

the warmest of all colours, and contrasts with blue, which is the coldest and most retiring of the colours. Then if blue and orange, or red and green, or yellow and purple, are placed in juxtaposition it increases the intensity of the colours so placed, hence they are called complementary and contrasting colours.

Again, if we gaze long upon one of the primaries, the eye, if correct, becomes tired, and for relief calls up the complementary, as red—green; blue—orange; yellow—purple. The secondaries have less power than the primaries, and the tertiaries less than the secondaries. For this reason we find much more use made of the tertiaries in the decorative arts now than formerly. It is necessary at all times to note clearly the difference between a colour and a tint. In the production of a tint we employ white in the mixing with any of the colours (we may gradate it as we please) and produce innumerable delicate shades, as light green, or light blue, &c. These tints hold a very prominent place in the industrial arts, because upon their surface we can arrange the stronger colours in the form of ornament. And, as in the case of a wood-carver, or stone-cutter, when ornamenting a piece of work they must be careful not to cover up too much of the ground from which the design stands out in relief, or confusion follows. This is also the case if you employ an excess of ornament by placing too great a quantity of bright colour over the plain tint, destroying what is called repose,—an element so essential to good decoration. Much of the improper use of colour arises from lack of this quality. A correct eye becomes offended, and when we see a lady dressed in an excess of colour, we look in vain for repose to the eye. It is true we have great variety in Nature, as the ever-changing cloud-forms, the surging motion of the sea, or the flickering shadows, but these have at times that repose which appeals so pleasantly to us in those tranquil scenes of Nature, as the peaceful valley, the placid river, the calm lake, and the serene morning and evening.

It must be gratifying to the fair sex, and every lover of good design, to note the changes taking place, and the great improvement made in much of the decorative arts. We have less now of those staring bunches of red roses, tied with blue ribbon, or imitation rococo scrolls standing out in bold relief upon our carpets, nor must we forget the life-like Bengal tiger of the hearth-rug. We hope their day is past, and are we not justified in hoping? Step into any of our stores and the proprietors will inform you that their trade is rapidly changing; this is not caused by purchasers buying more expensive wares, but proceeds from a better taste being displayed by manufacturers, and a keener appreciation of what is beautiful in the buyers. If the customers demand, the supply will follow, and that supply will be according to the taste of the public. Yet there must be a harmony of interests between manufacturers, merchants and purchasers, each striving to obtain those wares whose value are increased by their beauty. For the greater diffusion of correct taste we want in our schools less dependence upon patent or cheap and easy methods of teaching. We have no faith in any "Royal road to knowledge;" we want teachers capable of thought themselves, and instilling it into the minds of others; we want more interest taken in the decorative arts by the masses; and we sincerely hope that when the coming exhibition opens, it will bear evidence not only of the skill, but the taste of our mechanics, and their wares will attest the goodness of material employed in their construction, show chaste ornamentation, and bear the stamp of utility upon them, and that the arrangement of their goods will attest that they have given attention to the laws which regulate colour. We trust the opportunity will be afforded the mechanics to visit the exhibition; that they will go there in a spirit which is ever ready to acquire useful knowledge by observation, and that the lessons there obtained may prove beneficial to them. For the use of an exhibition is to test by actual experience how we compare with the progress of others.

J. W. Gray.

A LIFE'S OPPORTUNITY.

BY FELTON LEA.

(Continued.)

"Miss Barbara," said a timely voice, "do you not think it hard to be obliged to work others look down upon the emphatic reply," "nor would anyone who thought what work really is."

"Myra Brown," said Miss Barbara, sharply, "I see your smile of derision at both question and answer. Kindly answer this one for you. What part or lot had you in bringing about your present surroundings?"

"I really do not understand your meaning," faltered the girl, not having bargained to be caught in her telegraphic communication with one of the twenty-two, seated on the opposite side of the aisle.

"Well, I'll put it in another form," said Miss Barbara, grimly. "How came you to be one of those daughters who are not required to do what a servant is always at hand to do?"

"Miss Barbara, you are laughing at me," said Myra, her face rosy red, as she saw the smiles dimpling first one face then another, as she looked helplessly for one to come to her rescue, by hazarding an opinion. "I had nothing, of course, to do with my position. Papa——"

"Never mind about your papa," interrupted her mentor. "You say you had nothing to do with it. Now tell me what had Lucy Annesley to do with her present position?"

"I have nothing to do with Miss Annesley," began Myra, deeply offended.

"Myra Brown, do you wish to be regarded as possessing the qualities making a gentlewoman," asked Miss Barbara, in no unkindly voice; and through the weeds so thickly growing all round, Myra felt the influence touching one spot not quite covered—"I take it for granted you do. Tell me, then, who assigned your lot and that of Lucy?"

Myra really looked frightened, so turning to the subdued faces round about her, she asked the question of them.

