



VOL. XIX.—No. 928.]

OCTOBER 9, 1897.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.

HOW WE FURNISHED OUR FIRST HOME FOR £150.



All rights reserved.]

THE DRAWING-ROOM.

THE DINING-ROOM AND DRAWING-ROOM.

THERE are two classes of people who rarely sit in their drawing-room. Those who live in castles, possessing libraries, studies and boudoirs, and the lower middle class who like to live in a dining-room. As one of my chief objects is to make our house thoroughly comfortable as well as artistic, I preface my description of the drawing-room by saying that no efforts can ever make it home-like unless we sit in it. I flatter myself that the dining-room is too severely simple to make anyone wish to spend their evenings there. It is, I am well aware, quite possible for the pendulum to swing too far the other way, and I should be very sorry to have cutting out, dressmaking, or any litter in the drawing-room. I am considering the furniture for the dining-room and drawing-room in one article for the following reason. If our rooms are small, it is an immense advantage to have them open out of each other. In this case they must be papered alike. Have a white dado of anaglypta or the new parquetry (thin wood panelling). If the room faces south or west, a plain grass green paper will look well. If north or east I would suggest cream coloured ground (a yellow paper has become too common) with bunches of yellow carnations and green leaves. The panelled dado should be painted white or brown. Rooms in small houses are already too low; it is therefore wiser to avoid a frieze. If money were no object, I would choose a soft, almost self-coloured pile carpet, but to us the price is prohibitive. A green Roman one with a conventional design is equally artistic, or a rich havana brown with unassertive pattern in green.

With regard to furniture, we must try to have a few good things (which can be handed on to our children as possessions), and we must avoid over-crowding. Nothing destroys the restfulness of a room more than a number of meaningless ornaments and small pictures. If you must keep frippery, stow it away in boxes. Have no pictures unless they are really good. The sum we have to spend is so limited that we must economise somewhere. The dining-room table, though covered with a self-coloured artistic cloth, has only a deal top; in a word, it is a kitchen-table with folding leaves which can be easily moved out at any time. If you can afford to pay £2, an old oak one with turned legs is, of course, more artistic. Our illustration shows you the kind I mean. It is not necessary to sketch one with a deal top.

Directly you can afford it buy an old oak Welsh dresser with shelves for china, or a Sheraton sideboard. For the present, the carved oak chest which I picked up for £2 (covered during meals with a sideboard cloth) must do. A low wooden cupboard fills up the recess on the right of the fireplace. This can be stained dark mahogany. Any clever boy who has learnt carving will for 10s. carve some artistic panels. The small writing-table with turned legs on the other side of the fireplace can be bought at most second-hand furniture shops for 4s. 9d. Covered with an Indian cloth which costs 1s. 0½d. (during the sales), with a brass in-stand, candlesticks, and green blotting-book, it answers every purpose. Directly we can afford to replace it with a better one it can be transferred to the spare room. It is only by strict economy that we can afford old Chippendale chairs. They are covered with remnants of quaint green tapestry which I need hardly say I bought during the July sales. For the present I have put some into the drawing-room, but for any occasions when we require more than six (including the two elbow chairs) we have two others to complete the set. It is a good plan to have castors put on to the dining-table.

It can then be more easily moved out on an "At Home" day.

The most important piece of furniture is a thoroughly comfortable sofa. Pretty looking ones can be had for £3 10s.; but I have committed the extravagance of choosing the very best pillow-seated Chesterfield. Go where you will, this particular kind is not to be had under £10, although I am well aware that they can often be picked up at a sale in a gentleman's house for £5. A good hair-seated one can be bought new for £7 10s., but ours will last a life-time, and comfort, to my mind, is beauty. Had you ever been, as I have, to an old furniture shop and seen the thin coating of hair covering, the hay and shavings which compose the seats of many chairs, you would realise that "stuffed with the best hair" is to be taken *cum grano salis*.

The most comfortable place for the sofa is on one side of the drawing-room fireplace, jutting out in a straight line with a screen behind it to keep away the draught from the door. In a large room a second Chesterfield sofa exactly facing the fireplace almost touching the rug, always looks cosy.

No room can be lovable without books, so, after many peregrinations to various second-hand shops, I found an ideal piece of furniture at an exceptionally reasonable dealer's, who really understands furniture. It is a Chippendale china cupboard and book-case combined, the latter is below, the china above. The doors have the unmistakable Chippendale woodwork dividing the irregular shaped panes of glass. If you have no old china, real self can be bought very cheaply nowadays. In any case blue china looks best with this particular wood. Fourteen pounds is a long price to pay, but it is a joy for ever, and no less than £22 was charged for a similar one (only less beautiful) in the West End. If you dislike the very cheap temporary writing-table in the drawing-room, a cupboard for china, like the one I have described, is to be had for the same price, with a bureau and drawers below.

Our next purchase shall be a revolving book-table. I was amazed to find I could get a very good one for 25s., and the top makes an excellent stand for a pot of ferns, and a framed photograph of a valued friend. A really good Chippendale screen costs from £10 to £20. The only way therefore is to order one to be made specially for you from a good design. A mahogany frame with glass above, and green tapestry (almost self-coloured) in the lower half can be made for £2. If you are content with a guinea one avoid the inartistic black Japanese screens with gold birds. I prefer the plainest wooden frame (even a light clothes horse) stained mahogany, and fitted in with a very lovely thick paper, yellow or green with purple irises; but I strongly advise the glass and tapestry, though the cost is 27s. more.

In the dining-room, the basket-work couch has good springs, and is thoroughly comfortable. The green mattress is covered with a remnant of tapestry. The cushions should be terra cotta or yellow silk, which depends on the paper you choose. If you are fortunate enough to find a really good Chesterfield sofa at a private sale you can afford two. The basket chair is upholstered in brown. It is treble the price usually given, and six times as comfortable. Without it we must have had a pillow-seated arm-chair costing £5, and dispensed with our Chippendale cabinet. Do you ask why I insist on a sofa in a dining-room. Simply because a young wife often has to rest where there is a fire, and visitors may be shown in at any moment into the drawing-room. Except on an "At Home" day the curtains between the two rooms will be drawn. A folding up tea-table is the most convenient. The estimate of cost together with our sketch will explain any further details.

The curtains are of artistic lettuce green Bolton sheeting with a design of fleur de lis (I have only seen this particular kind at one place in London), but blue or brown Friesland velvet would look quite as well.

I will only add one word of caution. Your furniture may be beautiful and well chosen, yet it is only too easy to spoil the effect by a variety of ornaments given by well-meaning friends. They must find a place elsewhere! I happen to like blue china best, but Devonshire ware, or any other artistic pottery looks well. Avoid multiplying photograph frames. One good copy of an Old Master—a "Morland" engraving, or two genuine Bartolozzi prints are enough pictures for the present. Miniatures, if you have any, always look well hung very low above the chimney-piece. Much is necessarily left unsaid, but I shall be delighted to answer any questions. We cannot yet afford a Chippendale glass, but it is just possible some kind friends may give you a cheque for a wedding-present. Taking this into consideration I have chosen a Chippendale glass to be hung above the chimney-piece.

ESTIMATE, DINING-ROOM.

	£	s.	d.
Four Chippendale chairs at 30s.	6	0	0
Panels for cupboard and staining	0	10	0
Roman carpet or green Brussels, with a nondescript pattern of a slightly darker shade	4	0	0
Writing-table 4s 9d., instand			
1s. 11d., candlesticks 3s. 11d.	0	10	7
Blotter 4s. 11d., cloth 1s. 0½ l.	0	5	11½
Basket chair with springs	1	8	0
Ditto sofa	2	10	0
Iron tripod oak scuttle 2s. 11d., tongs 3s.	0	5	11
Old brass fender 25s., fire-irons 10s. 6d.*	1	15	6
Table with wooden top	0	14	6
Four yards art sheeting for curtains, 1s. 11d.	0	7	8
Plain table-cloth in serge or cloth	0	8	0
Eight yards muslin, for curtains.	0	4	0
Brass rod	0	4	0
Four footstools at 10d.	0	3	4
Second-hand print	0	10	0
Blue china for chimney piece	0	6	0
Grandfather clock £2, or corner cupboard oak dresser £8 10s. (later)	2	0	0
Friesland velvet curtains between the two rooms, four yards at 3s. 11d., rod 4s.	0	19	8
	£23	3	1½

DRAWING-ROOM.

Two Chippendale elbow chairs	4	0	0
One Chesterfield sofa	10	0	0
One pillow-seated arm-chair	5	0	0
One Chippendale bureau and cabinet †	14	0	0
Three stained green chairs 3s. 6d.	0	10	6
One wicker arm-chair with springs	1	8	0
One carriage clock £1, china for chimney-piece 5s.	1	5	0
One Roman carpet	2	2	0
One Eastern rug	0	10	0
Two occasional Bavarian carved oak tables, 7s. 6d.	0	15	0
One tea-table with flaps	1	0	0
One screen to order	2	0	0
Brass fender 25s., fire-irons 10s.	1	15	0
Coal box 2s. 11d., rug 3s.	0	5	11
Revolving table for books	1	5	0
Window-seat (made by village carpenter) and upholstered	1	0	0

* At a favourite old furniture shop such as, no doubt, my readers have.

† I cannot include these in the estimate unless you are content with arm-chairs at 25s., which are comfortable and look much the same, but cannot last so long.

Drawing-room continued.

High plant stand	£	s.	d.
Two cushions 7s. 6d.	0	7	6
Eight yards book muslin for curtain	0	15	0
Four yards art sheeting for curtains at 1s. 11d.	0	7	8
Brass rod	0	4	0
	£48	14	7

THE BEDROOMS.

The walls of the best bedroom are hung with an expensive paper. The ground is creamy white, with trails of pink monthly roses in stripes. The curtains are chintz, with pale pink roses and green trails lined with a deeper shade of the same colour. The suite I like better than any I have ever seen for the price—in my many peregrinations to shops all over London, it is stained green wood. The cost is £13. The carpet is olive-green, with a conventional pattern in pale terra-cotta, the bedspread white covered with an olive-green conventional pattern almost touches the floor, thus doing away with the necessity for any valance. The very lovely bedroom I have in my mind had a green silk eider-down over the bedspread, but this we must dispense with for the present. Perhaps I had better say the carpet in this instance was dark olive-green and terra-cotta. A rich Eastern rug repeated the same colours and the curtains were of Bolton sheeting, the ground of pale terra-cotta well covered with a pattern of a slightly deeper shade. It certainly is a room that rests one's eyes. The arm-chair had a chintz cover with bunches of roses. The iron bedstead is painted white.

Green stained suite	£	s.	d.
Carpet	13	0	0
Curtains four yards at 1s. 11d.	0	7	8
Four yards muslin at 4½ l.	0	1	6
Iron bedstead spring mattress	7	9	0
Upholstered wicker chair	0	8	6
Writing-table	0	4	9
Fender and fire-irons	0	3	9
Side table	0	15	0
Bath rug	0	3	11
Basket for soiled linen	0	3	6
Envelope case and blotter	0	5	6
Brass inkstand 1s. 11d., candlesticks 1s. 11d.	0	3	10
Self-coloured terra-cotta Liberty toilet set	0	15	0
Glass and bottle	0	1	6
Blue china for chimney-piece	0	4	0
Waste paper basket	0	2	11
Iron cauldron for coal	0	2	11
Screen	0	5	11
	£26	17	2

Dressing room

5 8 6

The dressing-room has a paper to match the bedroom. In one corner is a small Sheraton corner wash-stand. It cost 22s. second-hand. The jug and basin are old spode. I picked them up at a bric-a-brac shop at Southwold for 9s. 6d., and the Sheraton chest of drawers was £2 10s. at a sale. The glass is an old Chippendale one, and cost 27s. This room has a small fireplace, having, I believe, been intended for a bachelor's bedroom. The addition of an arm-chair, book-shelves, and a table, would make it a comfortable little study, quite as large as the sanctuary of a friend of mine (a clergyman who manages to read a good deal). The curtains would match those in the adjoining bedroom. The total cost was £5 8s. 6d.

THE SPARE ROOM.

