Echoes.

The blithesome shepherd sings
His artless song,
And Echo's wandering voice
The notes prolongs.
A maiden's eye strikes mine,
My cheeks flush red,
And, like a flower oppressed,
She droops her head.

I love the mystic voice
That back again
Returns in purer tones
The shepherd's strain.
I love the maid whose soul,
Reflecting mine,
Won'd speak its kindling thoughts
In looks divine.

Belgravia.

THE BARTON EXPERIMENT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "HELEN'S BABIES."

"And I would rather be dead than be the wife of any one of them," said Esther with an energy which startled Fred. "Mrs. Moshier used to be such a happy-looking woman, and now she is so quiet and has such sad eyes. Brown seems to spend no end of money on his family; but his children are always put to bed before he comes home, because he is likely as not to be cross and unkind to them; when they meet him on the street they never shout 'Papa!" and rush up to him as your little brothers and sisters do to your father; but they look at him first with an anxious look that's enough to break one's heart, and as likely as not cross the street to avoid meeting him. Mrs. Crayme was having such a pleasant time at Nellie Wainwright's party the other night, when her husband, who she seldom enough has a chance to take into society with her, said such silly things and started around with such an odd look in his eye that she made some excuse to take him home. And Nellie Wainwright—she was my particular friend before she was married, you know—was here a few days ago, and I was telling her how pleased I was, when suddenly she threw both arms around my neck and burst out crying, and told me that she hoped that my husband would never drink after I was married. She insists upon it that her husband is the best man that ever lived, and that if she only mentions anything she would like, she has it at once if money can buy it, and yet she is unhappy. She says there is always a load on her heart, and though she feels real wicked about it, she can't get rid of it."

Fred Macdonald was unable for some moments to reply to this unexpected speech; he arose from his chair, and walked slowly upand down the room, with his hands behind him, and with the countenance of a man who has heard something of which he had previously possessed no idea. Esther looked at him, first furtively, then tenderly; then she sprang to his side and leaned upon his shoulder, saying,

"Dear Fred, I know you could never be that way; but then all these women were sure they knew just the same about their lovers, before they were married."

"Well, Ettie," said Fred, passing an arm around the young lady, "I really don't know what's to be done about it, if drinking moderately is the cause of all these dreadful things; I'm bound to be somebody; I'm in the set of men that make money; they like me and I understand them. But they all take something, and you don't know how they look at a man who refuses to drink with them; all of them think we don't intend to much, and some of them actually feel insulted. What is a fellow to do?"

"Go into some other set, I suppose," said Esther very soberly.

"You don't know what you're saying, my dear girl," said Fred. "What else is there for a man to do in a dead-and-alive place like Barton? you don't want to be the wife of a four-hundred-dollar clerk, and live in part of a common little house, do you?"

"Yes," said Esther, showing her lover a rapturous face whose attractiveness was not marred by a suspicion of shyness, "I do, if Fred Macdonald is to be my husband."

"Then if either of us should have a long illness, or if I should lose my position, we would have to depend on your parents and mine," said Fred.

"Let us wait, then," said Esther, "until you can have saved something, before we are married."

"And be like Charley Merrick and Kate Armstrong, who've been engaged for ten years, and are growing old and do eful about it."

"I'd never grow old and doleful while waiting for my Fred to succeed," said Esther, in a tone which might have carried conviction with it had Fred been entirely in a listening humor. But as Fred imagined himself in the position of the many unsuccessful young men in Barton, and of the anxious looking husbands who had once been as spirited as himself, he fell into a frame of mind which was anything but receptive. In his days some reason had seemed to make up of many things beside the perpetual companionship of Esther: it had among its very desirable components a handsome, well-furnished house, a carriage in the most approved style, an elegant wardrobe for Esther, and one faultless style for himself, a prominent pew in the church, and, not least of all, a sideboard which would be better stocked than that of any of his friends. To banish these from his mind for a moment, and imagine himself living in two or three rooms, cheapening meat at the butcher's; never driving out but when the neighbor's horse and buggy, or the antiquated buggy; wearing a suit of clothes for two or three years in succession, while Esther should spend hours in making over and over the dresses of her unmarried days; all this made him almost deaf to Esther's loyal words, and nearly oblivious to the fact that the wisest and sweetest girl in Barton was resting within his arm. Suddenly he aroused himself from his revery, and exclaimed, in a tone which Esther did not a first recognize as his own,

