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LADIES AT HOME



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THE DEBUTANTE.

The Story of a Child.

BY MARGARET DELAND.

"MY own opinion is," said Mrs. Dale, "that he heard they were coming to Old Chester again, and he felt that his presence would be an embarrassment to her, and so went away. Very properly. I'm sure; it shows very nice feeling in a person like Mr. Tommy."

"Well, perhaps so," Mrs. Wright agreed; "but I don't know why he should shut up his little house, and go away, dear knows where, just because she is to be in Old Chester for the summer. Suppose he was foolish when she was here before; I don't know but what it shows a little conceit on Mr. —on his part, to think that his presence makes any difference to Jane—I mean to her." Mrs. Wright corrected herself nervously, glancing at the little figure curled up on the steps of the porch.

Mrs. Dale raised a cautioning finger. "Children do understand things in the most astonishing way," she said in a low voice.

"Oh, yes," Mrs. Wright said quickly. "I didn't mean to mention names, I'm sure. But it is so awkward to have the apothecary shop shut up, and have to go to Willie King's for one's medicines, all because Jane Temple—Oh, dear me!" ended Mrs. Wright blankly.

"She didn't hear you," Mrs. Dale assured her: "it's almost her bed-time, and she will go in in a few minutes. But do be careful, dear Susy."

Mrs. Wright, who despite her forty-five years was still in the bubbling inconsequence of youth, said nervously, "Oh, my gracious, yes! I didn't mean to. Only the Temples haven't been in Old Chester for four years, and I'm sure that is time enough for him to have forgotten that he was ever so foolish as to think of—of her," said Mrs. Wright, swallowing the name; "and I'm sure she never encouraged him."

"Of course not," Mrs. Dale agreed.

"They are talking about Mr. Henry Temple's sister," the child on the steps reflected; "and they are talking about Mr. Tommy Dove going away and leaving his house all shut up. They have to talk about those things because they are grown up."

In her heart she pitied them, but not too deeply to disturb the joy of that delicious melancholy that a child feels in the summer twilight. She put her head down on her arm and looked up into the branches of the locust-trees, standing, sentinel-like, on either side of the porch. She followed with her eyes the curious outlines of the gnarled and twisted limbs as they were drawn against the violet of the evening sky. She knew these outlines well; they met and crossed in a way that suggested the arm and clenched hand of an airy giant imprisoned by the growing branches. She had, long ago, fashioned a story to suit the tree picture. She said to herself that when her grandfather died this hand was stretched out to rob her of her grandmother, too, but that the wrinkled branches of the friendly trees had caught it and held the giant fast; when the wind blew, she could hear him whispering and complaining, but the faithful trees kept him a prisoner so that he could do no harm. The thought that he might ever escape made her shudder; it occurred to her that it would be wise to do something to keep the trees friendly; perhaps, water them every evening.

Such plans led her far away from the talk of the grown people. She did not hear Mrs. Wright say that if only "he"

had been in a different walk of life she would have been glad enough to have had "her" marry him. "Her life in her brother's family can't be very happy," said Mrs. Wright; "her sister-in-law is such a wretched invalid, that she, poor dear, has to give herself up to the housekeeping and to those two children. She ought to have a home of her own. Of course she would be lonely, but an unmarried woman must expect to be lonely." Mrs. Wright said this with as much severity as a plump woman can; she tried to have Christian charity for every one, but, being happily married herself, she found it hard to excuse Jane Temple's single life.

"Yes," Mrs. Dale admitted briefly, and then added, "but it is better to be lonely than wish to be alone. If she had married a man so different from herself, she might have come to that."

The child, sensitive to the change in her grandmother's voice, looked up, and her little forehead gathered in anxious wrinkles; she thought she would like to take Mrs. Dale's hand and kiss it, and say, "don't be sorry!" She listened for some comment from Mrs. Wright, but none came. How still they were, these two, sitting in the darkness! The full skirt of her grandmother's silk dress looked as though it were carved out of black marble, and above it glimmered whitely the old solemn face that she loved and feared; Mrs. Wright's comfortable form seemed to melt into mystery; and suddenly, as she looked at the two motionless figures, all the intangible dumb terrors of childhood began to rise in her throat. Oh, if they would only speak; if she could hear some other sound than the high faint stir of the leaves above her and, far away, below the terrace, the prolonged note of the cicada!