The spare room has a very pretty soft pale brown paper with green leaves and a cream-coloured frieze with pink wisteria. Exactly the same things will be required as for the other bedroom. The bedspread is pink, with



THE DINING-ROOM.

brown leaves; the carpet a blue Roman one with a brown conventional pattern. The curtains brown serge, lined with pale pink muslin ones. The china on the chimney-piece is Devonshire pottery yellow and blue. The Liberty toilet set can be brown (self-coloured) or yellow, whichever you prefer. The furniture is Sheraton. The wash-stand is a bargain, for it only cost £2. The chest of drawers, £4 10s.* has delightfully deep drawers, which roll in and out. Happily there is a wardrobe cupboard, but this is not the case everywhere. I therefore allow 25s. to have doors and pegs put in the recess to the right of the fireplace. The Chippendale glass was 27s.* A small low chest of drawers takes the place of a dressing-table. The bath room is used as a dressing-room to this room.

The sum fixed is so very small that we cannot even afford 2s. 4d. for a small table at the side of the bed, unless we dispense with a waste-paper basket. In this case stain the table green, or cover it with a remnant of the tapestry and plain serge. On the whole I think I would rather have only a bag for paper than be without a table for a candle, matches, or cup of tea.

SPARE ROOM.

Low Sheraton chest of drawers	£	s.	d.
Chippendale glass	4	10	0
Hanging cupboard in recess	1	7	0
Washstand	1	5	0
Carpet	2	0	0
Carpet	2	0	0
Curtains (as in other room)	0	7	8
Muslin curtains	0	1	6
Bed and bedding	7	9	0
Arm-chair	0	12	6
Writing-table	0	4	9
Bath	0	15	0

* From a wonderful old furniture shop.

Fender and fire-irons	£	s.	d.
Glass and bottle 1s., clothes-basket 3s. 6d.	0	3	9
Ink-stand, candlesticks, one chair, blotter, etc.	0	4	6
Clock 2s. 11d., coal cauldron, 2s. 11d.	0	7	4
Screen 4s. 11d., bath rug 3s. 11d.	0	5	10
	0	8	10
	£22	2	8

N. B. A very pretty suite in white wood (with Adams' design) or ash can be had for £5, but this good furniture is worth the extra £4.

BATH ROOM.

Framed glass 3s. 11d., bath rug, 3s. 11d.	£	s.	d.
Chair	0	7	10
Wire basket 1s., soap dish 8d.	0	3	6
Curtains, two yards sheeting at 1s. 11d.	0	1	8
Two yards linoleum at 2s. 11d.	0	3	10
	0	5	10
	£1	2	8

YOUNG LADY'S ROOM.

A very pretty rug large enough for the centre of this small room can be bought for 9s. 6d. The particularly pretty suite is white with a raised pattern, reminding one of Adams' chimney-pieces. It can be got at many London shops for £5. The wardrobe has a plate-glass door, a dressing-table with glass, a washstand, two chairs and a towel rail. The small iron spring bedstead, mattress and pillows will be £2 2s. Fender and fire-irons 1s. 9d. Clothes basket 3s. 6d. This room with a green paper and frieze of pink wisteria, a pink linen bedspread with green leaves, a

green carpet and pink and green cretonne curtains would make a dainty little room for any girl friend.

	£	s.	d.
Single spring bed and bedding	2	2	0
Clothes basket	0	3	6
White suite	5	0	0
Rug	0	9	6
Fender and fire-irons	0	3	9
Four yards of chintz 6½-l. (remnant)	0	2	2
Linen for bedspread and green thread	0	3	6
Coal basket (shaded green)	0	1	0½
Toilet ware pink and green	0	7	0
Bottle and glass	0	1	0
	£8	13	11½

SERVANTS' ROOM.

Fender and fire-irons	0	1	9
Two strips of green drugging at 1s. 11d.	0	3	10
Glass and water bottle	0	1	0
One chest of drawers	1	2	6
One iron bedstead with spring mattress	0	16	6
One best wool mattress	0	16	6
Two pillows	0	10	0
One glass	0	3	11
One washstand	0	8	6
Bath	0	12	0
Towel rail	0	2	6
Two chairs	0	5	0
Four yards cretonne for curtains at 6d.	0	2	0
	£5	6	0

Pale terra-cotta paper and green curtains and carpet.

My readers may be disappointed that I have only furnished four bedrooms, but it must be remembered that the dressing-room was formerly a bedroom. Most estimates given in catalogues for furnishing omit much that we have included, e.g., baths, coal-boxes, screens, curtains, carpets and pictures, for, strictly speaking, they do not come under the head of furnishing. I do not anticipate that newly-married people obliged to consider every penny in furnishing, will want more than one spare room, but we must take into consideration the probability of a nursery being wanted, hence the wisdom of furnishing our fifth room.

The deficit of 13s. 2d. can be met by ordering two pretty toilet sets at 7s. 6d. for the two best bedrooms instead of the 15s. ones.

Those of my readers who can afford to spend a little more than the sum fixed by our Editor need not dispense with one thing so carefully chosen, for it is no exaggeration to say that I have spent weeks planning how it is possible to buy possessions and at the same time furnish a pretty house for so very little.

It is quite impossible to include linen in the £150, but it is considered the bridegroom's duty to provide this also. Bachelors not living at home may be glad to have an idea of the cost. During the sales two first-rate shops, usually considered (by those who don't know) too expensive for "poor people," have the best and cheapest linen I have ever seen anywhere. I give below the minimum quantity:—

Usual price. Sale price.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Two pairs of cotton sheets for servant at 7s. 11d.	1	5	6	0	15	10
Four pairs of linen sheets	4	5	0	2	18	4
One pair of servant's blankets	0	17	6	0	10	10
One pair ditto	0	9	11	0	3	5½
Three pairs of blankets at 24s. 9d.	3	13	0	1	16	10½
One pair of under-blankets	0	17	0	0	10	0
One dozen linen filled pillow-slips at 2s. 6d.	1	13	0	0	11	0
One dozen dinner napkins	0	11	0	0	6	11
One dozen ditto	2	7	6	1	3	6
One dozen huckaback towels	0	9	11	0	4	4
One dozen fine linen	1	1	6	0	8	0
Six bath towels (white)	0	7	0	0	5	3
Two best table-cloths	3	11	0	1	10	0
Four double damask at 22s. 6d.	4	10	0	2	5	6
Three dozen dusters at 2s. 11d.	0	8	0	0	2	10½
One dozen kitchen cloths	0	5	0	0	3	0
Six glass cloths	0	3	4	0	2	7½
Four roller towels at 1s. 3d.	0	0	0	0	5	0

20 17 4½ 11 11 1

China and glass may be got at one of the best London sales for wonderfully little. A blue breakfast service, in shape and colour very like old Salopian china, a friend bought for 7s. 6d., and a lovely dinner service, the small size, e.g., for twelve people, can be bought during the sales for 25s. The following items were got at a first-rate London shop.

In the estimate I have given for linen I quote the exact prices paid at Hampton's last year during their sale. The cost is almost half the ordinary price. Soiled linen may sometimes be got even cheaper, and of course it is equally good.

CHINA AND GLASS.

	£	s.	d.
One best dinner service for twelve people (real china)	1	5	0
Dessert service for ditto	2	2	0
One breakfast service for ditto	1	2	6
One tea service	0	7	6
Twelve tumblers	0	3	0
Twelve port glasses 3s. 6d., sherry 3s. 6d.	0	7	0
Twelve claret glasses 4s. 9d., twelve champagne glasses 9s. 6d.	0	14	3
Two sherry decanters	0	4	0
One claret jug	0	3	6
Two water bottles and glasses	0	3	0
Twelve plates for the kitchen	0	2	0
Two meat dishes	0	2	0
Six tumblers	0	1	0
Six cups and saucers (white)	0	2	0
Six plates	0	0	9
Sugar basin and cream jug and slop basin	0	1	2
China cruet	0	0	6½
Two china butter dishes 6½d.	0	0	1 1
	£7	2	3½

CUTLERY.

Twelve ivory balanced table-knives	1	6	0
Ditto small knives	1	1	0
One pair of meat carvers	0	7	6
Ditto poultry carvers	0	7	6
	£3	2	0

IRONMONGERY.

One wrought iron kettle	0	3	6
One small copper kettle	0	5	6
Four iron saucepans	0	5	0
Two enamelled saucepans	0	2	11
One tin kettle	0	1	6
Two china jelly moulds	0	2	6
Two iron frying pans	0	1	11
Twelve patty pans	0	0	5
Two dust pans	0	1	1
Cinder shovel	0	0	6½
Six kitchen knives and forks	0	5	0
Pair of meat carvers	0	2	6



BEDROOM.

Ironmongery continued.

One iron fish kettle	£	s.	d.
One coal scuttle	0	5	0
Coal hammer	0	2	6
Two trays	0	0	10
Three flat-irons and stand	0	2	0
Toasting fork	0	3	6
Set of scales and weights	0	0	2
Bread pan	0	4	6
Strainer	0	2	0
Mincing knife	0	2	0
Three pie dishes	0	0	6½
Six basins	0	0	6
Coffee mill	0	2	0
Mincing machine	0	2	6
Box larding pins	0	3	0
Two cake tins	0	0	4½
Gravy strainer	0	1	0
Sugar dredger and flour dredger	0	0	6½
Bread grater	0	0	6
Egg-beater	0	0	7
One set of skewers	0	0	0
One frying basket	0	0	2
Three iron spoons	0	0	6
Pepper-box 1d., salt cellars 2d.	0	0	9
Mustard pot 1d., sugar cannister	0	0	3
3s. od	0	3	1
Two coffee cannisters	0	1	1
Two tea cannisters	0	1	1
Rice and sago jars	0	1	1
Two sugar jars	0	2	0
One gridiron	0	0	1
Set of dish covers	1	1	0

Flue brush	£	s.	d.
One furniture brush	0	1	0
Paste brush 1d., crumb brush and tray 1s. 9d.	0	1	0
Saucepan brush	0	1	10
Hair brush	0	0	8
Set stove brushes	0	1	0
Two plate brushes at rod.	0	2	6
Long carpet broom	0	1	8
Two soft hair brooms	0	3	0
One kneeling mat	0	2	6
Two hair sieves	0	0	10
Flour tub	0	2	6
Salt box 6d., towel roller 6½d.	0	2	0
Wire sieve	0	1	0½
Knife board	0	0	10
Six wooden spoons	0	1	0½
One jelly bag	0	0	8
Four leathers at rod.	0	1	6
One sponge	0	3	4
Two clothes horses	0	1	0
One pair of seven tread steps	0	4	6
One baize lined plate basket	0	5	0
One cinder sieve	0	2	6
Butler's tray and stand	0	1	6
Knife tray	0	10	6
Six small bedroom hot watercans	0	2	6
Two large ditto	0	9	0
	0	7	0
	£	4	8 9

Cutlery	£	s.	d.
Ironmongery	3	2	0
Turnery	5	0	0
	4	8	9
	189	11	4½
Deduct glass, linen, etc.	34	7	1½
Furniture	£	155	4 3

TURNERY AND BRUSHES.

Two housemaids' pails	0	3	0
Chopping board	0	0	9
Paste board and rolling-pin	0	2	6
Carpet broom	0	2	0
Two scrubbing brushes	0	1	1
Wall broom	0	3	6
Four stove brushes	0	3	6

Hall and staircase	11	1	1
Dining-room	23	3	1½
Drawing-room	48	14	7
Bedroom	26	17	2
Dressing-room (no schedule)	5	8	6
Spare room	22	2	8
Bath-room	1	2	8
Young ladies' room	8	13	11½
Servants' room	5	6	0
Kitchen	2	14	6
Linen (sale prices)	14	14	1
China and glass	7	2	3½

I think I have shown that a house with two entertaining rooms, five bedrooms and a bath-room can be comfortably furnished for £155 4s. 3d. If you are content with four bedrooms or can afford £160 you need not lessen the price of anything chosen for the drawing-room. Should you be able to spend £200 on your house, there will be £9 1s. 11d. which can be spent in small silver, after linen, turnery, g'as, china and furniture are paid for. A newly married couple would possibly have small silver given to them.

Half-a-dozen silver tea spoons	£	s.	d.
Six table spoons	1	10	0
Half-a-dozen silver dessert spoons	3	0	0
One soup ladle (plated)	2	5	0
Two silver pepper pots	0	8	6
Two silver mustard pots	2	0	0
Half-a-dozen silver forks	3	0	0
Half-a-dozen plated forks	0	5	0

A smaller sum is allowed for turnery in some cheap estimates, but every item I have included is really necessary even in a small household, and has been carefully priced at various shops.

