

A BROKEN LIFE.

BY CAROLINE W. D. RICH.

"I declare, I do hate to be poor! I don't see what I have done, that I must work forever, any more than Mrs. Bird or Mrs. Sparrow."

Mrs. Blank laid her work down, and began to think of her discomforts. She had refined tastes, and could appreciate books, and elegant furniture, and fine paintings, and rare china, as well as her neighbors. But her husband could not afford luxuries. He had a lucrative business, but he was young, and must make his way. His wife had been a school-teacher in her native village, and consequently quite a leader in village society. Mr. Blank was the son of a village minister. His position had opened to him many avenues, denied to others of his acquaintance. But he learned to love the bright-faced school-teacher, with her cheerful ways, and had relinquished his hope of an education, preferring to make a home, and then ask Mary, to leave her teaching, and marry him. When at length he had the home to offer, he thought that no one could be happier than he, with a good income, and a wife that would be all the world to him.

Mary was happy, and made her home attractive, caring for nothing so much as to please her husband, until she began to feel the difference between a country village and a large city. She had been as good as the best in her native town. Here she was unknown, and comparatively unsought. She was ambitious, and determined to compel even people of wealth to recognize her. So she took sewing from a dressmaker, and neglected her household, in order to earn something to supply deficiencies. She saved and pinched in every possible way, her economy even extending to the food. If she could live cheaply, no matter if she did not relish her food.

It gradually dawned upon Henry that his wife was not happy. At first he fancied that she needed a change, and urged her to visit the country home, and enjoy the fresh summer air and the sunshine. Her face had grown pinched and thin, so unlike the sweet face he had wedded. But Mary would not think of the expense. She wanted money for better furniture and better clothing, and this greed was fast eating out the social enjoyment of home. Her husband longed for the anticipated pleasant meal, or evening with his wife. He worked harder than ever, in order to save expense of extra help, as his business increased. By and by he was obliged to give the most of his evenings to business. But it brought the desired gain.

At the end of three years, Mr. and Mrs. Blank could hardly have been recognized as the happy pair, of whom the village had been so proud, as they went forth to their new home. A year or two will leave marks of discontent, which wealth can not erase; or the deeper lines of care and toil, which come often like mildew, to cover the once cheerful, care-free countenance. Haggard and worried, Henry Blank had striven, as a drowning man, to make the most of every straw that came in his way. He had not the hungering for gold that possessed his wife; but he did wish to come up to her ideal; and if any exertion of his could make her happier, and bring back the cheerful face, he would make it. So, at thirty, his hair was growing white and his face thin.

Mary intended to be a good wife, and she certainly meant to be thoughtful for her husband. But it was all to be when they had secured enough money to place them on an equal footing with those whose acquaintance she coveted. How little this would add to their happiness, she did not pause to ask herself. How much more to her love and sympathy of her husband, as they journeyed on together! How much more a breath of fresh air now and then! Money,—more money, seemed to be the absorbing desire of her heart.

At length the constant strain upon Henry resulted in entire prostration. He must now wait, for he could not work. The kind doctor ordered country air, and absolute rest. Now Mrs. Blank must close the new house, with its costly furnishing. They went, once more, to the little village among the hills. Rev. John Blank was still the esteemed pastor of the one little church there. He received his son gladly, whom he had not seen since his marriage. His shock at the changed looks was too marked to be

concealed. But no questions were asked. This breaking down, in the very prime of manhood, he looked upon as one of God's providences. He only sought to soothe and comfort his disappointed boy—for he was still a boy to him.

The summer months waxed and waned, and Henry began to think of God again, and to return to the love that had been buried under the ambition of his wife. He listened to the voice of the dear Elder Brother; and the voice clamoring for money seemed as the far-off rushing of the sea. Mary, too, was restless and gentle and loving again; and Henry felt that it was worth the pain and disappointment, for it brought them closer in heart. But one day, as he lay in a dreaming, half-wakeful state, and Mary sat by him, reading of the rest for those who are weary, he reached out his hand, and, clasping hers, said: "Rest, rest! we have had very little of it, Mary; but"—the sentence was unfinished. She looked,

just because you have not the courage to resist this dangerous fashion."