"Suppose," she said to herself, her eyes widening with fright,— "suppose that all of a sudden grandmother's head and Mrs. Wright's head were to roll off, and roll down the steps, right here, beside me!" Her breath caught in a sob of terror. The vision of the rolling heads frightened her to the last point of endurance; she could not trust her voice to say good-night, but darted down the steps and ran, her knees trembling under her, along the path to the back of the house. She knew that the servants would be in the kitchen; yawning, very likely, over the good books Mrs. Dale provided for their edification, or rocking and sewing in stolid comfort, but alive—speaking! In her rush along the dewy path the child had a ghastly thought of a dead world, herself the only living thing in it; but this was followed by the instant reflection that, under the circumstances, she might walk into the queen's palace and put on a crown; this thought was so calming that when she reached the women she had no desire to throw herself into Betsy's arms, as she had planned to do, declaring that she would be a good girl forever afterwards. This promise had seemed to Ellen necessary as a bribe to something; but, her passionate fright over, the impulse faded, and she was content to pin Betsy's shawl around her waist and walk up and down the kitchen with a queenly tread, absorbed in visions of future if solitary greatness.

The two ladies upon the porch were rather relieved by her flight, though Mrs. Wright checked her kindly gossip long enough to say, "Why, what is the matter with Ellen?"

"She has gone to tell Betsy to put her to bed, I suppose," Mrs. Dale said. "Dear me, Susy, she is a great care. I wish she were like your Lydia, quiet and well behaved. I often think I'm too old to train a child; and she is very like

her mother. Poor Lucy was not brought up according to our ideas, you know."

"She reminds me of Dr. Dale, sometimes," said Mrs. Wright, who was conspicuous in Old Chester for always saying the wrong thing.

Mrs. Dale's face hardened. "I only wish she may grow to be like my dear husband in—in amiability."

"Oh, dear me, yes!" cried Mrs. Wright with an exuberance that betrayed her. "Dear Dr. Dale!"

Mrs. Dale bowed her head.

The thoughts of both these women were on Dr. Eben Dale—one with honest pity, the other with the scorch of mortification and anger. He was dead, the brilliant, weak old man—dead, and escaped from his wife's fierce rectitude. In their youth she had harassed him with the passionate spur of exacting love, but later that had been exchanged for contempt. And then he died. No one guessed her grief, covered as it was by bitterness, and yet no one knew her fear of that joyous and imaginative temperament which had made it easy for him to go wrong, and which she saw repeated in her grandchild.

When Mrs. Wright said that little Ellen was like her grandfather, Mrs. Dale's heart contracted; she lost her interest in Jane Temple's affairs; she began to examine her conscience as to whether she was doing her duty to the child. It seemed to her that her husband was looking at her from Ellen's eyes—looking and laughing, as though he and she took up the old quarrel again.

"Like her grandfather!" Mrs. Dale's thin old hands clasped each other in a tremulous grip. "Oh—no—no!" she said to herself. "Oh, if my Heavenly Father will only give me grace to train her for Him!"

II.

Old Chester is a hundred years behind the times; so, at least, it is assured by its sons and daughters who have left it to live in the great world, but who come back, sometimes, for condescending visits to old homes. The town lies among the rolling hills of western Pennsylvania—hills which have never echoed with the scream of the locomotive, but are folded in a beautiful green silence, broken only by the silken ripple of little streams which run across the meadows or through the dappled shadows of the woods.

There is not much variety in Old Chester. The houses are built in very much the same way; broad porches; square rooms on either side of a wide hall that runs from the front door to the back; open fireplaces like black caverns under tall wooden mantelpieces. In all the gardens the flower-beds are surrounded by stiff box hedges, and all the orchards are laid out in straight lines.

The people are as much alike as their houses; they read the same books, go to the same church, train their children by the same rules, and are equally polite, reserved, and gently critical of one another.

Perhaps the most striking thing about the village is the way in which the children are brought up. In Old Chester young persons are supposed to be seen, and not heard; they are taught that when they have the privilege of being in the company of their elders and betters it is to profit by example and be grateful for advice. Thus they early perceive that their opinions are of no importance—a perception which adds greatly to the comfort of grown persons.

In spite of this admirable system, there has been more than one black sheep in the village. There was Eben Dale himself, although his youth dated so very far back that perhaps his maturity should not be quoted against Old Chester. Henry Temple, too, had not turned out well, except in a worldly way; and the worldly way was of small importance in Old Chester. Indeed, without quite putting it into words, the village felt a little lack of gentility in Henry's undoubted wealth; and that, added to his change in politics, and his indifference to church matters, and his willingness to live in the great world instead of the village, was enough to make

Old Chester say that he had "not turned out well." "Such a pity that his father was so lenient with him!" people said, and waited calmly for some Nemesis to overtake him; it being a peculiarity of Old Chester to believe that an overruling Providence agreed with it in questions of desert.

