

any wound the world could make. Wintry flight would be more genial than even June sunlight, if her eyes would reflect it into mine. With such companionship, all the Gradgrinds in existence would prove in vain; life would never lose its ideality, nor the world become a mere combination of things. Her woman's fancy would embroider my man's reason and make it beautiful, while not taking from its strength. Idiot that I was, in imagining that I alone could achieve success! Inevitably I could make but a half success, since the finer and feminine element would be wanting. Do I wish men only to read our paper? Am I a Turk, holding the doctrine that women have no souls, no minds? The shade of my mother forbid! Then how was I, a man, to interpret the world to women? Truly, I had been an owl of the night, and blind to the honest light of truth when I yielded to the counsel of ambition, that I had no time for courtship and marriage. In my stupid haste I would try to grope my way through subjects beyond a man's ken, rather than seek some such guide as yonder maiden, whose intuitions would be unerring when the light of reason failed. In theory, I held the doctrine that there was sex in mind as truly as in the material form. Now I was inclined to act as if my doctrine were true, and to seek to double my power by winning the supplemental strength and grace of a woman's soul.

Indeed, my day-dream was becoming exceedingly thrifty in its character, and I assured ambition that the companionship of such a woman as yonder maiden must be might become the very corner-stone of success.

Time passed, and still no one was "moved." Was my presence the cause of the spiritual paralysis? I think not, for I was becoming conscious of reverent feeling and deeper motives. If the fair face was my Gospel message, it was already leading me beyond the thoughts of success and ambition, of mental power and artistic grace. Her womanly beauty began to awaken my moral nature, and her pure face, that looked as free from guile as any daisy with its eye turned to the sun, led me to ask, "What right have you to approach such a creature? Think of her needs, of her being, first, and not your own. Would you drag her into the turmoil of your world because she would be a solace? Would you disturb the maidenly serenity of that brow with knowledge of evil and misery, the nightly record of which you have collated so long that you are callous? You, whose business it is to look behind the scenes of life, will you disenchant her also? It is your duty to unmask hypocrisy, and to drag hidden evil to light, but will you teach her to suspect and distrust? Should you not yourself become a better, truer, purer man before you look into the clear depths of her blue eyes? Beware, less thoughtlessly or selfishly you sully their limpid truth."

"If she could be God's evangel to me, I might indeed be a better man," I murmured.

"That is ever the way," suggested Conscience; "there is always an 'if' in the path of duty; and you make your change for the better dependent on the remote possibility that yonder maiden will ever look on you as other than a casual stranger that caused a slight disturbance in the wonted placidity of their meeting hour."

(To be continued.)

GOD'S TITHE.

One-tenth of ripened grain,
One-tenth of tree and vine;
One-tenth of all the yield
From ten-tenths' rain and shine.

One-tenth of lowing herds,
That browse on hill and plain;
One-tenth of bleating flocks,
For ten-tenths' shine and rain.

One-tenth of all increase,
From counting-room and mart;
One-tenth that science yields,
One-tenth of every art.

One-tenth of loom and press,
One-tenth of mill and mine;
One-tenth of every craft
Wrought out by gifts of Thine.

One-tenth of glowing words
That golden guineas hold;
One-tenth of written thoughts
That turn to shining gold.

One-tenth! and dost Thou Lord,
But ask this meagre loan,
When all the earth is Thine,
And all we have Thine own?

A QUEER TEST.

"How happens it, Tom, that you never married?" asked Harry Stanhope of his friend, Tom Meredith, as the two sauntered along Broadway one fine spring morning.

"Because I never could find any woman who would have me, I suppose," answered Tom, laughingly.

"No use to tell me that, old fellow," rejoined Harry. "Girls are not so foolish as to decline a good looking man like you, with plenty of money; yet here you are, nearly thirty years old, and no more prospect of settling than you had ten years ago. Now if it were me, why, the case is very different. A doctor just struggling into practice, is scarcely considered eligible by match-making mammas, to say nothing of their worldly-wise daughters, but they are ready and eager to smile upon you, and you might as well make your choice."

"Thank you," answered Tom, still laughing, "when I find a young lady who can come up to my grandmother's standard of domestic virtues, I will invite her to become Mrs. Thomas Meredith."

"And what were your grandmother's peculiar doctrines on the subject?" asked Harry.

"I presume she had more than one," said Tom, "but this she particularly impressed upon my mind: 'Always look at a woman's dish-towels,' she would remark with much solemnity. 'No matter how well she plays the piano or sings, or how many languages she can speak, never marry her unless you see that she uses soft, dry towels; and plenty of them, when she wipes her dishes. Be sure that the girl who uses soiled or wet dish towels does not know enough to be the wife of an honest man.'"

