comes into contact will neutralize his gall; the coals of forgiving love will dissolve his hatred, and the good returned for evil will overcome evil with good.

BE KIND TO THE LIVING.

We live in a world where nothing is sure. To-day our friends are about us in the freshness and bloom of health and spirits; to-morrow we bend in anguish over their still forms; and it is well if no bitter regrets mingle with the tears we shed upon their white faces. O life is insecure, and the brightest and most promising of all our treasures may, perhaps, soonest droop and fade! And when one dies how anxious we are to do him homage! We speak of his virtues, we excuse his faults, and spread the mantle of charity over his vices, which, while he lived, we had no patience with. If we only had, we might have won him to a better life. Had we exercised toward him a little of the forbearance and kindness with which we now speak of him, he had had fewer faults. How often his heart ached and cried out for human sympathy—for our sympathy—we may never know; and if we could, it is too late to undo the past, too late to soothe and benefit him. We may not take up the broken threads of life that is gone and weave them into a web of hope and joy; but toward those who are still left to us, who have ears to hear, and hearts to throb with pain and grief, we may be generous and just, forgiving, loving and kind.

Do not wait till the faithful, devoted wife who has tried so hard to make your home pleasant and comfortable, is dead, to show her kindness. No funeral pomp, no costly monument with loving words inscribed thereon, will make up for past neglect. Could the fond kisses that are now imprinted on her cold lips, and the murmured words of endearment that fall unheeded upon her ear, have been hers while living, there would have been no woman in all this wide world fonder or happier than she.

Do not wait till the hands of the tired, patient mother are folded over the heart that has so often thrilled with joy, or beaten wildly with pain on your account, to do her honor. By the memory of all the loving offices which she has performed for you from infancy all the way up to manhood, or womanhood, keep your love for her deep and ardent, dutifully respect and reverence her, repay with interest the tender love and care that she has lavished upon you, and strive to make her last days restful, happy and peaceful.

Be especially kind to the little ones. The world will deal harshly enough with them; it is a rough world at the best. Surround them with an atmosphere of love, and instill into their hearts noble feelings and principles while you may; for, sooner than you think, other and less holy influences will be brought to bear upon them.

Be kind to the sad, the sorrowful, the unfortunate, the erring and the fallen. Kind words and kindly acts cannot hurt them, and may do them a world of good.

CHURCH MUSIC.

Bishop Clarke, of Rhode Island, in an article in *Sunday Afternoon*, for July, says:

Church music should be strictly ecclesiastical. Not that we are to be restricted to slow, heavy, monotonous strains in the house of prayer; for, while the wailings of the soul, when "out of the depths" it cries out to the Lord, may fitly express itself in long-drawn, and measured notes, there are other moods of worship which call for bright and cheerful utterance, and then "we would cry merrily before the Lord of hosts." And still even this sacred mirth should seek for another expression than that which is heard in the house of feasting.

The music of the church should also be intelligible. By this I mean that it should not be of such a character as to confound and bewilder us by complicated involutions, strange and subtle chords, and such feats of art as only a learned professor can comprehend. There is no edification in listening to a special exercise of their gifts on the part of the choir, when it is impossible to understand a word that is sung, or even to tell whether they are singing English or Latin or Choctaw. There is a story told of a city clergyman who was once invited to preach in a small country church, and the choir thought they would get up a very elaborate performance for his benefit. They were more ambitious than successful; and when they were through, before giving out his text, the preacher looked up to the gallery and said:

"My friends, if the angels in heaven should hear you sing, they would come down and ring your necks."

It was not a courteous thing to do, but the provocation was probably very great.

The music of the church should never be allowed to become tedious. It is so when there is too much of it; or when it is all of the same sort; or when it is painfully elaborate; or when it is rendered listlessly, and with apparent indifference; or when the same words are repeated over and over again until one's patience is exhausted. I have heard the Te Deum stretched out to the length of an ordinary morning sermon, the closing sentence being repeated twenty-nine times, until it seemed as if the choir "would never be con-founded." When the entire Psalter is chanted, as is done in some of our Episcopal churches, it should be done with such a movement as to consume little more time than is required to read it, otherwise it becomes a weariness and a vexation.

The music of the church should be such as is, for the most part, familiar to the people. I would not proscribe the introduction of new tunes altogether, but there should be a free proportion of old ones, in which the congregation may join, if they are so disposed. And when a hymn has for a long time been wedded to a particular tune, so that the words spontaneously suggest the music, it is a great trial to be obliged to stand dumb, and listen to some strange air, which quickens no association, and sounds like the voice of an unwelcome intruder.

MATCHING HIM.

Dr. Guthrie was equal to any emergency, physical or otherwise. While engaged in visiting the poor, he came one day to the door of an Irish Catholic, who was determined that the Doctor should not enter his house.

"You cannot come in here," said he; "you're not needed nor wanted."

"My friend," said the Doctor, "I'm going around my parish to become acquainted with the people, and have called on you only as a parishioner."

"It don't matter," said Paddy, "you shan't come in here;" and lifting the poker, he said: "If yer come in here I'll knock yer down."

Most men would have retired, or tried to reason; the Doctor did neither, but drawing himself up to his full height, and looking the Irishman in the face, said:

"Come now, that's too bad. Would you strike a man unarmed? Hand me the tongs, and then we shall be on equal terms."

The man looked at him in great amazement, and then said: "Och, sure, you're a queer man for a minister! Come inside." And, feeling rather ashamed of his conduct, he laid down the poker.