Strictly speaking the furniture only comes to £136 4s. 3d., if you deduct cushions, curtains, screens, fenders, coal-boxes, etc., which are not usually included in a furniture estimate.

It is always wise to use silver every day, and keep plated for occasional use.

E. H. PITCAIRN.

VARIETIES.

VIRTUE.

"Riches chance may take or give;
Beauty lives a day and dies;
Honour lulls us while we live;
Mirth's a cheat, and pleasure flies.
Is there nothing worth our care?
Time, and chance, and death our foes?
If our joys so fleeting are,
Are we only tied to woes?
Let bright virtue answer No;
Her eternal powers prevail
When honours, riches, cease to flow,
And beauty, mirth, and pleasure fail."

BOOK-KEEPING MADE EASY.

A young husband, finding that his pretty but rather extravagant wife was considerably exceeding their income, brought her home one day a neat little account book. This he presented to her together with ten pounds.
"Now, my dear," he said, "I want you to put down what I give you on this side, and on the other write down the way it goes, and in a fortnight I will give you another supply."
A couple of weeks later he asked for the book.
"Oh, I have kept the account all right," said his wife; "see here it is."
On one page was inscribed—"Received from Willie ten pounds," and on the one opposite the comprehensive little summary—"Spent it all."

ARTIFICIAL DUCK-HATCHING IN FORMOSA.

Artificial duck-hatching is a great feature in the local native industries of Formosa. This is how it is managed:—

A long low shed is built, mostly of wattles and mud, with a thick thatched roof. Along the inside walls are arranged rough troughs, which are filled up with grain and roasted paddy-husk, on which the eggs are placed as fast as they are laid.

In the summer no particular precautions are taken, but in the winter the eggs are covered over with quilted coverlets, and far more care is taken to exclude cold draughts than is ever dreamt of in a native dwelling-house.

The grain, which is sprinkled with a little warm water, sets up fermentation, and that with the help of the warm paddy-husk, which is continually being changed, hatches the eggs in about thirty days.

By this simple and inexpensive process the breeder is enabled to sell young ducklings at about a penny each.

Many flocks of ducks, averaging five hundred to the flock, can always be seen feeding on the mud-banks of the river at low-tide. They are attended by a man in a small boat, who occasionally feeds them with winkles, and guides them about from place to place by his voice, and by the action of his boat.

CHARACTER-BUILDING. — Character is made up of small deeds faithfully performed, of self-denials, of self-sacrifices, of kindly acts of love and duty.

"A SOFT ANSWER TURNETH AWAY WRATH."

The famous Napoleon Buonaparte, who was extremely thin in the early days of his generalship, though he afterwards became somewhat stout, was once present at a bread riot during the last days of the revolutionary period.

The mob was led by an extremely stout woman, who, seeing Napoleon and his staff ride up, called out to her companions—

"Down with the shoulder-strappers! Down with those chaps who feed and fatten, while the people die of hunger!"

"Come, come, my good woman," said Napoleon, "look at me and tell which of us two is the fatter."

The laugh which followed disarmed the mob more completely than a cavalry charge would have done.

NO PROGRESS.

Entering the house of one of his congregation, Rowland Hill saw a child on a rocking-horse.

"Dear me!" exclaimed the aged minister, "how wondrously like some Christians! There is motion but no progress."

HINTS.

To learn a girl's character, mark how she takes a favour.

To know your ruling passion, examine your castles in the air.

"IF LOVING HEARTS WERE NEVER LONELY—";

OR,
MADGE HARCOURT'S DESOLATION.CHAPTER II.
A FISHING EXCURSION.

THERE was a glad change in the Manor House next morning. Instead of the usual silence and unvarying routine, snatches of operatic songs and gay whistling were heard, first in one direction and then another, to say nothing of the hurrying feet and general enlivenment on all faces.

Everybody seemed to be brisker, and there were brighter smiles than had been seen for many a day.

It was all Jack's doing.

He was so light-hearted and merry himself that his spirits always infected the whole household.

His yearly home-coming was the signal for a general rousing up. Even Mrs. Harcourt was heard to exclaim, with something like a laugh, "I declare that boy upsets everything. I don't seem to be able to settle to any work at all while he is in the house."

This morning, directly breakfast was over, he had announced his intention of going out to fish, and now everybody available was busy searching high and low to find the tackle.

It was a happy knack of Jack's, that of engaging everybody's services if he chanced to lose anything. The strange part was, nobody ever seemed to be cross when, as was usually the case, the missing article was found put away in his own room.

"Of course, you have all your things together," his step-mother had remarked, in answer to his announcement.

"Not a bit of it," was the gay reply; "I've got nothing but my rod. I believe my hook is in the side-board drawer; you might just turn it out and see.

"And, Madge," he continued, "my line is somewhere in the hall or library, and just tell someone to go and ask the boy to find me some bait. And, Jane," turning to the housemaid, "you might just look for my sandwich bag, and ask cook to fill it, and then bring my boots."

"And, pray, what's your lordship going to do himself?" asked Madge.

"Oh, lots of things. I haven't got my boots on yet. Hurry up and find that line or you won't be ready."

"I don't suppose I shall be allowed to come unless I just please myself."

"Nonsense—I'll arrange it.

Mater," he called from the hall, "have you found that hook? It's awfully good of you to take so much trouble, but I know you like it."

"Do you? I wonder when you found that out? I shouldn't like it often, I can tell you. However, there's your hook; what time shall you be back?"

"About four o'clock, Madge won't want to stay longer."

"Margaret going, indeed! I never heard of such a thing! I don't wish her to do anything of the kind!"

"Oh, come now," he replied coaxingly; "you never refuse me anything, you know, and I can't possibly go without her."

"Such nonsense; she's much better at home attending to her duties! I don't wish her to go!"

"But her duty to-day is to amuse me. Come, say she can go. I'll take great care of her, and to-morrow we'll do whatever you want."

"I expect it will be the kind of to-morrow that never comes," answered Mrs. Harcourt, "but I suppose she'll have to go, if you've made up your mind to take her," and so saying, she shrugged her shoulders and bustled off, while Jack and Madge made the most of their time and quickly departed.

It was a glorious day, without a cloud in the sky, and a beautiful soft haziness overspread everything.

The very birds seemed too lazy to sing, and, but for an occasional chirping, and humming of bees, with here and there the ripple of a hill-side stream, silence reigned supreme.

"Oh, I do love the summer!" exclaimed Madge, as she threw herself down on the grass beside the lake in which Jack's fishing expectations were centred. "I feel as if I could lie here and dream for days. I'm sure you won't catch any fish, they'll be too lazy to move."

"Wait till they've heard me sing," he replied, "they'll—"

"Never smile again, I should think," intercepted Madge quickly. "If you

take my advice, you'll not only silence your voice, but you'll hide your face as well, if you want the fishes to venture out," and the girl laughed merrily. The prospect of a whole day with Jack's company and no step-mother had already worked wonders in the usually hard young heart, and she was prepared to enjoy herself thoroughly.

"That's what you call treating your elder brother with respect, I suppose," remarked Jack, with feigned displeasure. "If I have any more impudence, I shall certainly have to send you in search of the fishes. I must lecture you on paying proper respect to your elders and betters."

"But what if they don't inspire it?" and there was a very roguish expression in the lovely eyes that met his.

"Why, then, I'll—" but he stopped short; the upturned face was too much for him, and, throwing himself down beside her, he passed his arm round her and kissed her warmly. "You little witch, Madge," he exclaimed, "I never saw a girl yet who was a patch on you! I believe if I had you always, I should never want to get married at all."

"Get married, indeed!" she exclaimed—"you're not even to dream of such a thing! You belong to me; I won't share you with anyone!"

"I daresay, and what am I to do when you get married?"

"I'll get married?" she repeated with scornful emphasis. "There's not the faintest likelihood of that. I don't like men well enough so far as I know them, and I'm quite certain they wouldn't like me. Besides, I would rather live with you than anyone else in the world."

But, Madge, just think how delighted the mater would be if you married a meek young curate, or at any rate, someone connected with the church. You really ought to study her a little. Just imagine how she would pride herself all her life on having so nobly done her duty by you," and a wicked twinkle shone in his eyes.

"It will have to be the sexton or grave-digger, or a bell-ringer," remarked Madge. "There's no other eligible church officer in these parts. Which should you prefer for a brother-in-law?"

"The gravedigger, decidedly," replied Jack. "Fancy getting the mater buried free of charge," and he laughed merrily.

Madge laughed too, but she quickly grew serious again.

"But you won't dream of getting married, will you, Jack," she asked pleadingly. "I think I should break my heart if you did."

"You needn't have much fear, old lady," he replied affectionately. "I haven't enough money to pay my own bills, much less a wife's. In fact I want money badly just now; I must get something out of father before I go."

"It'll take you all your time; you'll

have to get round step-mother first. She manages everything. Father doesn't trouble about anything in the world but his books and his walks."

"Phew!" whistled Jack disconsolately, adding, "you'll have to help me, Madge."

"I help you indeed. I should do fifty times more harm than good if I said a word about it."

"Well, but you can help keep the mater in a good humour."

"How?"

"Why make up to her a bit and we'll manage it."

"H'm! and so you think I can play the hypocrite among my various other accomplishments, do you?" and she turned away from him, a little haughtily.

"You needn't be a hypocrite for a little thing like that. Why, hang it all, one would get on badly in the world if he never made up to anyone a little."

"Then I'd rather get on badly," and Madge closed her lips with a determined air. "I hate flattery and hypocrisy, and I won't be double-faced for anybody. It seems to me more than half the people in the world are hypocrites. They just love each other, or pretend to, for what they can get, and express any feeling that happens to be in their own interest."

"Oh come, Madge, draw it mild. The world isn't half so bad as you would make out. There are lots of people who are very nice even if they don't always mean what they say."

"I shouldn't think them nice," she replied obstinately, "but of course the world naturally looks to you very different from what it does to me."

"Probably I know more about it."

"Why?"

"Because I've knocked about in it for at least seven years, and you've never left this little out-of-the-way village."

"Anyhow I've read a vast deal more than you have, and principally books by men who have spent their whole lives 'knocking about' as you call it. Besides, Jack, you never think seriously about anything. You just get through the day the pleasantest way you can and leave the worries to look after themselves."

"What a mean, selfish fellow you must think me, Madge," and Jack looked a little wistfully, into the serious young face beside him.

"Oh, indeed I don't!" she exclaimed. "I am certain you are no worse than other men; in fact, in my opinion you are a vast deal better. You are just the dearest old boy in the world," and she laid her hand caressingly on his arm. "I'll do anything in the world for you except be a hypocrite, and I couldn't do that, because I can't help saying what I think; it's my nature, you know. I suppose that's why I'm always getting into trouble."

"Never mind; it's a good fault, if it's a fault at all; only I'm sure you'd be happier, Madge, if you humoured the mater a little more. You know you are beginning to look much too old for your years. There is a change in you somehow that I don't quite like. You don't look happy."

"I'm not likely to," she replied

bitterly, turning her head away. "Another year you will find me more changed still. I expect I shall be unbearable."

"You'll never be that to me," he said quietly; "but what makes you think so?"

"Because every month I hate my step-mother, my surroundings, and lastly myself a little more," and her voice grew almost passionate in its earnestness.

"I know you have a wretchedly dull time of it," he said, "but you're very young, Madge, and it won't last much longer. Besides, you have a good home and excellent health, for which thousands of girls would envy you."

"Oh, yes, it's all very fine to talk. That's what step-mother says if I chance to make a single complaint in her hearing. She begins in a sanctimonious tone of voice to expatiate on my various blessings, and then preaches a sermon on the wickedness of ingratitude. She pities me for having such an evil disposition, and I—well, I just hate her, and grow a little harder than I was before," and there was a flash of defiance in her dark eyes, and a tremor in her voice, while she ruthlessly destroyed the flowers that were within her reach. And why should I have to live on here, killing time, while you go out into the world and enjoy your life?" she continued, speaking quickly. "It is unjust and unfair, I will never believe otherwise. You have a chance given you to work and do something which you care nothing for; while I, who would jump at the opportunity, am obliged to live a life of emptiness and ennui. Why shouldn't I have a real aim in life, as much as you?"

"You can't have the same that I have, because you are a woman, but you have a woman's aims."

"And what are they?" she asked in a tone of unutterable bitterness.

He was silent.