Harry laughed at this definition of house-wifely knowledge, but presently he said in a serious tone:

"There is considerable truth in the old lady's ideas after all, but I don't quite understand how, in these days, you can apply the test. Most young ladies that we know have, perhaps, never seen a dish towel. Now I think of it, I promised to introduce you to my cousins. There are three of them, all bright, pretty girls, though I think it doubtful whether they would fulfil your grandmother's requirements as a wife. Still, you may find them pleasant acquaintances, and if you like we will go there now."

"Agreed," responded Tom, and the two friends soon found themselves in the magnificent parlour of Mrs. Renshaw, Harry's aunt.

The young ladies were all at home, and, as Harry said, were bright, pretty girls. Ida, the eldest, was a tall, queenly brunette, whose magnificent black eyes and abundant raven tresses seemed to compel universal admiration, though she had a powerful rival in Adele, the second daughter, whose delicate blonde beauty shewed to fresh advantage beside her more brilliant sister. The two were acknowledged belles in their own circles, and few who knew them ever paused to give a second glance at their younger sister, little Violet. As shy and shrinking as her floral namesake, she avoided the gay assemblages in which her sisters loved to shine, and passed her time pleasantly and peacefully with her books, her music and flowers. She was not present when Harry and his friend entered, but when her cousin, with whom she was a great favourite, asked expressly for her, Miss Adele desired the servant to call her. Tom, who was conversing with Ida, did not notice her entrance until accused by Harry's voice saying:

"Mr. Meredith let me introduce you to my cousin, Miss Violet Renshaw."

And, turning quickly, he was surprised at the sight of the tiny creature, so unlike her elder sister. There was nothing magnificent, and little that could be termed strictly beautiful, in the almost childish figure, but there was something indescribably winning in the clear, gray eyes, and the rich, chestnut curls that clustered about the broad, low brow.

Tom had little time for observation, however, as Ida and Adele claimed all his attention, while Harry monopolized Violet in a frank, brotherly way, quite unlike his more formal and ceremonious manner with the elder sisters.

"Well, what do you think of my two cousins?" was Harry's natural question when he and Tom were once more in the street.

"I can only express my admiration by saying that I wish it were possible to divide myself into three separate and distinct individuals, that I might offer each of the fair enslavers a hand and a heart," replied Tom with much solemnity.

"What, without waiting to discover whether their dish-towels are in proper order?" retorted his friend.

Tom laughed.

"I have a presentiment that I shall forget my reverend grandmother's advice until too late, when the important event of meeting my fate shall arrive."

"And then remember it for the rest of your life, I suppose," observed Harry; "on the principle of 'marrying in haste and repenting at leisure.' Well, I hope my fair cousins will not be the cause of such a catastrophe; but I must leave you here, as I have a patient in the house." And he hastily ran up the steps.

Left to himself, Tom sauntered slowly on, thinking of the young ladies whom he had just seen. It must be confessed that little Violet occupied but a very small portion of his thoughts—which were filled with Ida and Adele.

"But I doubt if either of them ever saw a dish-towel," was his concluding reflection, as he reached his boarding house.

Weeks passed on. Tom was devoted in his attentions to the Misses Renshaw. Rumour assigned him first to Ida, then to Adele, and waited with impatience for the time when the engagement should be publicly announced.

Meanwhile, almost every day brought some good and sufficient excuse for him to call at Mrs. Renshaw's pleasant house, a new poem, the latest song, an invitation for a drive, or a plan for an excursion. Of Violet he saw less than of the other sisters, although they were very friendly, and he treated her with the same brotherly frankness as did Harry.

One lovely June morning he presented himself at Mrs. Renshaw's at quite an early hour, intending to invite the three sisters to pass the beautiful day in a long country drive. He noticed that there was some delay in answering his ring, which was not usually the case with Mrs. Renshaw's well-trained servants; but at length he heard a light footstep, and in another moment the door was opened by Violet. She had a broom in her hand and a dust-cap covered her bright curls; but she bade him good morning with as much cordiality as usual, and inviting him to enter, adding:

"Please walk into the dining room, for I am sweeping the parlours."

Secretly wondering, Tom obeyed. As he turned the handle of the dining room door, there was a sudden rush, a hasty bang at the door, and a hurried exclamation of "O Violet, how could you?" and he found himself in the presence of fair Adele, although for a moment he scarcely recognized her in the slovenly dressed girl, with dishevelled hair, who stood by the breakfast table dabbling the cups and saucers in some greasy water, and wiping them on a towel, which to say the least, was very far from being spotlessly clean. She coloured and with some confusion, said:

"Ah, good morning, Mr. Meredith. So you have come

to find us all at work this morning. It happens that we have for our three servants a brother and sisters. They received this morning the news of their mother's dangerous illness, and mamma at once gave them all permission to go home. We supposed we could get a woman who sometimes does extra work for us, but she was engaged for this day, so we are obliged to do the best we can for ourselves. I assure you," she continued with a little laugh, which Tom had often thought pretty and engaging, but which now sounded false and affected, "that I am by no means accustomed to such work, nor have I any desire to become so."