Said the last king of France, in an epigram which should have stung his subjects into common-sense, "Once you met Dianas, Venuses, or Niobes; no nowadays, only wasps."

When woman attempts to improve upon nature, she merely defeats her own object. It is no more possible for her to enhance her charms, save by healthful living, than it is for a river to run uphill.

The unnatural is always the ugly; it is but another name for deformity. The human figure in the shape of a wasp is as truly deformed as if its spinal column described a semicircle.—*Youth's Companion*

A CERTAIN SORT of tobacco blindness is on the increase. The *Lowell Citizen* says that the victim is so affected that he can't see that he is puffing smoke right into the face of the person nearest him.

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and he was just entering upon that restful sleep that knows no waking here.—*Morning Star*.

WAISTS.

The girl of the period seems to be a trifle more sensible than her sister of the last decade. Her boots are not quite as pointed at the toe, and their heels are not as distinctively "French." She does not as ambitiously emulate the camel, in the wearing of a hump upon her back, and she has discarded the "rats" and cushions which erst were wont to make her coiffure into the sea-blance of pillows and bolsters. Unfortunately, however, she does not yet realize that beauty is inconsistent with a pinched waist.

Admirable as the wasp may be in his humble capacity as an insect, there seems to be no legitimate reason for a young woman's modelling herself upon his figure; but the young woman insists upon doing so. She is wont to express the most fervent admiration for the Venus of Milo; but even at the moment when she stands rapt in contemplation of the grand creature, she finds it difficult to draw a full breath, so tightly enclosed is she in corsets.

Napoleon I., who had as much common-sense as military ability, was dismayed at the revival of the corset in 1812. He said to an eminent physician, in regard to it, "This wear, born of coquetry and bad taste, which murders women and ill-treats their offspring, tells of frivolous tastes, and warns me of an approaching decadence."

Cuvier, whose work on comparative anatomy was published during the consulate, and who occupied a high official position both at that time and under the empire, had also the greatest aversion toward this article of dress.

He once endeavored, by practical illustration, to force his views upon a young lady who was a victim of tight lacing. Walking with him in the *Jardin des Plantes*, she expressed her admiration for a very lovely flower.

"You were once like this blossom," said Cuvier, glancing at her thin, pale face. "To-morrow it will be as you are now."

The next day he led her to the same spot, where she found the flower drooping and dying. She asked the cause.

"The plant," said the great anatomist, "is an image of yourself. I will show you the trouble."

He pointed to a cord bound tightly about the stem, and continued, "You are fading away exactly in the same manner, under the compression of your corset, and you are losing by degrees all your youthful

Question Corner.—No. 18.

BIBLE QUESTIONS.

1. What prophet, who did not himself see Babylon, wrote a book of prophecies against it, and sent it thither to be sunk in the river Euphrates as a sign that that great city should fall to rise no more?
2. Where do we read of an angel letting a man out of prison, and who was the man?

ACROSTIC.

The initials give the appellation of a famous woman who lived in the time of Solomon.

1. A city. Acts 21: 39.
 2. A king. Acts 12: 1.
 3. A sorcerer. Acts 13: 8.
 4. A lady. Matt. 12: 42.
 5. Part of a house. Acts 20: 8.
 6. A city. Acts 19: 1.
 7. A wind. Acts 27: 14.
 8. A ruler. John 3: 1.
 9. A slave. Philemon 1: 10.
 10. A Roman ruler. Acts 25: 1.
 11. A sect of the Jews. Acts 23: 8.
 12. A language. Acts 22: 2.
 13. One raised from the dead. Acts 20: 9.
 14. A son of consolation. Acts 9: 27.
 15. A city. Acts 11: 26.
- Most of the words occur in connection with the life of Paul.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTIONS.

1. Methuselah. He was contemporary with Adam two hundred and fifty-three years.
 2. In B. C. 2349.
- WHAT CITY.—Samaria.

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