"Ettie, your ideas are honest and lofty, but you miss the point. You know best about matters of business. I can't deliberately throw away everything I have done, and form entirely different business connections. I've always regretted my promise to stop drinking after our marriage; but I've trusted that you, with your usual sense, would see the propriety of absolving me from it."

Esther shrank away from Fred, and hid her face in her hands, weeping hoarsely.

"I can't, I can't, and I never will."

She dropped into a chair and burst into tears. Fred's momentary expression of anger softened into sorrow, but his business instinct did not desert him. "Ettie," said he tenderly, "I thought you trusted me."

"You know I do, Fred," said the weeping girl; "but my lover and the Fred who drinks are two different persons, and I can't trust the latter. Don't think me selfish; be always your natural self, and there's no poverty or sorrow that I won't endure to be always with you. Do you think I hope to marry you for the sake of living in fuxiry, or that any pleasures that money will buy will satisfy me any more than they do Nellie Wainwright and Mr. Meshier's wife? Or do you, professing to love me, can even think the slightest risk of ever being as unhappy as the poor women we have been talking about are with their husbands, who love them dearly? You must keep that promise, or I must love you apart from you—at least for a time. I feel as if even then I could only stop, it seems to me, by stopping to live."

Fred's face, while Esther was speaking, was anything but comely to look upon, but his intended reply was prevented by a violent knock at the door. Esther hurriedly dried her eyes, and prepared to vanish, if necessary, while Fred regained in a hasty his ordinary countenance; then, as the servant opened the door, the lovers heard a voice saying,

"Is Fred Macdonald here? He must come down to George Doughty's right away. George is dying!"

Fred gave Ettie a hasty kiss and a conciliatory caress, after which he left the house at a lively run.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME NATURAL RESULTS.

George Doughty lay propped up in bed; standing beside him, and clasping his hand tightly, was his wife; near him were his two oldest children, seemingly as ignorant of what was transpiring as they were uncomfortable on account of the peculiar influence which pervaded the room. On the other side of the bed, and holding one of the dying man's hands, knelt Person Wedgewell; beside him stood the doctor; while behind them both, near the door, and as nearly invisible as a man of his size could be, was Squire Tompple. The Squire's face and figure seemed embodiments of a trembling, abject apology; he occasionally looked toward the door, as if to question that inanimate object whether behind its broad front he, the Squire, might not be safe from his own fears. It was very evident that the Squire's conscience was making a coward of him; but it was also evident, and not for the first time in the world's history, that cowardice is mightily influential in holding a coward to the ground that he hates. Had any one spoken to him, or paid him the slightest attention, the Squire would have felt better; nothing turns cowards into soldiers so quickly as the receipt of a volley; but no such relief seemed at all likely to reach him. The doctor, like a true man, having done all things, could only stand, and stand he did; Parson Wedgewell, feeling that upon his efforts with the Great Physician depended the sick man's future well-being, prayed silently and earnestly, raising his head only to search, through his tears, the face of the patient for signs of the desired answer to prayer. Mrs. Doughty was interested only in looking into the eyes too soon to close forever, and the faces of the two children were more than a man could intentionally look upon a second time. So when Doughty's baby, who had been creeping about the floor, suddenly beholding the glories of the great seat which depended from the Squire's fob-chain, tried to climb the leg of the storekeeper's trousers, the Squire smiled, as a saint in extremity might smile at the sudden appearance of an angel, and he stooped—no easy operation for a man of Squire Tompple's bulk—and, lifting the little fellow in his arms, put kisses all over the tiny face, which, in view of the relations of cleanliness to attractiveness, was not especially bewitching. A moment later, however, a muffled but approaching step brought back to the Squire his own sense of propriety, and he dropped the baby just in time to be able to give a hand to Fred Macdonald, as that young man softly pushed open the door. The Squire's face again became apologetic.