"Cannot you allow me to assist you?" asked Tom, politely. "I was brought up on a farm, and often washed dishes and made myself generally useful in the kitchen."

"You!" exclaimed Adele, in such an astonishing tone that Tom couldn't forbear laughing.

"Yes, certainly; why not?" asked Tom.

"Oh, I don't know—only I thought—you never did anything," stammered out Adele. Then endeavouring to seem at ease she said: "Yes, if you will help take the teakettle into the kitchen and set it on the stove."

Tom seized the kettle, and throwing open the door leading to the kitchen, was crossing the room towards the stove, when his progress was arrested by the sudden appearance of Ida from the store-room. If Adele looked slovenly and dishevelled, what shall we say of Ida? An old dress, dirty and torn slippers, run down at the heels and burst out at the sides, no collar or ruffle, very little hair, instead of the magnificent tresses he had often admired, and what there was was hanging uncombed about her face, no wonder that Tom stared in blank astonishment.

A heavy frown took the place of the usual smile, as she curtly bade him good morning. Tom muttered an apology for his intrusion, as he deposited his burden on the stove, and turned to retrace his steps just as Violet entered the dining room. She did not see him, but addressing Ida, said:

"Run away now, Ida dear, and dress before callers come for you. I have already sent Adele upstairs, and will finish the dishes, now that I am about done with my sweeping."

"You have been long enough about it, I hope," muttered Ida ungraciously, nevertheless availing herself of her sister's offer with much celerity. "Here are the dish-towels, Violet," extending several greasy, blackened articles to the young girl.

Tom stood meditating an escape; not an easy affair, as the sisters stood directly in his path, but at the word dish-towels, he involuntarily stopped and glanced around.

"No wonder my grandmother cautioned me," was his first thought, as the soiled towel met his sight, and he hastily approved the look of disgust which crossed Violet's face as she laid them aside, and opening a drawer she took from it a splendid supply, soft and clean.

Ida and Adele had both disappeared, and Tom ventured to renew his offer of assistance to Violet, who startled a little, as she for the first time noticed his presence. But she recovered her composure at once, and quietly answered as she deftly filled the dish-pan with clean, hot suds:

"No, thank you, Mr. Meredith. I shall do very well without your assistance. My sisters have not left me much to do. You had better walk into the parlour, and they will soon join you."

"No, indeed," replied Tom. "I will take myself out of the way, with apologies for my untimely intrusion, unless you will really let me be of some service. And believe me," he added, earnestly, with an admiring glance at the neat little figure tripping so lightly about the kitchen, and mentally contrasting her with her two sisters, "you make me happy by allowing me to help you."

"O, very well," said Violet, smiling and blushing a little as she met his gaze. "If you are really in need of employment I'll try and find some for you to do. Suppose you set those dishes on the lower shelf of the closet as I wash them; then I can arrange them after all are done."

Tom obeyed and was rewarded by being allowed to bring a hod of coal from the cellar and doing various other little errands, during which time he was noticing the neatness and despatch with which Violet worked, and was especially observant of the clean, dry dish-towels and the skill with which, when done using them, she washed and scalded and hung them to dry.

He declined the invitation to dinner, given by Mrs. Renshaw when she came in and found him assisting Violet, and made his way directly to Harry's office.

"I have made my choice at last, Harry," he announced, "it is the one who would even suit my grandmother."

"Might I inquire who the fortunate damsel is?" asked Harry, laying down his book; "and how are you sure of your reverend grandmother's approval?"

Tom told his morning's experience, concluding with: "If she will only accept me, I shall be the happiest man alive, and all owing to my dear old grandmother's advice."

QUARREL not rashly with adversities not yet understood, and overlook not the mercies often bound up in them; for we consider not sufficiently the good of evils, nor fairly compute the mercies of Providence in things afflictive at first hand.—*Sir Thomas Browne.*

ALL truly consecrated men learn, little by little, that what they are consecrated to is not joy or sorrow, but a divine idea and a profound obedience, which can find their full outward expression, not in joy and not in sorrow, but in the mysterious and inseparable mingling of the two.—*Phillips Brooks.*

NEVER give way to melancholy. One great remedy is to take short views of life. Are you happy now? Are you likely to remain so till this evening, or next week, or next month, or next year? Then why destroy present happiness by distant misery which may never come at all, or you may never live to see it? For every substantial grief has twenty shadows, and most of them shadows of your own making.—*Sidney Smith.*