"God," was the scarcely breathed reply from her own niece, Beatrice.

"If, then, young ladies, you acknowledge that, whom do you *practically* despise when you draw your skirts around you from fear of contamination?"

"But, Miss Barbara," ventured one, "you do not think because our position warrants us in keeping within our own circle that we are necessarily despising others lower in the social scale. You would not care to visit all you know?"

"Certainly not, Ellen, and never was such a design possible to be carried out. But whilst friends are heart friends, and interchange visits, how many such do you make and receive in a year you never would if you confined them to your friends—aimless, useless visits, neither benefiting nor being benefited?"

"I give in, Miss Barbara; you come too close," said the young girl, with a laugh.

"But we have wandered from the point I was aiming to impress. I wish you to think how many people of wealth you crave to know, how few of worth you care to bestow a thought upon. It is not for any to be dictated to in the choice of friends; but, young ladies, I am anxious for you not to go through life attracted by the casket, heedless if it be empty or contains a jewel. Wherever you find the latter, do not despise it because it may be enshrined in a common one. Wherever you meet truth, integrity, uprightness of purpose and aim, remember you behold one of the Creator's highest creations, be he clothed with the dignity of a prince or the garb of the mechanic."

"Now, Miss Barbara, just think of nothing higher for many girls than to dust, cook, mend, and do household work from the beginning to the end of their lives."

If the position demands this at their hands, and they bring *conscientious* doing of it thoroughly into the *action*, they have just as much claim to ask at the end of life the question Cæsar of Rome did at that of his—and *neither have done a whit more than the other*. I leave Miss Fitzroy to talk to you of spiritual things, but it has just struck me forcibly what the Saviour said before his death: 'I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.' If the work committed to our doing be ruling an empire or sweeping its chimneys, the one question will be, *How was it done?* Young ladies, will you let your work be killing time with trifling and sipping at its so-called pleasures? If so, you must see the transposition in the end,—Time killing you."

Miss Barbara sat down with the same energy she had at first started to her feet, and watched with her keen glance the young forms as they silently withdrew. As the door closed, she stepped down quickly, passed through the vacant seats, and once more stood in the midst of the now animated group.

"Beatrice! Violet!" and two loving faces looked into hers. "I see a strange face amongst us," and the former exclaimed "Oh, Aunt Barbara, I really forgot—this is Miss Clayton, a friend of Ellen's I only introduced her to Violet as we entered for lecture. She is from the country of the Stars and Stripes," was the merry allusion to the young girl who now came forward with outstretched hand.

"None the less welcome for that," said Miss Barbara with a true Briton's shake. "You will all stay with us, I hope, to-day," she added.

It was refreshing to hear the different cries of "Miss Barbara," wonder, pleasure, gratification and every other such feeling was expressed in the one name. Turning them over to the care of Beatrice and Violet, it was a pleasant sight to her to see all those young girls just budding into womanhood and yet playful as very children when cut off from the stiff starched unnatural manners of the incipient women of fashion.

"Mary, do get hold of Myra Brown and try what you can do with her, I have not the patience she requires; a word from you may make her think—and there is a young one amongst them to be made feel at home."

"All right, Barbara," was the cheerful response. "Let them have a good time outside, then we will scatter a little more seed."

Later on the group of girls somewhat thinned as other engagements demanded their presence, but none the less merry and animated were gathered round the couch of Miss Fitzroy whose heart yearned with a motherly tenderness over each one. In her own peculiar manner she drew one and another into expression of thought and feeling on one subject or other, and with a directness few have the gift of possessing clothed it with a new meaning not easily to be forgotten.

It is not in human nature for either sex to be indifferent to the companionship of the other, and the pulsations of young hearts quickened when Mr. Ralph Brandon, with his two nephews, and the Hon. Mr. Fitzroy eldest son of Lord Somerset and nephew of the Hon. Misses Fitzroy, entered the room.

"Aunt Barbara," said the latter gentleman mischievously, "which ought I to admire most the flowers outside or those within?"

"If you are one of those individuals who never know how to make up their own mind, you have applied to the wrong person for assistance. But, Fitzroy, talk common sense," said Miss Barbara emphatically.

"Violet," he called, "as Aunt Barbara generally informs you with myself, we have not much of that commodity, suppose you come over to this side of Aunties couch, and she will help us to get over our deficiency."

"I am leaving you in the lurch," was the playful rejoinder, "for Aunt Barbara told me the other day I was getting to shape ideas with some sense, and gave promise of becoming a woman with a few brains, so, Fitzroy, I will not rob you of any portion of Auntie's bounty. You may outstrip me yet, but I will be generous and leave you the chance."

"Once get hold of your uncle," he whispered coming to her side "and you desert everybody else."

"Could not do such a thing, sir," she said saucily, "so do not be spiteful because Aunt Barbara corrected you."

How unmistakably the training of each betrayed itself. How unconsciously