



Our Homes.

THE MODEL MOTHER.—Happy would all Christian mothers be, if at the end of their lives they could say they were faithful to their children even in death. And unhappy must those mothers be who hand over their children to the influences of a false education, and when they are dying know they are leaving behind them children who will not even say a prayer for their souls. Their own hearts "a sword shall pierce," but their sorrows shall never be crowned with joy, like Mary's.

IN SIGHT.

Long years, beloved! held us far apart;
A waste of days, the goal beyond our sight;
We only knew by our firm faith in right,
That somehow, some day, bringing heart to heart,
Our ways would meet and never more would part,
And we would both be happy bearing light
To make life's journey for each other bright,
And knowing balm to heal each burning smart.
But now, oh joy! beloved, see the goal!
Behold the glory of that mountain peak!
Ah, sweet! your eyes are lit with happy tears—
A light is in them, laying bare your soul.
A little while, dear love, and all we seek
Will then be ours, to crown the coming years.

THE BRIDAL VEIL.—The bridal veil is of Eastern origin, and among the Anglo-Saxons it was held over the heads of both bride and groom. The orange blossom is the emblem of purity and truth, although in some portions of France the bride is crowned with a myrtle wreath, which is transferred to her hand when she is blindfolded, and the bridesmaids dance about her while she seeks to place the wreath on one of their heads. The one so crowned, it is said, will herself be a bride within the following year. An old superstition prevails to the effect that all pins used in fastening the bridal veil and flowers must be thrown away or ill fortune will come to the bride. How many must have neglected to do this.

A CHILD'S TIME TABLE.

Sixty Seconds in a minute;
Here's your task, so now begin it.
Sixty Minutes in an Hour;
Do your work with all your power.
Twelve good Hours in every Day;
Time for work and time for play.
Twenty-four for Day and Night;
Some for darkness, some for light.
Every Week of Days has Seven;
All are good, since all from Heaven.
Yet the first, the Day of Rest,
Ever must we count the best.
Lunar Months of Weeks have Four;
Calendar, a few days more.
Twelve new Months in every Year;
Each in turn is coming near.
Winter, Summer, Autumn, Spring,
All their pleasant changes ring.
Century!—a Hundred Years;
Leave with Heaven its hopes and fears.

A ROYAL BREAKFAST.—A letter written by Anne Boleyn about three and a half centuries ago has just been published. It was on the occasion of her first visit to London, and the writer describes, among other things, the unfavourable effects produced in her case by the late hours and dissipations of the capital in the early part of the reign of Henry VIII. She writes:—"We rise so late in the morning—seldom before six o'clock—and sit up so late at night—being scarcely in bed before ten—that I am quite sick of it. The irregular life which I have led since I came to this place has quite destroyed my appetite." She then proceeds to mention what was a normal appetite in a healthy English woman at that period. "You know," she writes to her correspondent, "I could manage one pound of bacon and a tankard of good ale for my breakfast in the country, but in London I find it difficult to get through half that quantity."

A Horse-Dealer's Little Ruse.

BY WALTER BLACKBURN HARTE.

The season had been a most disastrous one to the agricultural community throughout Great Britain, in consequence of a long continued drought, combined with an almost unprecedented depression of the markets all over the world, and an unusually large wheat crop in India, which completely demoralized prices and drove English competition out of the market. There was a general stagnation of trade, and great failures were of daily occurrence; but the greatest distress prevailed in the agricultural districts, and among the many sufferers was Mr. William Flewelling, of the Oak-tree Farm, Knobbing, Greenshire.

He was living with the sword of Damocles, in the shape of bankruptcy and ruin, trembling over his head. It was a heavy heart, which he carried silently in his bosom through many a weary day of anxious apprehension; and many a sleepless night he passed staring the grim future in the face, and trying to discover a loophole of escape from the web of difficulties which entangled him. It was not for himself that he cared, but he was married, and had given hostages to Fortune, and the thought that his little ones might soon be crying at his knees for bread and he not able to give it to them, sent the blood with a hot rush through his veins, and made his heart turn sick. He was no longer a young man, and had been engaged in agricultural pursuits from his youth up, and was ignorant of aught else in life, so what could he do? That was the question which revolved unceasingly in his mind. He never knew when he arose at early dawn to perform his daily toil, which once had been a pleasure to him, and was now such a hopeless making of bricks without straw, but that the long expected thunderbolt might not fall before the sun set. He had dreaded it so long that it would almost have been a relief to know the worst, instead of living through years of misery in anticipation, and yet when he looked at his wife and children he still dreaded it, and prayed to that Heaven, which always preserves such a stilly silence, to defer the evil hour. He had for a long while by one means and another managed to obtain a reprieve and avoid a crisis; but it could not last much longer, and the inevitableness of it all, ate into his life like a cancer. His heart was devoid of all hope; only despair and a terrible expectancy, which was a perpetual thorn in his side, remained. Life to him had become a burden, but he bravely clung to it for the sake of his little ones. There is often more heroism in living for others than in laying down one's life for them. As an old philosopher tersely put it: "Sometimes to live is magnanimity."