"How did it happen?" whispered Fred.

"Why," replied the Squire, "the doctor says it's a galiop ng consumption; I never knew a thing about it. Doctor says it's the quickest case he ever knew; he never imagined any thing was the matter with George. If I had known anything about it, I'd have had the doctor attending him long ago; but George isn't of the complaining kind. The idea of a fellow being at work for me, and dying right straight along. Why, it's awful! He says he never knew anything about it himself, so I don't see how I could. He was at the store up to four or five days ago; then his wife came around one morning and told me that he didn't feel fit to work that day, but she didn't say what the matter was. I've been thinking, for two or three weeks, about giving him some help in the store; but you know how business drives everything out of a man's head. First I thought I'd stay around the store myself evenings, and let George rest; but I've had to go to lodge meetings and prayer meetings, and my wife's wanted me to go out with her, and so my time's been taken up. Then I thought I'd get a boy, and—well, I didn't know exactly which to do; but if I'd known—"

"But can't something be done to brace him up for a day or two?" interrupted Fred; "then I'll take him out driving every day, and perhaps he'll pick up."

The Squire looked twenty years older for a moment or two as he replied,

"The doctor says he hasn't any physique to rally upon; he's all gone, muscle, blood, and everything. It's the queerest thing I ever knew; he hasn't had anything to do, these past few years, but just what I did when I was a young man."

The dying man turned his eyes inquiringly, and asked in a very thin voice,

"Isn't Fred here?"

Fred started from the Squire's side, but the storekeeper arrested his progress with both hands, and fixing his eyes on Fred's necktie, whispered,

"You don't think I'm to blame, do you?"

"Why—no—I don't see how, exactly," said Fred, endeavoring to escape.

"Fred," whispered the Squire, tightening his hold on the lapels of Fred's coat, "tell him so, won't you? I'll be your best friend forever if you will; it's dreadful to think of a man going up to God with such an idea on his mind, even if it is a mistake. Of course, when he gets there he'll find out he's wrong, if he is, as——"

Fred broke away from the storekeeper, and wedged himself between the doctor and pastor. Doughty withdrew his wrist from the doctor's fingers, extended a thin hand, and smiled.

"Fred," said he, "we used to be chums when we were boys. I never took an advantage of you, did I?"

"Never; said Fred: "and we'll have lots of good times again, old fellow. I've just bought the best spring wagon in the State, and I'll drive you all over the country when you get well enough."

George's smile became slightly grim as he replied,

"I guess Baker's hearse is the only spring wagon I'll ever ride in again, my boy."

"Nonsense, George!" exclaimed Fred heartily. "How many times have I seen you almost dead, and then put yourself together again? Don't you remember the time when you gave out in the middle of the river, and then picked yourself up, and swam the rest of the way? Don't you remember the time we got snowed in on Raccoon Mountain, and we both gave up and got ready to die, and how you not only came to, but dragged me ho me besides? The idea of you ever dying! I wish you'd seen for the hardest knocks. I've been one of the Sons of Temperance ever since I was converted, an' that's nigh onto forty year; I don't see why I don't get my sheer of the good things of this world."

"If you mean," said Crupp, with incomparable deliberation, "that my taking stock in the mill is a reward for stopping the liquor business, you're mightily mistaken. I'd have taken it all the same if anybody had put me up to it when I was in the liquor business."

"Yes," sighed Father Baguss, "like enough you would; as the Bible says, 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.' I can't help a-gettin' mad, though, to think it has to be so."