"Well, tell me, what are woman's aims?" she continued. "You don't know? Then I will tell you. She must make herself content to live the life of a dependent all her days, without a murmur. If she has a good home and good parents, she must consider she has all she needs. Whatever her nature, she must never desire anything further; if she does, she is wicked, ungrateful, base. When her brothers go out into the world to fight their way, encouraged by the delight of freedom and independence, she must stay at home and mend their socks and do as she is told, spending each day in the same weary round of little duties and little pleasures. Men tell her it is all holidays and she lives like a queen. She knows otherwise, but she soon learns not to say anything; she finds it is simplest to go with the crowd. It doesn't matter in the least, if the monotony and ennui crush her best points and develop instead, irritability, discontent and selfishness. It doesn't matter in the least, if, instead of becoming a gracious, high-minded woman, she becomes a fretful, dissatisfied, disappointed one! There is no sympathy, no escape for her. It is no one's fault. She happened to be born a

woman and she must abide by the consequences. If she feels she is capable of something nobler and better than the life assigned to her by custom and society, the sooner she crushes the feeling the better it will be; it is madness to cherish it; there is no place in the ranks for her. She is a woman, and woman's place is at home, be it never so uncongenial and disheartening. What more can she possibly want than household duties; and for pleasures, pretty clothes, tea-parties, and entertainments, with her chief aim to look nice and marry well? It is not an aim to treat lightly either, for if she fails to secure a husband there is nothing for her but the 'martyrdom of spinsterhood.' 'Martyrdom, not because she has no one to fight the battle with her, and gladden her life, but because, in the eyes of the world, she has failed in the great essential!'"

She stopped short and breathed hard, while her eyes flashed out their scorn.

Jack expressed no surprise at her vehemence; he was used to his sister's flights of eloquence.

"It would be a pretty state of affairs at home, if all the women went out to work and left the house to look after itself," he said. "In fact there would soon be no homes at all, for men hate strong-minded women and would never marry them."

"I am not speaking of women who already have homes of their own to look after. I am speaking of unmarried women and girls, particularly those who see very little prospect of ever being married and have never had a chance to make themselves independent. Why shouldn't they have something to look forward to, better than waiting on their more fortunate sisters? But that's the argument everyone uses," she continued. "I wonder someone does not invent a new one; it could not be much poorer. If a woman has genuine, because useful, occupation in life, it does not follow that she loses her womanliness. She might lose a few traits such as spending several hours a day before her looking-glass and regarding every man as a possible husband. For the rest her mind would be enlarged and widened, and when the time came for her to have a home to look after, she would have had more time to make a wise choice and fulfil her mission better. If girls had something more satisfying in their lives, there would be none of that frantic haste to get married and have homes of their own. It isn't the girls reared in comfortable homes and shielded from every anxiety who make the best wives, Jack. It is those who know what it is to struggle and persevere. Those who have made their lives real instead of being content with mere butterfly existences. You talk disparagingly of strong-minded women, but the strong-minded woman you mean is a mere bubble of the age, who lost her womanliness, if she ever had any, before she went out into the world. You are no better than other men, Jack; you are all selfish, every one of you. You are afraid if you help us in our efforts to be freer, you will lose your



THE YOUNG MOTHER.

home comforts and perhaps some of your pleasures too."

She clasped her hands round her knees, and looked hard into the water, while the cynical expression on her face deepened as she continued: "No, you would rather keep us as we are. We may share your anxieties and worries; we may nurse you when you are ill, and in return you give us comforts and occasional treats. But it would never do to let us do anything for ourselves, there is no telling where we should end! You think you are wise, but you are really foolish. As the average woman is now, she will never love you or be worthy of your love, as she might be if you helped her to rise out of herself and her own petty pleasures. We have only a counterfeit of 'love abroad in the world now. A love that can be bought and sold; taken and cast aside at pleasure. There are very few rocks in the ocean of humanity where real love finds a resting-place."

She paused and looked past him, to the far-away hills, while a sad expression and that old wistfulness crept into the dreamer's eyes.

"What do you call real love?" he asked, picking up a stone and tossing it idly into the lake. He liked to hear her talk, and purposely encouraged her by questions.

For some minutes she remained silent, gazing always over those distant hills. Then she said slowly, "The love that is not afraid of sacrifice; that

shines brightest when the strife is fiercest and grows stronger with the passing years. The love that sees the weaknesses as well as the beauties in the object of its devotion and still loves on—time cannot change it—cares cannot lessen it—and death will not end it."

She ceased speaking and both were silent.

Her beautiful eyes still gazed dreamily beyond him, into a strange, dim, ideal world of her own pure imagination.

At last Jack spoke, and his voice sounded harsh and matter-of-fact. It was as if he would feign expel the softening influence of her words; as if they made him "think," which was just what he did not want to do.

"You look for too much," he said, rising on his elbow and throwing another stone into the water. "You will never find love like that, it doesn't grow nowadays."

"I know that and I don't expect to find it," she answered. "In my own imaginary future I have left no place vacant for it. I don't intend ever to get married. I expect to live and die a sour old maid. In any case, it would be almost sure to come too late. The life I am leading now is turning me into stone, another year or two will about complete the work. By that time I shall be too callous to think of love as anything but a fraud and a delusion—an impossible dream I had once when I was a girl."

But here Jack turned to her quickly

and said half-impatiently, "Don't talk such nonsense, Madge. I hate to hear you say those sorts of things. You really are the very oddest girl I ever came across. I wish you would try to be more like other girls; I shall go back to town quite miserable about you, if you don't brighten up and look happier."

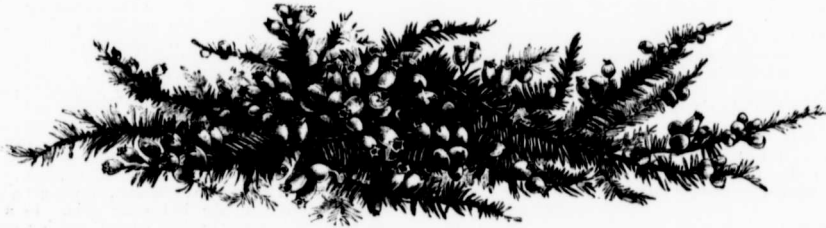
"Oh, no! you mustn't do that," she said quickly. "I will promise to try and make the best of things. I couldn't bear to make you unhappy, Jack."

"That's right," he replied cheerfully. "Look on the bright side, and when the mater's cross don't take any notice of her. Think about the good time coming, when you're of age and your own mistress. I'll get father to let me take you on the continent and we'll have no end of fun. Don't think so much, it only worries you."

Madge wondered what he would have her do instead, considering how little choice she had, but she did not say so. She only kissed him and promised to try, but her heart was very heavy.

Little as she knew what she really wanted she felt at least that satisfaction would not follow on the means suggested by her bright but careless brother. The young heart, in its loneliness and bitterness, felt no throb of delight at the idea of mixing in the gay world, which it had already learnt to distrust. There was indeed one true and lasting satisfaction to be had but, clever as she was, she would not find it yet.

(To be continued.)



THE YOUNG MOTHER.

By EDWARD OXENFORD.



N a far-off land is my love to-day;

I know not when I his face shall see;

From the morning's dawn to the twilight grey
I count the hours he is lost to me!

On their silent journey they come and go;

To each that passes my hopes are sighed,

And I bid them listen, and whisper low

My words to him o'er the ocean wide—

"O love! though parted is hand from hand,

My heart is with thee in that far-off land!"

From a far-off land in my dreams I hear

A voice that thrills with a joy untold,

And it bids me trust to the past so dear,

For perfect still is the love of old!

In the spirit then he is near, I know,

And souls are joined by a mystic tie,

O! his words would never so clearly flow,

Repeating my own in the sweet reply—

"O love! though parted is hand from hand,

My heart is with thee in that far-off land!"

"A GIRL OF GRIT."

CHAPTER I.



How much have we left for next week, Helen?"

"Only fifteen shillings, dear, but don't worry. Go to sleep. I can manage very well on that, now that you are getting better."

The figure on the bed moved uneasily.

"But am I getting better, Helen? That is the question. I feel weaker every day instead of stronger, and James won't keep my place in the office open for me much longer. I can't sleep at night, dear, for thinking about

what will happen to us both if he gives some other chap my place, and you can't expect him to wait for me indefinitely."

The girl, who was sitting in the well-worn rocking-chair by the window, got up from her seat, and went to her brother's bed-side. They were strikingly like each other in cast of features, but the girl was dark and superbly healthy, whereas the youth was fair, and, in his present state of health, looked weak and effeminate.

"Oh, Harold, don't say that! The doctor said you were getting on quite nicely, and with a little fresh air you would be quite strong in a few weeks."

Harold took his sister's hands in his, which were dry and feverish.

"You're a brick, old girl, for trying to cheer a fellow up, but where is the fresh air to come from? I'm too weak to walk, and if we open the window the draught makes me cough."

"That's because this window faces due north. I'm going to have you moved into the front room to-morrow, and we can open the window almost all the morning."

"You're going to have me moved into the front room to-morrow?" A look of joy came into his poor tired eyes. "But, Helen, the front room is two shillings a week more; how can you manage that?"

A flush crept over the girl's face, but she answered bravely—

"Never mind. I'm boss of the situation at present, and you've only got to obey—invalids mustn't ask questions."

As she turned away from the bed to hide her confusion, her purse fell on her brother's shoulder. He lifted it as if with a great effort of strength and handed it back to her; but in so doing he felt how empty the well-worn little green pouch was. His sister held out her hand impatiently to take it from him, but he pushed her fingers aside and looked up into her flushed face.

"Chum, dearest, there isn't fifteen shillings here. Why did you say there was?"

"I didn't say there was fifteen shillings in that purse, you dear old silly! Do you suppose I carry our entire fortune in a purse that leaks? Look, there's a hole in it!"

The boy's face lost its look of anxiety, and he gave a sigh of relief.

"What a fool I was to think you'd deceive me, dear; but I always carry all the money I possess in my pockets, and I never thought you had a private hoard. Our purse always did leak, didn't it, Chum?"

The girl stooped and kissed his heavily-veined forehead with tears in her own eyes.

"You didn't think there was a miser in our spendthrift family, did you, dear? But, go to sleep, Harold, do, while I go out and do some shopping, or the doctor will be saying that you have a high temperature again to-night."

As she closed the door of her brother's room behind her, she found herself face to face with their landlady who was on the point of entering the room to demand a week's rent—not a very unjust demand on her part, for they owed her three weeks' rent, and she, poor woman, had to support a worthless husband and two children.

Before she could say a word, Helen had emptied the contents of her little purse into her hands, and put her firm capable fingers over her mouth.

"Don't speak loud, dear Mrs. Larkin, or my brother will hear, and he is just going off to sleep."

The woman looked at the two-shilling-piece and the few coppers that the girl had thrust into her hand, and said:

"Is that all you have to give me? And you know that letting rooms is my only source of livelihood for myself and for my children! I'd be ashamed to rob innocent children of their daily bread, I would!"

While she was speaking a pair of strong young arms were clasped round her portly waist, and she found herself standing, breathless and panting, at the other end of the narrow passage.

"Do come away from the door, Mrs. Larkin, and scold me as much as ever you like; but, for pity's sake, don't let my brother hear! I have given you every penny I have in the world—what can I do more?—and I promise you that to-morrow evening I will pay you the remainder of this week's rent."

Mrs. Larkin's outburst of anger had been more assumed than genuine. She had braced herself up to be stern.

"Haven't you got any relations you can apply to, miss?" There was a degree of tenderness in the woman's voice, and her attitude was less defiant.

"Not one in the world that would give me a farthing. You are the best friend I have, indeed you are, Mrs. Larkin."

The beautiful, well-bred girl laid her head down on the dusty, work-stained shoulder of the woman who was dunning her for money, and something like a sob escaped her proud, resolute lips. The woman heard it, and her mother's heart smote her.

"There, dear, there; don't take on so! I suppose you would be a bit too proud to help me with some ironing I have to do? I would take something off the rent for if you'd help me to get it done this evening."

The girl's sob was quickly followed by a happy laugh.

"There, I knew you were the best friend I had! Too proud? Indeed, of course, I'm not! I'm too proud to owe you money and not do what I can to repay it. Give me the things up here and I'll do them the best way I can."

"Not up here, my dear. It would only be costing you coal and making your brother's room too warm. If you'll come down to the kitchen when I have tidied it up a bit there will be nobody to interfere with you."

