

Now at that hour before supper, a man who had a long ride in the morning, and done hard work all afternoon, and felt himself generous in his battlings with selfish promptings, does not feel in the mood to receive in the best manner disagreeable news. Blyth did not bear opposition very well. He had something rugged in his nature; a far away strain of fierce Northman's blood, inherited through long generations from his ancestors, and made him chafe when fate or others' wills crossed his; a different nature from the easy-tempered, idolent folk of those parts.

So now, though Joy had won the day, he was sorely vexed at heart.

There was silence in the parlor for it seemed, a long time. The tall clock standing in the corner ticked on. The rain pattered down with ceaseless pertinacity. Blyth caught himself thinking suddenly that it would rain for days now, probably, and that he could do little good at work on the farm, he might as well be away; except that his father was not strong enough for it to be left to leave him if Joy were gone. Several days' rain, and bad for delicate women to be journeying; while to the threshing his presence would make little difference. Says a well-known but defamatory rhyme of that poor country;

"The west wind always brings wet weather,
The east wind cold and wet together;
The south wind surely brings us rain,
The north wind blows it back again."

Fitter, patter! drip, drip! And still Joy sat without stirring at one side of the large mahogany dinner-table, looking away out of the low, wide window fringed with her favorite creepers, whose wet tendrils-fingers tapped the panes; her thoughts directed even far, further than the distant gaze of her eyes.

And still Blyth Berrington sitting at the end of the table, on which he had planted his elbow in a sturdy, aggrieved manner, rested his head in the hollow of his hand, watching her. He seemed to note as never before the details of the old room he had known from boyhood; for he was asking himself how it would look soon without that figure to which his eyes always turned, wherever she might be, as to their centre of attraction. The walls wainscoted in dark wood, and low ceiling, whitewashed, but creased by beams of wood unspiced by paint; deep window recesses, with their cupboard seats and heavy lattices, generally in the days opened outwards into the garden, while Joy's rose-leaves were dried on the wall.

It was a dark room pleasant to him hitherto; it might easily become gloomy.

The heavy table filling all the centre of the room shone with a mellow, dark glow, fully answering to the care and frequent polishing of many years. The same tale was silently told by the solid square arm-chairs and the big side-board on which stood the silver cups won at the agricultural shows and at wrestling-matches. Two faded foxes' heads and some brushes, the gifts of his own youthful exploits, adorned the mantle shelf. Some shelves of old-fashioned books, some on fardriery, the others mostly godly, and that had belonged to his mother, represented the literature of the Berrington household.

Most comfortable; most respectable! But of lightness, of color, of beautiful outline, or ought to cheer the eyes, what was there in the room but Joy herself—with her glorious eyes, her rich complexion, her exquisite poise of her beautiful head, the noble, easy grace of her figure as she sat there so still? She was like a faded exotic flower, a tropical bright-colored bird under a gray northern sky—she was going away! who knew for how long?

A sigh from Blyth broke the silence. Joy started if thrilled at the light sound. "You are wet, you are all wet, Blyth, I have been keeping you here. How cold, how careless of me!"

"Never mind my wetting. It won't hurt me," curtly replied the young man, yet not ungraciously, rather with gruff resignation.

"Only I wanted to ask, Joy—if you must go on this unknown expedition—will you not, or at least be helped, by some small sum, for your travelling and inquiries will cost money, you see. What is mine would be dear, from now. Consider it yours before, and let me feel I am giving that which I am not to do more, in the end."

Joy's cheeks glowed of a beautiful crimson for a few seconds.

"You are always so kind, always so generous!" (Ah! was he? That amote him in the conscience.) "But indeed we have been already far too much like the plagues of Egypt upon you. Aunt Rachel and I have got some money truly; enough to last us for some months."

"Plagues of Egypt! What an idea! More like the Israelites, who were a blessed people, for whom the plagues were sent because they were ill-treated. But excuse me, Joy dearest, you can't have much!"

"Indeed, dear Blyth, though I must not explain how, we have got a good deal. If it is not enough, then indeed I might borrow some because I can repay it from my little fortune when I come of age."

"For some months—and then more! How long, in Heaven's name, do you suppose you will be away? A year?—say two years just as well! Well, well, well! I will say no more against it all."