Two or three unsuccessful starters lounging about the stove sighed sympathetically, but Crupp indulged in a sarcastic smile, and remarked,

"I always supposed it was because the children of light had got their treasure laid up in heaven, and were above such worldly notions."

The late sympathizers of Father Baguss saw the joke, and laughed with unkind gaiety, upon which the good old man straightened himself and exclaimed,

"The children of the kingdom have to earn their daily bread, I reckon; manna don't fall now-a-days like it used to do for the chosen people."

"Exactly," said Crupp, "and them that ain't chosen people don't pick their dinners up without paying for them either, without getting into jail for it. But say! I didn't come here to make fun of you, Father Baguss. If you want some of that mill stock to help you, I will—just for old times, that is, if you'll go into temperance with all your might."

The old man seemed struck dumb for a moment, but when he found his tongue, he made that useful mature, and that astounding remark: "Go into temperance!" he shouted. "Did anybody ever hear the like of that? I that's been a Son more'n half my life; that's spent a hundred dollar a year—that's been my dues—that's been to every temperance meetin' that's ever been held in town, even when I've had rheumatiz so bad I could hardly crawl; that kept the pledge even when I was out in that Black Hawk war, when the doctors themselves said that I ort to have drank; that's plead with drinkers, and been scoffed an' reviled like my blessed Master for my pains; that's voted for Maine Liquor Laws, and been read out an' lettin' Miles Dalling into the church because he brews beer for his own family drinkin', though he's a good enough man every other way, as far as I can see; I that went to every member of our church, an' begged an' implored 'em not to sell our old meetin'-house to the feller that since turned it into a groggery; I to be told by a feller like you, that's got the guilt of uncounted drunkards on your soul——"

To be Continued.

FALLEN FORTUNES.

BY JAMES PAYN, AUTHOR OF "LOST SIR MASSINGBERD," "WALTER'S WORD," ETC., ETC.

To them succeeded an unmistakable commercial traveller; "money and orders" was written in his twinkling eyes as legibly as the Hebrew characters that were wont to be seen (by the faithful) inscribed upon those of some pious folk of old. He was a chirpy, gossipy fellow, full of Joe Millerish jokes, and very inquisitive with regard to his companion's "whom" Dalton "travelled for," as he expressed it.

"A family man, I presume?" said he. Dalton—who indeed in good-natured assent. "Ah, then you are quite right to come second-class, sir; I always do it myself, and save the difference for Mrs. R——(my name is Roberts) and the young people." Presuming upon his superiority in years, he was so good as to give his companion much advice as to the pursuit of his supposed calling. "My motto is push, sir"—which he pronounced like "rush" "and I have always found that system to answer." And, by way of illustration, he dug the would-have-been member for Brampton playfully in the ribs.

Without being at all of the opinion of that unmannerly fellow, who agreed that he never spoke with any fellow-creature with out learning something new, Dalton was by nature social and a citizen of the world; so that the "push" and Mr. Roberts' conversation sped the leaden hours of the journey, but the two parted the best of friends.

"You are the right sort, you are," was the eulogium passed upon him by that gentleman on the platform as they shook hands. In the midst of which leave-taking, up came Dalton's footman to show him where the carriage stood.

"Well, I am blowed!" said Mr. Roberts, with a prolonged whistle.

He did not know, of course, that it was the last drive in his own carriage which his late fellow-traveller was ever to take.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE WORM TURNS.

The house in Cardigan Place was as yet unchanged in every respect—just as Dalton had left it on his quitting town—yet everything spoke of gloom and desertion. It was no longer his home, except in name: and in a few days it would lose even the designation. He felt that he could not eat his dinner there, but went out to dine at his club. London was what was called "empty;" there were only a few millionaires left in it who could not afford to go into the country: Piccadilly was a solitude, Pall Mall a waste. Dalton felt qualms as he drew near his club, imagining that every one there would have heard tidings of his downfall, and that he would be looked upon with pitying eyes. He knew how weak it was in him, how false the pride that made him no longer his home, except in name;