"Thank you, Mrs. Larkin, and, please, you must not take anything off our rent! Only

let me help you when you are busy to iron or mend the children's clothes by way of return for your kindness. I'll pay you everything when I get the money. I know you haven't bought any meat for Sunday's dinner all on account of not getting our rent, and I feel so ashamed."

"And who told you that, I'd like to know! What we have for dinner is my business and nobody else's until Mr. Larkin chooses to pay for it!"

The assumed anger didn't frighten the girl; she only laughed softly.

"You needn't be angry because I know. Little Victoria Maud told me, but she didn't mean to hurt me; and my heart is too sore to feel much more, Mrs. Larkin. It's beginning to get hardened."

"Indeed it ain't, my dear; it's a deal too tender, and I'll teach Victoria Maud to talk to her betters like that. In an hour's time I'll be tidied up a bit downstairs, and you'd best be going out now while your brother's asleep."

Just at that moment the postman's knock shook the front door.

"It's sure to be for you, dearie, do you mind picking it up? I'm that bad at stooping."

Helen ran down the stair and eagerly picked up the letter. A look half of fear and half of anger spread over her face as she read on the envelope the name of the business house in which her brother was employed as one of the junior book-keepers. She hastily tore it open and read the contents of the letter, which were type-written and autographed with her cousin's signature.

"What a mean cur the man is; and he is our nearest and, in fact, only relation in the world. So Harold was right, he cannot wait for him any longer. Now, indeed, we are absolutely penniless."

She put the letter into her pocket, and went out into the street. Suddenly, as if inspired with a way of getting out of the difficulty, she hastened her footsteps and walked on. In less than half an hour's time she was standing in the manager's private room of the large business house belonging to her cousin. Her heart was beating, and her eyes were bright with excitement. It was not a pleasant errand she had come upon. In a few moments the door opened, and her cousin came in. When he saw who it was, he started, and said—

"Good afternoon, Helen. To whom or what am I indebted for such a pleasant surprise?"

"Good afternoon, Mr. Churchill. I am here to answer your letter to my brother in person. You may think perhaps that such a letter scarcely demanded an answer, but I do. I have come to ask you to give me the post of book-keeping, which my brother has lost through his ill-health."

Her cousin had a weasel type of face, and a falsetto voice. He laughed scornfully, as he answered—

"My dear Helen, I do not employ any women in my firm—the idea is absurd."

Helen tried to speak calmly, but her voice shook as she answered him—

"Pray do not address me as 'dear Helen.' I am here on business, not in the light of a relation."

"Come, come, not so high and mighty. If you are here in that light, the sooner you go the better, for the idea is absurd."

"Why is it absurd? I have learnt book-keeping, and am much quicker at it than my brother, for I have all the business capacity in my family, while he has the artistic temperament of our mother."

"More's the pity, as he can't make a living off it. Do you mean to tell me you would come here amongst all my clerks and work at the post your brother held? It's absurd—the idea is madness!"

"Nothing is madness, sir, if you have not a penny in the world, and there is no one to help you."

"I can help you, if you will marry me? I have made you the offer before, and you scorned it. You are old for your years, why not marry?"

"Because under the circumstances, I prefer to remain penniless. I will not marry you, sir, because I do not love you."

"Isn't love rather an expensive luxury for a beggar? But there is nothing more to be said. Wife of the owner and manager of the firm is the only position you shall ever find in my business, so good-morning."

Helen sprang after him, and called out—

"Stop a minute, you must hear me. All our life you have bought us up. As children together you bought every treasure I possessed, for even then money was horribly scarce, and mother was ill. Ah, how well I remember the day you bought my rabbit with the red eyes, and my canary, my carving tools and paint-boxes, and you paid me a few pence for my childish treasures, when you would not have missed a few pounds. When father died you bought our home, and now you want to buy me. But even for my brother's life I will not sell myself to you; but if he dies, you will have his death at your door, and all your thousands a year will not chain his ghost in your strong room; it will haunt your footsteps—"

"Indeed; so this is the character you give me. It is true, when we were children I was rich and you were poor. What you had of childish treasures to sell I bought and paid for. Was there anything unfair in that? Your old home I took over as a bad debt. What more could I do?"

"You could let me have my brother's post for a few months, and I promise you the work will be well performed!"

"I have already offered you the only post I wish you to fill, and you have refused it."

You say a few months. What does your brother propose doing while his sister keeps him?"

"My brother, as you know, is an extremely clever black-and-white artist. He studied in Paris for a year before he came here; if he had only a little spare time he would soon make a good position for himself."

"Then why has he not already done so?"

"Because he has had no time, he dared not give up a certainty for an uncertainty." Helen's eyes had lost their anger, and were full of entreaty, but the falsetto voice said slightly, while he bowed her good-morning: "Then he will have plenty of time in the future. I wish him great success," and there was nothing left for the girl to do but to accept her *congé*.

On her way back to her lodgings, she stopped at an odd-looking block of buildings, and turned down a dark passage which had rooms opening off it on one side only. At number 28 she stopped and knocked twice. A pleasant voice quickly answered "Come in," and Helen opened the door and entered a comfortably-furnished studio.

"Oh, you're the very person I wanted to see, Miss Churchill. Can you come to-morrow at ten o'clock; it's rather a difficult position for you, but you are very strong, I know, and you've got just the figure to suit me."

A flush mounted to the very roots of the girl's glossy curling hair, and she stood before the critical eye of the artist.

"I shall be very pleased to come, sir, but you know I have never stood in a difficult position. You have only painted my hair and complexion before."

"Well, I won't tire you out, I promise you, and you must come, for I can't find a suitable model. I want someone who will look a lady in a simple frock, and that's what is so impossible to find. I've only six weeks before the Academy opens to paint the picture in, and my mind is full of it at the present time."

Helen smiled at his impetuosity, and said brightly: "Then I'll come, sir, and I'll try and stand properly."

He was going to ask her to stay and make a cup of tea for him, as he would have done to an ordinary model, but he checked himself and let her out of the studio with the same ceremony as he would have shown to a wealthy visitor to his studio.

Just as he was saying good-bye, Helen mustered up courage and faltered out—

"Would you mind paying me for my last two sittings, sir; I am sorry to trouble you, but you had no change the last time, you remember, and I want some money very badly just at present."

When Helen walked down the long dark passage with the money safe in her pocket, the artist's eyes followed her.

"Poor little girl, I should think she's jolly hard up. I wonder what her story is. I wish I could get Nan to call on her. I'm sure she's in awful trouble, and Nan's such a brick." Nan was his young wife, who was also his devoted friend and lover.

When Helen got back to her lodgings, her brother was awake and asking for her. She adroitly evaded his questions as to where she had been by busying herself in making him a cup of tea.

"And now I must leave you again, dear, for I have promised to go downstairs and see Mrs. Larkin on business. Harold thought that the business meant making arrangements for shifting him into the front room. He stroked her hand gently, and drew her face down to his.

"Chum, darling, you're such a brick. I don't know how to thank you, and I don't know where you get the money from, for when I try to think my poor head aches so, and I just give it up. I'm so selfish, dear, and you're so good; but I'm going to write and ask James to lend us ten pounds."

Helen promptly sat down on the bed.

"Promise me you won't do that, Harold. He wouldn't lend us a red cent, and it is no good humiliating ourselves. Promise me, Harold."

The girl's earnestness startled him, and as he was accustomed to obey her he acquiesced, and she went away downstairs to help Mrs. Larkin.

(To be continued.)

HOUSEKEEPING IN LONDON.

By A GIRL-PROFESSIONAL.

CHAPTER I.

A TURN IN THE TIDE.



Necessity calls out invention it is certain that there is nothing like it for showing up our true colours and the real value of the attainments we may pride ourselves upon possessing.

For instance, I had taken credit to myself for some small skill with paint brush and pencil, and my modest literary efforts had met with unqualified encouragement, but when it came to deciding whether these could be relied upon for rent, for daily food and clothing, as well as for the other expenses which make up what we call "living," I must confess that I first hesitated, then decidedly said "no." The more decidedly, perhaps, that another's maintenance, besides my own, depended upon such earnings.

Then came the question "what can I do?"

"Well," suggested someone, "you can cook!"

"Yes, but cookery lessons are not a very paying undertaking—that is, they pay well for a period but the appointments do not last long."

"True, but why not make your cookery pay in a home of your own, by cooking for others at the same time as for yourself. A good cook is a *rara avis* in these days, despite the cookery schools, and as much of the comfort of life depends upon cooking, there are many people who will pay well to ensure their comfort in this respect."

I pondered over this advice; there was common-sense in it certainly, and Necessity was ever at my elbow urging me to remember that she might soon teach me a difficult lesson.

A few days later a letter came to me in our little country home, which we must soon vacate, from my sister, a typical girl-bachelor who lived in the "dwellings" that typify London Bohemian liberty. She wrote, "I have very desirable residence, which you and I have so often envied is actually To Let, I wish we could take it."

"Now is your chance," said a voice within me; but yet I hesitated. Visions of rent, taxes, rates, and what not loomed large before me, besides the possible repairs that might be required inside, although outside the residence was attractive enough.

Was it chance again, that, while waiting for a local train the next day, a bill announcing "excursion to London" caught my eye, and reading it, I found it to be for the next morning, returning the same day. Surely the Fates were conspiring together!

It was true that to avail myself of this projected trip meant leaving home at the early hour of six, on a November day, and the return three-mile-walk would be at the still earlier hour of three o'clock the next morning, but that was no great deterrent.

Therefore, not knowing what good thing might be missed if this chance was lost I did not hesitate here, but when the next morning dawned, set out post-haste over the deserted fields, in the grey light, to meet the train which all but waited for me, as if determined to take me whether I would or no. By ten o'clock we drew up in St. Pancras station; a cup of hot coffee there raised my courage again,

and a wash in the waiting-room helped to complete a somewhat hasty morning toilet. Out in the road the maze of traffic seemed bewildering, but the right "bus" was soon hailed; once on that I felt secure, and gave myself up to half-an-hour's enjoyment of a busy London scene. Who has not felt the fascination that this thronging city holds? A fascination that is particularly attractive to country birds.

The sun was breaking through the grey gloom of the morning fog, glinting on the harness of the horses, reflecting itself in the shining windows of the shops which were undergoing their process of "dressing." Costers were bringing along their carts of produce fresh from the markets, and street stalls were being set out. In Piccadilly it was brighter still; hansoms going briskly by, few carriages as yet, but several riders on their way to the Park, everywhere a bustle of life—the West-End type of life. Involuntarily Frederick Locker's lines came into my mind:—

"Piccadilly! Shops, palaces, bustle and breeze,

The whirring of wheels and the murmur of trees;

By day and by night, whether noisy or still,

Whatever my mood is, I love Piccadilly!"

The neighbourhood of Sloane Square was the direction I sought, a neighbourhood whose quaint landmarks are rapidly being improved away by the modern builder. Here old Chelsea ends; if we want to find Carlyle's Chelsea we must follow the King's Road and work our way towards the Embankment through one of the old-fashioned streets which the sage must often have trod. Even now, in spite of the modern builder, Chelsea appeals to one's sense of the picturesque, and seems to link one with past generations as no other district of London does; the scarlet-coated pensioners belonging to the Royal Hospital meet one at every turn, and the bugle calls from the Military School close by keep the hours of the day as punctually as the chimes of the Greenwich clock. I am happy to think that the "desirable residence" I have come to visit is strictly within this parish, still happier to find that it overlooks the broad court that stretches to either side of the avenue leading to the main gateway of the Pensioner's Hospital.

My "Bachelor Girl" greeted me with surprise; this was a more rapid move than she had quite calculated upon, but I did not think it any the less necessary when I noted the effect that bachelor living was making upon her health. It was plain that another three years of Bohemian life would effectually banish all remnants of youth.

It was close upon the luncheon hour when she was able to set out with me to inspect the house we sought; we were both in a frame of mind that we meant to be critical, anxious not to be "taken-in," and not to let pass any details that might be important afterwards; but as it was our first experience of the kind we very likely looked as nervous as we felt. Looking back after a three years' trial of London life, I think it was a special Providence that gave us an honest man and a kindly one to deal with.