When he met any of his neighbours down in the village he endeavoured, with what poor success he half divined himself, to laugh and talk cheerfully for the sake of keeping up appearances, but it was with a sense of being arraigned at the bar before a prejudiced jury that he did so, and he longed all the time to get away and be alone with his sorrow. He knew, by a thousand and one little signs, that nearly everybody more than suspected his position, and that he and his affairs had long been a topic of conversation in every tap-room in the village. He knew that in his absence well-disposed folks said "Poor devil!" if his name was mentioned in conversation, and then charitably began to recall his imprudencies. It's the way of the world. Probably in happier days, in the arrogance of prosperity he had exercised the same charity himself in speaking of an unfortunate acquaintance. We poor mortals are so blind, and are possessed of such short memories.

But, ah, it's a terrible comedy in which to play a principal rôle this keeping up of appearances! To die rotting on a battle field, and hear the troops departing in the distance, and lie there forsaken and forgotten by the whole world is not harder. There, at least, a man need not hide the agony he feels. He is alone with his God, who in His infinite compassion will release him from his desolation. The struggle is bitter, but it is short. In the world, however, when a man falls, the circle

in which he moved is as uninterested as if he were a sparrow, yet he dare not cry out in his agony, because a thousand eyes are upon him, all as watchful as the carrion birds, which swoop above the dying soldier in his solitude, ready to fall upon his body when he has no longer strength to defend himself. And once he is down he is dismissed from all further consideration with a shrug of the shoulders, or a couple of empty phrases between two mouthfuls at dinner.

Hope is a pillar of fire flying before all men; lighting each one according to his aspirations and ambition through his individual Gehenna; only those who have been suddenly left in mid stream to grope through the valley in darkness, with precious souls upon their shoulders, fully comprehend the bitterness of poverty. Wickedness, especially if it be blatant and brazen, the world can condone; successful roguery commands its respect and as much moral whitewashing as may be desired, but poverty is too heinous a crime to merit even a backward glance of pity.

It was in the fall of the year. The crops were in and stacked in three miserable little ricks, already mortgaged, and the blustering autumn winds were beginning to assume their fierce autocracy over the fallen leaves. Flewelling, in order to save a little something from the wreck of his fortunes, and also to appease certain of his most pressing creditors, and keep a roof over the heads of his wife and family, had anticipated the auctioneer's hammer, and disposed of the greater portion of his farming implements, for which he had no further use as the season had closed, and all the best blood in his stables, with the exception of one colt, which, as he put it, "had a great future before him." In this colt were centred all his hopes. He had kept him back as long as possible, and would have liked to have been able to keep him a year or two longer, when he would naturally become much more valuable, but now this was not practicable, and he hoped that he might realize sufficient money upon the colt to meet some of his most urgent liabilities. Quarter day was close at hand, and he was already two quarters in arrears; the tax collector, too, would soon be round again, and every mail brought empty demands for settlement, or in default of the money being immediately forthcoming, threatening the institution of legal proceedings.

Such was the condition of affairs at the Oak-tree farm. When, therefore, Mr. Julius Smart, a horse-dealer, resident in the neighbouring village of Great Swingerton, of which he was one of the leading spirits, drove over to Knobbing one fine morning, in a high dog-cart, very rakish in appearance, and drawn by a tall, high-stepping trotting horse, a decided flutter of pleasant expectation ran through Mr. Flewelling's establishment. Mr. Smart's advent had much the same effect upon the household of the Oak-tree farm as a wave of heat does upon a thermometer. Everybody's spirits rose immediately. The general joy even infected "Trix," a big retriever dog, who ran out to the gate and greeted the visitor with sundry friendly barks. Usually "Trix" was too lazy and unconcerned to leave his kennel to notice persons whom he conceived to be calling upon merely business errands, and simply regarded such persons from his snug quarters with half shut sleepy eyes in a sort of superior and cynical manner. He reserved his enthusiasm for the reception of friends. He was quite above dissimulation on all ordinary occasions, and in this and many other particulars displayed an inconsequent integrity, which is generally more characteristic of dogs than of their masters. Of course, the object of Mr. Smart's visit was to examine the colt, which he had heard Mr. Flewelling was *disposed* to sell. Mr. Flewelling himself appeared in better spirits than he had done for many months, and with an hospitality born of his exuberant joy and the confidence he reposed in the colt, he pressed Mr. Smart to dine with him *en famille*, before proceeding to business. Nothing loth, after his drive in the keen air, Mr. Smart readily consented.

"The dinner was served up and waiting," said Mrs. Flewelling, putting her head out of the kit-