The Doctor entered, and talked in a way so entertaining and instructive as to win the man. Pat, when he arose to go, shook his hand warmly and said: "Be sure, sir, don't pass my door without giving me a call."—*Congregationalist*.

Is it possible that the microphone may enable us to dispense with our costly church edifices, and enable us to listen to the preaching of the Word in our own homes, without being obliged to walk or ride a Sabbath day's journey through the blazing heats of summer or the nipping frosts of winter? The *Halifax Guardian*, England, gives the following account of an experiment which seems to answer the question in the affirmative:

A microphone was placed in the pulpit of a chapel in this town on a recent Sunday, and connected by a private telegraph line with the residence of a gentleman over a mile distant. Every part of the service was distinctly heard at the gentleman's residence, with the exception of a few words rendered indistinct by the preacher's becoming a little excited and shaking the microphone. So faithfully did the instrument do its work that the chapel keeper was heard to close the doors after service, walk up the aisle, and up the pulpit steps, in conversation with some one else. The idea is about to be put to practical use, the gentleman already referred to having given instructions that his house should be connected with another in the neighborhood, in order that an invalid may hear the service from one of the churches in the town.

HISTORICAL NOTES OF METHODISM.

The recent Conference at Amherst was remarkable for its numbers, reunion with an adjoining Conference, exhibition of talent, fraternal spirit and gracious influence attending public services. We shall long remember, with pleasure, that ministerial convocations. It awakened many thoughts of the past both in reference to memory, and to recorded incident. Our review sometimes went back into the past one hundred years. What then? Was there any Methodism in Amherst 100 years ago? Yes, there was the nucleus of this system of religion—a prayer meeting. This was established by a few Yorkshire Methodists who came to these shores in 1775. True, there was not a Local or regular preacher at that time in the whole region now called the Dominion of Canada.

In answer to the prayers presented at that prayer meeting, a gracious revival of religion visited the place, during the next year 1779. In connection with this Methodist revival in Nova Scotia, a young man named William Black was converted to God. Soon after he began to preach, and thus became the "Apostle of Methodism" to the Lower Provinces. Are we not correct in saying that, as far as the Dominion is concerned, Methodism took its rise at

Amherst? Should not the centenary of Methodism in this country be celebrated next year 1879? It appears to me that the conversion of Mr. Black ought to fix the period of its introduction.

It is true that there was a Methodist preacher in Newfoundland as early as 1765; but as that colony did not have their centenary 14 years ago, they might unite with the Dominion Methodists in the celebration. Our cause, in consequence of recent ministerial increase, requires, financially, a special effort. I hope Mr. Editor that you will consent to allow the agitation of this movement in the columns of the *WESLEYAN*.

One hundred years ago, there was not a Methodist preacher in British America, except in Newfoundland, now there are more than 1200 in this branch of the Methodist family!

Never did the people of Amherst greet on any former occasion so many Methodist preachers, as during the Conference of 1878. On Saturday, June 29th, when the Conference of N. B. and P. R. I. visited the N. S. Conference, there were present more than 150. A few days later an equal number were in Sackville, classic, picturesque, salubrious and hospitable Sackville. Thirty-one years ago there was a ministerial gathering at this place, comprising all the Methodist ministers in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, about 46 in all. Twenty-four of these have crossed "the narrow stream of death."

The recital of the names of those present on that occasion may be interesting to some of our readers.

Table with 2 columns: The departed, Still living. Lists names of ministers who have passed and those still living.

Among all those who were at that meeting in 1847, only five are now in the active work. Of those five four are in the N. S. Conference, the other in N. B. In the three Maritime Conferences there are no old men in the effective ranks. The Rev. R. Smith, in ministerial age the oldest among us, having entered the work in 1842. Truly, these are youthful Conferences! We are however favored with the counsels of aged men. Our 28 super-numeraries are of great service in guiding the old ship over the rapids that sometimes lie in our pathway. We ought as young men to cherish, and manifest in every possible way, feelings of reverence and brotherly love for our aged ministers. G. O. H.

Maitland, July 15, 1878.

OBITUARY.

ARCHIBALD M'MULLIN, J. P., has passed away from this world of sin and suffering to "the land that is fairer than day." Our deeply lamented brother was born at Milltown, N. B., May 2, 1806, where he remained till 1812, when his parents removed to Digdeguash, where he resided till July 10, 1878, when he exchanged mortality for life. He was blest with a pious mother who early taught him to read the Holy Scriptures, pray and love God. She first introduced Methodism into Digdeguash. He was awakened under the ministry of the Rev. R. Shepherd, and found the peace that passeth understanding during the administration of the Rev. A. DesBrisay Sr. Since that time he has been a consistent member of the Methodist Church. For many years he faithfully performed the duties that devolved upon him, and always took a lively interest in the church he loved so well. His death makes a gap that we are at present unable to fill. His home was always open to the ministers whom he truly loved. The writer will not readily forget his kindness to him last year. In 1848 he was appointed Justice of the Peace, which he adorned till his end. His sufferings though intense and protracted were borne without a single murmur. With "lamb-like patience" his breast was armed. He was resigned to his Father's will. He told his eldest daughter shortly before his death that his affliction had been made a great blessing to him in bringing him nearer to God, and that he had no fear of passing through the dark valley of death, as his trust was on Jesus whom he leaned. He died the death of the righteous and may our last end be like his.

W. R. PEPPER. Digdeguash, Charlotte Co., N. B., July 18th, 1878.