This man—the then tenant—opened the door to us himself, and we briefly explained our errand. We learned that there were others in the field before us, although there was still a possibility of our securing the lease if we could decide quickly. Then we made a free inspection of the premises, the fixtures, etc., and, as far as we were able, of the drainage. Everything seemed satisfactory, and the price of the fixtures, which comprised spring blinds and cords to every window all nearly new, gas brackets, curtain poles and rings, a splendid linen cupboard, and several other things, was a very moderate one. What pleased us even more than all was to find the wall-papers in every room clean and fresh and in excellent taste, the paint too only needed to be washed to come up like new. Some of the ceilings would need to be whitewashed, and the kitchen walls would need fresh distemper, but this was not a great outlay.

The house was a comparatively modern one, that is it belonged to a time when houses were well and solidly, if somewhat plainly built. The doors were thick and fitted easily, heavy window-frames and deep-skirting boards, good pantries and cellarage, and marble mantelpieces in every room, showed sound workmanship. But the charm was its outlook, and with every floor it grew better.

The grey-roofed buildings that reminded one strongly of Hampton Court Palace faced us, the fine trees surrounding them, and the stretch of green grass adding to their quaintness. From the upper windows one saw the columns of the beautiful suspension bridge over the Thames, beyond that the trees of Battersea Park, and a faint outline of Surrey hills. It was a lovely view indeed. At the back too we were open, having a long line of back gardens, with here and there a fine tree growing, and a glimpse of the lime trees of the royal avenue.

"It's worth an effort to secure a house like this," I whispered to my companion, and she assented, as anxious as I was to clinch the bargain.

The lease, we ascertained, had still eighteen years to run; a decided advantage in a neighbourhood of rapidly-increasing rents; it could be taken on transfer and there was no premium to pay.

We explained that in the event of our taking over the lease it would be with the object of sub-letting a part of the house, as we could not afford to occupy the whole of it.

"That is precisely what I do myself," said our cicerone, and gave us substantial evidence as to what his own success had been with such attempts; they amounted to the fact that applications had always been more numerous than he had accommodation for. A rapid calculation showed that it was possible, granting that all circumstances were favourable, to make the house pay well.

"We must think it well over," we said at last, having completed the tour of inspection, and we left, promising to send in our final decision by the end of the week.

Together, in the bachelor's bed-sitting-room, we went over every detail afresh, planning, calculating, weighing the pros and cons of our project.

The little furniture that we could count upon was far from sufficient, although it included such essential things as a fair supply

of house and table linen, plate and cutlery, with some china, still it was a hopeful beginning. Even counting that we let some rooms unfurnished, we must still lay out some twenty or thirty pounds in the purchase of carpets, mats, curtains, beds and tables, to say nothing of stair-rod and other minor items. Besides this we must pay for the fixtures, any law expenses over the transfer of the lease, and we ought to have a quarter's rent ready.

"And we have absolutely no capital!" we groaned. We thought of the alluring advertisements put out by the loan offices, and decided that a loan of fifty pounds, repayable by monthly instalments, was not an impossible thing in view of the success we were going to ensure.

"I think I must first tell Uncle B. all about it," I said. And this was agreed. Uncle B. was a good friend and kind to us girls.

My train left St. Pancras at midnight, so at eleven o'clock I bid good-bye to my bachelor girl.

"I don't half like turning you out of doors at such an hour," she said regretfully.

It did seem eerie truly, but ten times more so to be set down at the lonely country station at 3 A.M., where all was dark, no moon, no lamps, only a few pale stars lighting faintly the black sky. However, I shook myself together and set out as boldly as I could; there was one cloud in the sky that caught a red glow from somewhere, it outlined the tops of the trees, and I thought of the pillar of cloud and fire which guided the Israelites of olden times.

The wind whistled and rustled the branches of the trees and hedges, bringing down showers of dead leaves, and startled rabbits shot across my path, making me give a frightened jump—they seemed uncannily big in the dark. But the longest journey comes to an end at last, and, as the last wicket gate closed behind me I heaved a deep sigh of relief; a few moments more and I was inside our own garden and a lamp shone through the window.

A lamp's light, a cosy bit of fire, a singing kettle and a supper (or breakfast) tray soon banished the last trace of nervousness, and I barred the door and went to bed glad and grateful, only pausing to whisper as I passed one door:

"All right, mother, safe and sound," and to hear her answer, "Thank God, dearie."

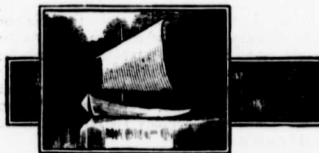
About one o'clock I awoke to find the sun flooding my room, and someone saying, "Are you ever going to get up to-day?" then remembered the duties that lay before me.

The first thing to be done was clearly to consult Uncle B.; he might think I had been on a fool's errand and my project a wild one; men—especially business men—have but a low opinion of women's capabilities.

But when instead of ousting my scheme and putting it to ridicule, Uncle B. said, "Well done, lassie, I'll stand by you!" I was too glad almost to properly express my gratitude; and especially when he offered to be surety instead of allowing us to have recourse to any loan office whatsoever.

And that very day a telegram went up to London with the fateful words, "Secure house at once without delay," and then, for good or ill, the die was cast.

(To be continued.)



SISTERS THREE.

By Mrs. HENRY MANSERGH, Author of "A Rose-coloured Thread," etc.

CHAPTER II.



HERE was a simultaneous exclamation of dismay as the three girls leapt from their seats, and flew round the room in different directions.

Hilary lighted the tall lamps, Norah drew the curtains across the windows, while Lettice first gave a peal to the bell, and then ran forward to escort her father to a chair by the fire.

"Tea will be here in a moment, father, come and sit down. It's New Year's Day, you know, and we have been so busy making good resolutions, that we have had no time to do anything practical. Why didn't you come down before? You are a regular old woman about afternoon tea. I believe you would miss it more than any other meal."

"I believe I would. I never get on well with my writing in the first part of the afternoon, and tea seems to give me a fresh start. So you girls have been making good resolutions? That's good hearing. Tell me about them," and Mr. Bertrand leant back in his chair, clasping his hands behind his head, and looking up at his young daughters with a quizzical smile. A photographer would have been happy if he could have taken a portrait at this moment, for Mr. Bertrand was a well-known author, and the books, which were written in the study in Westmoreland, went far and wide over the world, and made his name a household word. He had forgotten his beloved work at this moment, however, at the sight of something dearer still—his three young daughters standing grouped together facing him at the other side of the old-fashioned grate, their faces flushed from the heat of the fire, their eyes dazzled by the sudden light. How tall and womanlike they looked in their dark serge dresses! Lettice's hair framed her face in a halo of mist-like curls; Hilary held up her head in her dignified little fashion. Mischievous Norah smiled in the background. They were dearer to him than all his heroines; but, alas, far less easy to manage, for the heroines did as they were bid, while the three girls were developing strong wills of their own.

"I believe you have been plotting mischief, and that is the beginning and the end of your good resolutions?"

"Indeed, no, father; we were in earnest—but it was a reaction, for before that we had been grumbling about— Wait a moment—here comes tea. We'll tell you later on. Miss Briggs says we should never talk about disagreeable topics at a meal, and tea is the nicest meal of the day, so we can't afford to spoil it. Well, and how is Mr. Robert getting on this afternoon?"

Mr. Bertrand's face twitched in a comical manner. He lived so entirely in the book which he was writing at the time, that he found it impossible to keep silent on the subject; but he could never rid himself of a comical feeling of embarrassment in discussing his novels in the presence of his daughters.

"Robert, eh? What do you know about Robert?"

"We know all about him, of course. He was in trouble on Wednesday, and you came down to tea with your hair all ruffled, and as miserable as you could be. He must be happy again to-day, for your hair is quite smooth. When is he going to marry Lady Mary?"

"He is not going to marry Lady Mary at all. What nonsense! Lady Mary, indeed! You don't know anything about it! Give me another cup of tea, and tell me what you have been grumbling about. It doesn't sound a cheerful topic for New Year's Day; but I would rather have that, than hear such ridiculous remarks! Grumbling! What can you have to grumble about, I should like to know?"

"Oh, father!" The three young faces raised themselves to his in wide-eyed protest. The exclamation was unanimous, but when it was over, there was a moment's silence before Hilary took up the strain.

"We are dull, father. We are tired of ourselves. You are all day long in your study; the boys spend their time out of doors; and we have no friends. In summer-time we don't feel it, for we live in the garden, and it is bright and sunny; but in winter it is dark and cold. No one comes to see us, the days are so long, and every day is like the last."

"My dear, you have the housework, and the other two have their lessons. You are only children as yet, and your school-days are not over. Most children are sent to boarding-schools, and have to work all day long. You have liberty and time to yourselves. I don't see why you should complain."

"Father, I should like to go to school—I long to go—I want to get on with my music, and Miss Briggs can't teach me any more."

"Father, when girls are at boarding-schools they have parties, and theatricals, and go to concerts, and have all sorts of fun. We never have anything like that."

"Father, I am not a child; I am nearly eighteen. Chrystabel Maynard was only seventeen at the beginning of the book!"

Mr. Bertrand stirred uneasily, and brushed the hair from his forehead. Chrystabel Maynard was one of his own heroines, and the allusion brought home the reality of his daughter's age as nothing else could have done. His glance passed by Norah and Lettice and lingered musingly on Hilary's face.

"Ha, what's this? The revolt of the daughters!" he cried. "Well, dears, you are quite right to be honest. If you have any grievances on your little minds, speak out for goodness' sake, and let me hear all about them. I am not an ogre of a father, who does not care what happens to his children, so long as he gets his own way. I want to see you happy . . . So you are seventeen, Hilary! I never realised it before. You are old enough to hear my reason for keeping you down here, and to judge if I am right. When your mother died, three years ago, I was left in London with seven children on my hands. You were fourteen then, a miserable anæmic creature, with a face like a tallow candle, and lips as white as paper. The boys came home from school and ran wild about the streets. I could not get on with my work for worrying about you all, and a man must work to keep seven children. I saw an advertisement of this house in the papers one day, and took it on the impulse of the moment. It seemed to me that you would all grow strong in this fine, mountain air, and that I could work in peace, knowing that you were out of the way of mischief. So far as the boys and myself are concerned, the plan has worked well. I get on with my work, and they enjoy running wild in their holidays; but the little lasses have pined, have they? Poor little lasses! I am sorry to hear that. Now come—the post brought me some cheques this morning, and I am inclined to be generous. Next week, or the week after, I must run up to London on business, and I will bring you each a nice present. Choose what it shall be, and I will get it for you if it is to be found in the length and breadth of the city. Now then, wish in turns. What will you have?"

"It's exactly like the father in *Beauty and the Beast*, before he starts on his travels! I am sure Lettice would like a white moss rose!" cried Norah roughly. "As for me, there is only one thing I want—lessons from the very best violin master in London!"

"Three servants who could work by electricity, and not keep me running after them all day long!"

"Half-a-dozen big country houses quite near to us, with sons and daughters in each, who would be our friends."

They were all breathless with eagerness, and Mr. Bertrand listened with wrinkled brow. He had expected to be asked for small articles of jewellery, or finery, and the replies distressed him, as showing that the discontent was more

deep-seated than he had imagined. For several moments he sat in silence, as though puzzling out a difficult problem. Then his brow cleared, and he smiled, his own, cheery smile.

"Hilary, pack your boxes, and get ready to go up to London with me on Monday week. If you are seventeen, you are old enough to pay visits, and we will stay for a fortnight with my old friend, Miss Carr, in Kensington. She is a clever woman, and I will talk to her and see what can be done. I can't work miracles, but I will do what I can

to please you. May I be allowed to have another cup of tea, Miss Seventeen?"

"Poor, dear, old father! Don't look so subdued. You may have a dozen if you like. Monday next! How lovely! You are the dearest father in all the world!"

Mr. Bertrand shrugged his shoulders. "When I give you your own way," he said drily. "Pass the cake, Lettice. If I have three grown-up daughters on my hands I must keep up my strength."

Lettice and Norah had a little conver-

sation on the stairs as they went upstairs to change their dresses for dinner.

"It's very nice for Hilary going up to London, but it doesn't do us any good. When is something going to happen for us?"

"I suppose we shall have to wait for our turn," sighed Lettice dolefully; but that very evening an unexpected excitement took place, though the Mouse's prophecy was fulfilled, inasmuch as it could hardly be called an incident of a cheerful nature.

(To be continued.)

HERCULES.