Thereupon Blyth rose, and, walking heavily, went out of the room and up the shallow, dark stairs; each of his steps echoed dully by the beats in Joy's heart.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Blessings of Beauty.

One says, it has been wet; and another, it has been windy; and another, it has been warm. Who, among the whole chattering crowd, can tell me of the forms and precipices of the chain of tall, white mountains that girded the horizon at noon yesterday? Who saw the narrow sunbeam that came out of the south, and smote upon their summits till they melted and mouldered away in a dust of blue rain? Who saw the dance of the dead clouds when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it like withered leaves? All has passed, unregretted as unseen; or if the apathy be ever shaken off, even for an instant, it is only by what is gross, or what is extraordinary; and yet it is not in the broad and fierce manifestations of the elemental energies, not in the clash of the hail, nor the drift of the whirlwind, that the highest characters of the sublime are developed. God is not in the earthquake nor in the fire; but in the still small voice. They are but the blunt and low faculties of our nature, which can only be addressed through lamp-black and lightning. It is in quiet and subdued passages of an obtrusive majesty, the deep and the calm, and the perpetual; that must be sought ere it is seen, and loved ere it is understood; things which the angels work out for us daily, and yet vary eternally; which are never wanting, and never repeated; which are to be found always, yet each found but once; it is through these that the lesson of devotion is chiefly taught, and the blessing of beauty given.

On The Study of Words.

There are few who would not acknowledge that mainly in worthy books are preserved and hoarded the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which the world has accumulated, and that chiefly by aid of these they are handed down from one generation to another. I shall urge on you something different from this—namely, that not in books only, which all acknowledge, nor yet in connected oral discourse, but often also in words contemplated singly, there are boundless stores of moral and historic truth, and no less of passion and indignation laid up—that from these lessons of infinite worth may be derived, if only our attention is roused to their existence. I shall urge on you how well it will repay you to study the words which you are in the habit of using or of meeting, be they such as relate to highest spiritual things, or our common words of the shop or the market, and of all the family intercourse of life. It will, indeed, repay you far better than you can easily believe.—*Archbishop Trench.*

Discontent with one's life as it is and ambitious endeavor to make it better is a wholesome state when kept in due subjection to reason and common-sense, but wholesome only when we can really do something to help ourselves, not when we merely lunge and complain and refuse to make the best of what we cannot possibly change, growl and protest as we may.

The End of Great Soldiers.

Happening to cast my eyes upon a printed page of miniature portraits, I perceived that the four personages who occupied the four most conspicuous places were Alexander, Hannibal, Cesar, and Bonaparte. I had seen them unnumbered times before, but never did the same sensation arise in my bosom, as my mind hastily glanced over their several histories.

Alexander—after having climbed the dizzy heights of his ambition, and with his temple bound with chaplets, dipped in the blood of countless nations, looked down upon a conquered world and wept that there was not another world for him to conquer—set a city on fire and died in a scene of debauch.

Hannibal—after having, to the astonishment and consternation of Rome, passed the Alps—after having put to flight the armies of this "mistress of the world," and stripped three bushels of golden rings from the fingers of her slaughtered knights, and made her very foundations quake—fled from his country, hated by those who had exultingly united his name to that of their god, and called him Hanni Baal—and died at last by poison, administered by his own hands, unlamented and unwept in a foreign land.

Cesar—after having conquered eight hundred cities, and dyed his garments in the blood of one million of his foes—after having pursued to death the only rival he had on earth—was miserably assassinated by those he considered as his nearest friends, and in that very place the attainment of which had been his greatest ambition.

Bonaparte—whose mandate kings and popes obeyed, after having filled the earth with the terror of his name; after having deluged Europe with tears and blood, and clothed the world in sackcloth—closed his days in lonely banishment, almost literally exiled from the world, yet where he could sometimes see his country's banner waving over the deep, but which would not, or could not, bring him aid!

Thus, those four men, who, from the peculiar situation of their portraits, seemed to stand as the representatives of all those whom the world call great—those four, who each in turn made the earth tremble to the very centre by their simple tread—severally died, one by intoxication, or, as some suppose, by poison mingled in his wine; one a suicide; one assassinated by his friends; and one a lonely exile!

Genius and Hard Work.