"Oh, it was grand to hear Of how he went, the champion of his race Mighty in war, mighty in love, now bent To more than human tasks, now lapt in ease, Now suffering, now enjoying. Strong vast soul, Tuned to heroic deeds, and set on high Above the range of common petty sins Too high to mate with an unequal soul Too full of striving for contented days."

Epic of Hades.

MANY years ago, how many hardly matters now, the writer of this article heard Ruskin lecture on the myths of the Greek legends.

That lecture was a revelation; the old mythological character so familiar in school books came forward dressed in new fashion and beauty; fables read in other and stranger lights revealed new wisdom; under the ideal lurked the real.

What depths of meaning lay hidden and many-folded under those quaint legends.

The lapse of time that has passed since then has hindered full recollection, but one sentence still stands out clearly in my memory: "Every time you open your window to the fresh morning air you are admitting Pallas Athéné;" and in Ruskin's skilful word-painting the cold, wise daughter of Zeus was presented to us under a new aspect.

The study of mythology to a thoughtful mind is pregnant with the deepest interest, we can drink deep draughts of wisdom out of these classic wells, nay, more, some of the truest lessons of humanity can be learned from those old fables.

Who amongst the youngest of us has not heard of Hercules, the most celebrated of all the heroes of antiquity? Hercules son of Zeus (Jupiter), the strong and much-enduring man whose mighty labours were rewarded by immortality. Hercules or Heracles as he is called by the Greeks is the hero of heroes; he is the impersonation of strength and energy, his life is the life of effort; he is the brave, strong, loving servant of humanity, the leveller of abuses, the champion against evil, the destroyer of monsters. What fairy story is so interesting as the life of this Greek hero; even in his cradle the wondrous babe strangles the serpent with his infant hands. In his eighteenth year while watching his father's oxen he slays the huge Nemean lion, and from this time his life is one recital of marvellous exploits.

There is a marble at Naples that represents him slaying the Hydra; this is one of the twelve labours that he undertook for Eurystheus, he was his servant for twelve years, after which he was to become immortal.

The Lernean hydra was a monster with nine heads that ravaged the country of Lerne near Argos, and dwelt in a swamp near the well of Amymone. Its middle head was immortal. A prodigious fight ensued. Hercules

struck off its heads with the club that he had cut for himself, but alas in the place of each head he cut off two new ones grew forth each time.

The old myth tells us that he was obliged to have recourse to the assistance of his faithful servant Iolaus, and that together they burnt away the heads of the monster and buried the immortal, never-dying head under a great rock.

What a strange story you say with a half smile, what a monstrous fable! who cares to read about Hercules nowadays!

Wait a moment, there is a lesson to be learned here, there is something to us unutterably pathetic in the picture of this strong but weary man, whose whole life was spent from the cradle to the funeral pyre in overcoming difficulties, who sinned but repented, who had brief moods of madness, who suffered and worked and lived and loved and did mighty deeds of good; Hercules the patient toiler, the destroyer of monsters!

What, shall the fearless arm and strong club teach us nothing? Has girlhood no difficult toils,

"Labours endured and hard-fought fights with ill
Now vanquished now triumphant,"

is there no hydra, no misshapen growth of evil to encounter and overcome?

Hercules was young and ardent, but for a long time his efforts were vain; the strong arm, the thick club availed nothing; for every severed head sprang up two others; the monster must be burned, utterly destroyed, not mutilated; and the living head buried under a rock.

The hydra is the embodiment of evil, Hercules is the impersonation of youth.

In the old mythologies the heroes of antiquity are represented in perpetual combat; impossible tasks are appointed, impossible actions achieved; to do and to suffer is the aim and object of their life; to win golden fruit, to slay monsters, to cleanse the foul abuses of the past, is the work of the young Hercules.

And herein lies a noble lesson.

The Book of books teaches us that life is a battleground, a perpetual combat from the cradle to the grave; the infant Hercules strangled the serpent, but in the flush of his youth the Nemean lion met him, later on the monster hydra towered in his path.

So do evil habits stretch their misshapen heads before our eyes in every life, in yours and mine, dear girls, is the old story of Hercules and the hydra enacted.

We overcome sloth, we rise perhaps a little earlier than our wont that our devotions may be less hurried, or some necessary work be done, we do it unwillingly but still we achieve it; that is striking off one of the heads of the hydra.

Perhaps sloth or want of energy is our besetting sin; conscience tells us this, and the grace of God in our hearts leads us to a

fervent resolve to wage war against this enemy of our peace.

We arm ourselves with our club, a very tough and weird resolution, we will perform such and such a task, we say there shall be no more idleness, no more half-hearted presence at work.

Ah, take care! Hercules had to summon assistance; the head may be struck off, the task done, but what if two more heads, pride and self-pleasing, spring up in its place; the lesson may be learned, the work done, but if we have relied on ourselves, if we have inconvenienced others in our mode of doing it, it will be the old story of the hydra again.

There is one specious form of temptation common to girls of an imaginative and impulsive temperament, the longing to do something great—something out of the common order of things. Dickens has embodied this idea very cleverly in his never-to-be-forgotten character of Mrs. Jellaby, whose eyes were ever directed to Africa and missions, while her husband and children were neglected at home.

These sort of star-gazing, far-looking natures would willingly lead a crusade to the end of the earth, when perhaps their mission is a sick mother or a tiresome younger sister at home; they would rather pick lint for hospitals than mend their own stockings. There is a quaint old poem called "Doe the nexte thyng" that touches finely on this thought and seems to clear up doubt, for if we "do the next thing" we shall surely do our duty.

Yes dear girls,

"Do it immediately
Do it with prayer,
Do it relyantly
Casting all care,
Do it with reverence
Tracing His Hand
Who hath placed it before thee
With earnest command,
Stayed on omnipotence
Safe 'neath His wing
Secure all resulting
Do the next thing."

Little duties lovingly undertaken, petty offences patiently borne, kind words blunting the edge of hasty ones, a gentle welcome to the weary father and mother at the end of a toilsome day; cheerfulness cultivated as a duty and selfish gloom repelled as an enemy, tiny seeds of daily virtue dropped broadcast into the soil of life; these seem little things, but as we do them we are burning out and reducing to ashes one of the many heads of the hydra, for as exercise braces the muscles so effort strengthens the moral fibres of our nature and gives us force for the Herculean labour of our lives, the overcoming our bad habits and the evil habits and the evil tendencies of our own natures.

ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY.

OUR PUZZLE POEM REPORT: "ON A VISIT TO THE COUNTRY."

SOLUTION.

ON A VISIT TO THE COUNTRY.

I went forth into the kitchen to make a cup of tea
And nearly died of terror, or as nearly as could be,
It only proved to be a bird attempting liberty.
And then I went into the air, and sat upon a seat,
But presently the ground did rock, rise up, and then retreat;
But it turned out to be a mole in search of things to eat.
But, O my nerves! when from the ground a lump of earth was shot,
And out there sprang a frightened worm, with wriggles quite a lot—
A dragon come to eat me up, and coming at a trot!
Then Mary brought the cup of tea before I scarce could scream,
I drank it down, and then confessed, with penitence extreme,
That yesternight with currant tart I overdid the cream!

PRIZE WINNERS.

Half-a-Guinea Each.

Murray Jardine Bell, Keig Manse, Aberdeen.
B. Bryson, Ponton Lodge, Staines Road, Sunbury, Middlesex.
Elizabeth M. Caple, 1, Prospect Place, Beechen Cliff, Bath.
Miss M. Hodgkinson, 2, Feversham Terrace, York.
Carolina V. M. Leggett, Burg Hall, Burg, Lincolnshire.
Ellen M. Price, 38, Eleanor Street, South Shields.
Lucy Richardson, 1, Bootham Terrace, York.
Kate Robinson, The Laurels, Claybrooke, Rugby.
W. Fitzjames White, Albert Drive, Low Fell, Gateshead.
Elizabeth Yarwood, 110, Bramhall Lane, Stockport.

Very Highly Commended.

Eliza Acworth, Mary E. Ball, Elsie Bayley, N. Campbell, Ethel Dickson, Edith E. Grundy, Ellen H. Kemp, E. King, Mrs. W. and Robert Murdock, Rosa Oliver, Gertrude Peace, Ida Rafford, Ethel J. Shepard, Fanny Shepard, M. Short, Ellen R. Smith, Gertrude Smith, Mrs. Isabel Snell, Mary E. Spencer, Ellen C. Tarrant, Emily M. P. Wood.

Highly Commended.

A. J. Batchelor, M. J. Champeys, Helen M. Coulthard, Dr. R. Swan Coulthard, R. D. Davis, Cecil Dawes, E. S. Dickson, C. M. A. FitzGerald, M. J. F. FitzGerald, Thomas Gordon, F. M. Haines, Mrs. A. D. Harris, Lily Hawley, Edith M. Higgs, E. A. Knight, E. Mastin, F. Miller, Ida Seabrook, Edith Shakespeare, A. C. Sharp, Ethel E. Spencer, Mary M. Tanner, Constance Taylor, Mary J. Taylor, Bettie Temple, C. E. Thurgar, Violet C. Todd, G. S. Wilkins, Emily C. Woodward.

Honourable Mention.

Maud L. Ansell, Mrs. Ashby, S. A. Baldwin, Ellen Baron, Rev. S. Bell, Lydia Belling, A. W. Blott, Eliza Blunt, Mary Bolingbroke, Amy Briand, E. I. Brideaux, Louie Bull, Edith M. Burr, Ethel F. Burr, A. C. Carter, Rev. F. T. Chamberlain, Rev. J. Chambers, Mary I. Chislett, Rebecca Clarke, Constance H. B. Cook, Mrs. Crossman, Elie

Crossman, E. G. Dalton, Edith A. Davies-Cook, S. F. Edmond, Amy G. Fasham, Mrs. F. Farrar, A. and F. Fooks, Mrs. W. H. Gotch, Florence Graves, Mrs. Grubbe, Mary Howard, Dorothy Hault, J. Hunt, Alice E. Johnson, E. M. Le Mottée, Florence J. McDermid, Ethel M. Morris, Mrs. Musgrave, Mrs. Nicholls, Annie Page, Phyllis Pearson, Mildred Richardson, Ada Rickards, Gertrude Saffery, M. Saffery, Annie Saunders, Eliza J. Scarle, Alfred Scott, Janet Scott, M. Shadforth, A. A. Lucy Shave, M. H. Shepherd, Anthea M. Stevenson, Ellen Thurtell, Ethel Tomlinson, Annie L. Trendell, Alice M. West, Frances Whitlocke, Florence Whitlock, M. Wilkins, Mrs. E. A. Wilson, Mary Woodcock, Alice Woodhead.

EXAMINERS' REPORT.

That is the worst of visiting the country. You think you are so invigorated by the fresh air that you can do anything with impunity. Some portion of your newly imagined strength is sure to be devoted to fruit and cream and other unwholesome things, and hysterical indigestion follows as a matter of course. Now in London no one ever thinks of eating too much cream, but whether that is because of the eater's lack of strength or the cream's is a question we need not discuss. The moral is the same in either case, "Stay at home." And let us say that to be able to point such a pleasing moral at the close of a long holiday affords us much peculiar satisfaction.

Now for the puzzle. It was clearly a difficult one and the number of solutions was much smaller than usual. But in spite of the difficulties ten perfect solutions were sent in, most of them by experienced solvers; and there was no need to hesitate as to the destination of the prizes. For once in a way, solutions having a good honest mistake receive honourable mention, and far be it from us to say that they do not deserve it.

Several solutions unaccountably omitted the "or" in line 2, but the first real difficulty proved to be the "tempting" picture in line 3. Of the alternative readings "longed for" was the favourite and it was presented in two ways—"that longed for liberty," the th being evolved out of nothing, and "at longed for liberty." The first can be dismissed as unwarranted, while as for the second we may say that the freedom of a kitchen is not the kind of liberty desired by most birds. On the other hand, assuming that the bird had escaped from a cage, the reading is not hopelessly absurd, and we allowed as much credit for it as possible.

All kinds of words were substituted for "rock" in line 5, but not one of them was so acceptable as the original. In the following line the thinness of the g was generally recognised though a few competitors wrote "geese" (gs=geese!) instead of "things." What expression does a mole assume when it is hunting for geese, and how much cream would an ordinary mortal have to devour before being in a condition to discern it?

Several solvers asked if there was not a superfluous a in this line. It all depends upon how you spell arch; the puzzle editor (in his professional capacity) spells it rich, and who shall say he is not justified?

"Snake" was a very common substitute for "worm" in the eighth line; the picture might do duty for either, but the story loses something of its point by the introduction of a snake. People who are not the victims of indigestion are often frightened at the appearance of a snake.

The tenth line proved to be a very troublesome one, but the true rendering occurred to

many solvers who failed at less difficult points. It is strange that in all the puzzles there has not been one point which has baffled every competitor. There is still something left for the "puzzle editor" to live for.

A. W. H.—Avril should be spelt with a small a, and we had to adjudicate accordingly. Obviously we cannot take the mistakes of others into consideration though your contention is natural enough.

FOREIGN AWARDS.

POISSON D'AVRIL.

Prize Winners (Half-a-Guinea Each).

Florence E. Bapty, Farnley Hall, Pedder Road, Cumballa Hill, Bombay.
Miss D. R. Wates, Elmwood, Priestman's River, Portland, Jamaica.

Very Highly Commended.

Philippa M. Kemlo (Cape Colony), Hilda D'Rozario (Bangalore).

Highly Commended.

Sadie Barrat (Canada), M. Browne (S. India), Mrs. Catford (Barbados), Dagmar Hentsch (Paris), Anna I. Hood (Pas de Calais), Gertrude Hunt (Auckland), F. G. B. King (Barbados), Cecilia Nicolay (Western Australia), Maud C. Ogilvie (Deccan), Frank and Ruth Ondatje (Ceylon), Nina Reid (New Zealand), Florence Stephenson (Cape Town).

Honourable Mention.

Evalyn T. Austin (Victoria, Australia), Winifred Baker (Dresden), Florence L. Beckman (New York), Ethel Bever (Ceylon), Winifred Bizzey (Canada), C. H. Cather (Malta), Annie I. Cunningham (Demerara), Victoria E. Drake (Victoria, Australia), Mrs. Hardy, Clara J. Hardy, and Edith Hardy (Melbourne), M. Heath (Cape Colony), Mrs. T. Hill (Victoria, Australia), D. H. Lyall (near Cape Town), D. Muecke (South Australia), Nellie B. Muir (near Cape Town), Mary Ruttonji (Deccan), Ethel Sanderson (Barbados), Mrs. Sprigg (Cape Colony), Ruth Sutherland (South Australia), Herbert Traill (Bombay), Gladys Wilding (New Zealand).

STILL-LIFE.

Prize Winners (Half-a-Guinea Each).

Miss Maryat c/o Mrs. Lynall Thomas, 5, Rue Danehouden, Bruges, Belgium.
Gladys Wilding, Opawa, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Very Highly Commended.

Mrs. A. D. Edwards (Blomfontein), Violet Hewett (Canada), W. K. Smith (Brisbane).

Highly Commended.

Sadie Barrat (Canada), Mrs. Catford (Barbados), Annie Hunt (Victoria, Australia), F. G. B. King (Barbados), M. V. Miller (New Zealand).

Honourable Mention.

Jean Andrew (New South Wales), Mrs. H. Andrews (Canada), Florence F. Bapty (Bombay), Elsie Bethune (Canada), Miss Bhabha (Mysore), Charlotte Brown (Victoria, Australia), Victoria E. Drake (Melbourne), Hilda D'Rozario (Bangalore), John A. Fitzmaurice (Victoria, Australia), Mrs. Gartshore (Jamaica), Flontilla Greaves (Barbados), Clara J. Hardy (Melbourne), Constance Ingpen (South Australia), A. Lincoln (Madras Pres.), Kate Moore (Victoria, Australia), Maud C. Ogilvie (Deccan), L. Plunkett (Poona), Evelyn Russell (Melbourne), Helen Shilstone (Barbados), H. L. Thomas (California).

STUDY AND STUDIO.



TRINITY.—Your idea of the snowdrop as an emblem is quite your own. That flower has, as doubtless you know, been consecrated to the Virgin Mary, since it appears on or about the Feast of the Purification, and is spotless in aspect. We consider this a better association of thoughts than the one you embody in your lines, as the distinction between the "Threes" is not sufficiently marked in the flower to carry out your comparison. As for the lines themselves, it would be better to keep them all alike, either of seven, or of eight syllables in length. But apart from these criticisms, we can say that your thoughts regarding "Faith, Hope, and Charity" and the snowdrop are pretty, especially in one verse—

"Love, that bids thee to the earth
Prophesy the sweet Spring's birth,
Though thou art denied its mirth."

PHOENIX OF DEAD-MOUNTAIN.—What a very delightful letter you have written us! If you have no girl correspondents it is a great pity, for you certainly have an unusual talent for letter-writing. We have no corrections to make, save that it would perhaps be better to say "I have never stayed" rather than "I have never been staying;" and it is not strictly correct to say that one thing is "more perfect" than another—perfect, not admitting of comparison—while "but which" (page 3) is inadmissible in its connection. These are rather far-fetched criticisms, and we must repeat that the reading of your letter, word by word, has been a very great pleasure to us. We wish you success in your examinations. There is no English degree exactly corresponding to that of the French "Licentiate." The Matriculation Examination of the University of London is a usual one for girls and boys of about the age you name. You might certainly prepare for that, or for the Senior Cambridge; but the B.A. (London) requires two successive examinations, at a distance of time from each other, and you would need to matriculate in one year, take your first B.A. in the next year, your second B.A. in the third year, under the most favourable conditions. You can obtain all particulars respecting the entrance examination to Girton from Miss Kensington, 1, Gloucester Terrace, Hyde Park, London; and respecting the "Senior Cambridge," from Dr. Keynes, Syndicate Buildings, Cambridge. We should be glad to hear from you again. Perhaps when you are older you will revert to the exercise of your pen which caused you such delight in early youth, and translate the unusual experiences and varied scenery of your life into poetry or prose.

STUDENT.—Only two questions may be answered at once.—1. The subjects in which the candidate passes are set forth at the foot of the first class certificate of the College of Preceptors we have seen.—2. The London University Matriculation is a far more difficult test than the first class College of Preceptors' examination. Address for particulars of either, College of Preceptors, Bloomsbury Square, W.C.; Registrar, University of London, Burlington Gardens, W. The fee for the Matriculation is £2, for the College of Preceptors' examination 10s.

TOPSY.—We are interested in your wish to improve yourself, but the choice of subjects for home study depends largely upon taste and inclination, as well as upon previous acquirement, so that we find it a little difficult to suggest any particular books to guide you. You could educate yourself, really, in almost any subject, at your age, by application. The history of your own or other countries, the French, German, or Italian languages, the history of art (Renaissance period), different branches of science, the art of essay-writing and composition, all are useful and attractive subjects that you could study alone. Perhaps if you wish more definite guidance in any one of them you will write again; and no doubt you have observed the numerous references in this column to societies for the help of home students.

L. K. N.—We asked the origin of the quotation you give, "This life to love but it is a double life to be beloved," for another correspondent last month, and we hope to receive some answers in "Our Open Letter Box."

VIOLET HORSLEY.—Do not apologise for writing to us. We are glad to hear from you, and are sure you will improve in the direction you speak of, since you are so much in earnest. Our rules, however, preclude us from answering more than two questions at a time.—1. "Ever upon the topmost roof our banner of England blew," is from the "Defence of Lucknow," a poem by Tennyson.—2. The 25th of September, 1857, was a Friday.

SAMASCO.—1. There are Moravian Schools at Bedford; Fairfield, near Manchester; Fulneck, near Leeds; Gomersal, near Leeds; Lower Wyke, near Bradford, Yorks; Ockbrook, near Derby; Tytherton, near Chippenham; also at Neuwied on the Rhine, Germany.—2. We do not understand if your second query is separate from, or identical with, the first, but if separate, we could highly recommend Miss Wills' Maison Fleurie, Lausanne, as an excellent school for a delicate girl. The education and influence at the Moravian Schools are said to be excellent, but we know nothing as to their suitability for delicate children.

MISCELLANEOUS.

PRESBYTERIAN.—1. Any good encyclopedia will give you a brief history of your church. In England it dates from the time of Wickliffe and the Lollards, in the XIVth and XVth centuries; the first separate congregation was formed at Wandsworth in 1572. In the U.S. of America the first (English speaking) was formed in Maryland. To mount maps or prints on calico or linen, get a smooth deal board and tack the cloth firmly and closely upon it, taking care that the grain or threads of the cloth run perfectly straight, not in wavy lines. Then coat it with strong size and leave it till nearly dry. The back of the map must then be evenly covered with good paste (not very watery), that called "gloy" is, perhaps, the best. Let the first coat have time to sink into the paper, say for about ten minutes, then apply another and lay it on the cloth, and dab it all over with a clean cloth, smoothing out the edges and expelling any superfluous paste, and when perfectly dry cut off the waste cloth margin.

JULY inquires why wives take the surnames of their husbands. We think you need only reflect a little to find some good reasons; but we may tell you that the custom is a very old one, and obtained amongst the ancient Romans, whence we derived it. The wife of Pompey was distinguished from other Julias by the addition "of Pompey." Our married women only omit the word "of." In some foreign countries—notably in Switzerland—the case is reversed, and the man takes the wife's name, but in addition to, and following his own. Thus, the well-known Genevese historian, Merle (blackbird), married an Englishwoman of the Daubeneys family, and styled himself Merle D'Aubigny, having Frenchified the English name; and English people unacquainted with this fact, have fallen into the error of calling his work *D'Aubigny's History of the Reformation*. He died in 1872.

CORA.—No. Van Eyck was not the inventor of oil-painting, but he revived the art. He was born and died between about 1340 and 1440, whose paintings of some kind are traced back to about 2100 years B.C., when Asymandias, a great King of Egypt, had his acts recorded in painting and sculpture on his own magnificent statue at Thebes. Polignotta, the earliest known Greek painter, who flourished about 422 B.C., decorated one of the public porticoes of Athens, and depicted the remarkable events of the Trojan war. Apelles (B.C. 332) is the next on historical record as a painter, and is said to be the first who produced perfected specimens of oil-painting; and then the art seems to have disappeared and was not revived till the end of the XIIIth century.

LOVER OF HISTORY should endeavour to obtain the *Egyptian Research Report for 1895*, and read what Professor Petrie says on the subject of the late wonderful discoveries made by Mr. J. C. Quibell. The former says that "no greater mystery existed in the ages of Egypt than the space between the Vth and the XIth dynasties, which has been cleared up by the discovery that a foreign people had occupied Egypt during the period. In the tombs (excavated) were burials of a wholly un-Egyptian character belonging to the invaders, who afterwards succumbed to the rising power of the XIth dynasty. We need not hesitate to term this 'new race' the Lybyan invaders, . . . a people who inhabited some yet undefined region of northern Africa. That these people were a branch of the 'Neolithic Race' of Europe, is also agreed by those most familiar with prehistoric man, although these Lybyans were just beyond the neolithic state of culture at the date of their invasion of Egypt."

MILLY.—The origin of the name "cab" is found in the French word *cabriolet*, of which it is a contraction; *cabri* means a kid (which is a quick traveller going by skips), and a public hackney coach was jokingly called a cabriolet, while a private carriage was called a *cabie à la crême*. The term "fly," by which in country towns the cab or hackney coach is designated, is also a contraction—i.e. of "Fly-by-nights"—instituted in 1809 by one John Butcher, a carpenter. At that time they were only "sedan chairs" for the use of ladies by night. The labour entailed on two carriers was then reduced by setting them on wheels, which increased the speed, and after that a horse was employed. On the panels of this small vehicle the owner painted an owl, and around it the motto *Nocte Volantur* (We fly by night). Very small *voitures à trois* chairs, or carriages, are in use in some of our watering places significantly called "midges," carrying out the original idea of a fly.

DIOT.—1. If your friend introduced you to her *Antioch*, you would, of course, at once acquaint her with him in a friendly manner for her sake. You must wait for an introduction.—2. On entering a room you should speak first to the lady of the house, if possible, but you are wise enough to see that in a crowded gathering you may be obliged to speak to many people before you can reach your hostess. This does not alter the rule. It is quite immaterial who speaks first, the guest who has already arrived or the last comer, we should say the latter.

CONSTANCE S.—If your cat suffer from fits, she is not safe, and rabies might ensue. Let a veterinary surgeon see her, and put her under treatment.

Answers
to
Correspondents.