There is in the present day an overplus of raving about genius and its prescriptive rights of vagabondage, its irresponsibility, and its insubordination to all the laws of common sense. Common sense is so prosaic! Yet it appears from the history of art that the real men of genius did not rave about anything of the kind. They were resolute workers and not idle dreamers. They knew that their genius was not a phrenzy, not a supernatural thing at all, but simply the colossal proportions of faculties which, in a lesser degree, the meanest of mankind shared with them. They knew that whatever it was, it would not enable them to accomplish with success the things they undertook unless they devoted their whole energies to the task. Would Michael Angelo have built St. Peter's, sculptured the Moses, and made the walls of the Vatican sacred with the presence of his gigantic pencil, had he awaited inspiration while his works were in progress? Would Rubens have dazzled all the galleries of Europe had he allowed his brush to hesitate? Would Beethoven and Mozart have poured out their souls into such abundant melodies? Would Goethe have written the sixty volumes of his works—had they not often, very often, sat down like drudges to an unwilling task, and found themselves speedily engrossed with that to which they were so averse?—*G. H. Lewes*

One of the commonest mistakes made by parents is to ignore the fact that their children are growing up. They remain simply boys and girls to their fathers and mothers, while everybody else sees plainly that they are already menaced by the dangers which beset the early maturity of life.

PEARLS OF TRUTH.

No man ever offended his own conscience, but first or last it was revenged on him for doing it.

If the key note of all your conduct to others had its spring in a fine self-reverence, there would be no discourtesies.

Many a man shall never cease talking about small sacrifices he makes; but he is a great man who can sacrifice everything and say nothing.

Only the true man can really be brave, only the righteous man walk through the darkness and face with a serene soul the mystery of life.

Persons extremely reserved are like old enamelled watches, which had painted covers which hindered your seeing what o'clock it was.

"The greatest folly," said Sancho, "that a man can commit in this world, is to give himself up to death without any good cause for it, but only from melancholy."

Far sweeter music to a true woman than the tone of a harp or a piano touched by her hand are the cheerful voices of husband and children, made joyous by her presence.

Blessed is the man who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. Know your work and do it, and work at it like Hercules. One monster there is in the world—the idle man.

The difficulties of education lie deeper down than the criticism. It is not so much finding out what to teach that is needful; the all-important thing is how to develop the mental and moral energies.

Talk about those subjects you have had long in your mind, and listen to what others say about subjects you have studied but recently. Knowledge and timber should not be much used until they are seasoned.

Enthusiasm is the glow of the soul; enthusiasm is the lever by which men are raised above the average level and enterprise, and become capable of goodness and benevolence which, but for it, would be quite impossible.

He that has never changed any of his opinions has never corrected any of his mistakes, and he who was never wise enough to find out any mistakes in himself will assuredly not be charitable enough to excuse what he reckons mistakes in others.

Our powers are limited. No one ever saw the whole of anything, however simple it may appear; and the more complex the object, the smaller the fraction that we behold. If we but realize this fully, it will go far toward dispelling prejudice and broadening our outlook.

If we would avoid moral intolerance, we must cultivate our imagination, widen our sympathies, search for excellence rather than defects, and give a generous and ready honor to those virtuous qualities which we ourselves lack, and which, from habit, we have come to esteem lightly.

Do not be troubled because you have not great virtues. God made a million spears of grass where He made one tree. The earth is fringed and carpeted not with forests, but with grasses. Only have enough of little virtues and common fidelities and you need not mourn because you are neither a hero nor a saint.

The sorrow which appears to us nothing but a yawning chasm or hideous precipice may turn out to be but the joining or cement which binds together the fragments of our existence into a solid whole. That dark and crooked path in which we have to grope our way in doubt or fear may be but the curve which in the full daylight of a brighter world will appear to be the necessary finish of some choice ornament, the inevitable span of our majestic arch.

The great art—not duty—which women have to learn, is, says a living writer, how to make the best use, in its own time, of the various kinds of attraction, the various sorts of charms practicable by them, each beautiful in its way, but only perfect when in harmony with age and condition. For instance the simplicity of a child is silliness in a full-grown girl; the unsuspecting frankness of a girl is loose-lippedness and undignified want of reticence in a woman; the instinctive coquetry and desire to excite admiration and love in a maiden become folly and heartlessness and a fixed habit of inconstancy and, as time goes on, a ghastly craving in a matron; and so on through the whole list.