There had been one instance of over-severity in the village, but only one, and that not among the families of importance. This was in the case of Mr. Tommy Dove, the apothecary. His mother had ruled him with an iron rod until his forty-seventh year; then death pushed her from her throne, and left Mr. Tommy free, except indeed for the restraint of tenderness, which death, kindly but untrue, left in her place. Yet he soon rallied into self-reliance—"remarkably soon," Old Chester commented disapprovingly; for within three months after her death he took advantage of his liberty to go gadding about the world, leaving his patrons to get their medicines where they might.

Dates were remembered chronologically in the village. "Dr. Dale gave up practice the winter that the first Mrs. Drayton died;" "Henry Temple voted the wrong ticket the year there was a snowstorm when the apple-trees were in bloom;" and "Mr. Tommy's first ill-regulated action in mysteriously leaving town took place the summer that Henry Temple and his family were here."

Mr. Tommy was hardly important enough to gossip about, but Mr. Temple was; and, incidentally, his children were discussed, for spoiling Richard and Euphemia was another of his sins. Not even his sister's efforts to train them could make up for his shocking carelessness, people said. That Miss Jane was gentle and timid and self-distrustful, as every unmarried woman should be, and the children, unfortunately, were like their father, headstrong and self-satisfied. So how could she discipline them?

Besides, the summer of the Temples' first visit—the summer Mr. Tommy had disappeared—Miss Jane had a small happiness and interest of her own, which no doubt claimed the thought that might have been given to Effie and Dick. It was not a very exciting happiness; only a pleasant talk now and then with Mr. Dove, or an occasional call from him in those fragrant summer evenings. They would sit alone, these two elderly persons, in the dimly lighted drawing-room, hearing a murmur of talk in the library across the hall, or starting with a fright which neither of them understood if a door opened and closed, or if Mr. Henry Temple's voice were heard in the hall. Mr. Dove had dared to give Miss Temple a bunch of flowers, once; and once, too, had embarrassed and touched her by bringing her a little green crape shawl which had belonged to his mother. It was all very harmless and very pleasant, when, suddenly, Old Chester learned with astonishment that its apothecary had gone! Of course the reason could not long be concealed: Mr. Tommy, the village declared, aghast and disapproving, but grateful for a bit of gossip,—Mr. Tommy had made love to Jane Temple.

But that was four years ago and Mr. Tommy, who returned as soon as the Temples had left the village, had behaved so properly ever since that his presumption was not remembered against him, until now, when they were coming back again, a second abrupt and mysterious departure brought it all to mind.

"So foolish in Mr. Tommy," every one said severely, and looked at Jane Temple to see how she took it. Miss Temple took it calmly. There was a quick, surprised glance at the closed house standing in its neglected garden, and a little heightened color in her cheek when she went to Willie King's to have one of Mrs. Temple's prescriptions filled. Perhaps she was too busy for any embarrassment, or regret, or wonder; her sister-in-law's health was an absorbing anxiety; Effie's lessons had to be looked after; Dick needed her to keep his fishing-lines in order; Mr. Temple was so good as to let her be of use in his literary work to the extent of copying manuscript for him. Beside, there was a certain occupation in the mere delight of being back again in her old home, among old friends. This quiet, old-fashioned, living which

afforded Mr. Henry Temple much diversion, was dear and sacred to her. There was nothing droll to her ears in being called a "girl;" it gave her a pathetic happiness to have Mrs. Dale apologize for speaking of a delicate subject in her presence. "I forgot you were here, my dear," Mrs. Dale said; and Miss Jane blushed, properly and prettily, and felt comforted and cared for. She knew more of the great, indifferent, vulgar world than Mrs. Dale ever dreamed of, but she cast down her eyes unaffectedly when the older women apologized for speaking of the misconduct of a village girl. She wished she might draw Dick and Effie into this tranquil life which so refreshed her. She looked at these two young persons, and pitied them because they did not know Youth. Here in Old Chester, how carefully Youth was guarded! It was still protected and considered when maturity had set its mark about soft lips and gentle eyes. It was done by snubbing, Henry Temple said, but Miss Jane never felt snubbed; she saw only kindly protection in the condescension which so amused her brother, and her elderly starved heart basked in it with great content. She was so modest, so grateful, that her friends were pleased to say of her that Jane had no "airs." This most satisfying praise could not be given to the rest of the

Temple household; the two children were especially "airy," and "snubbing" became a matter of duty to all thoughtful persons. "That unfortunate Temple child," Old Chester said, in speaking of Effie, "must really be reprov'd." The reproof was only the rebuke of a grave manner and a discreet indifference to what she said and did, but it astounded and irritated the child. To hear herself addressed, on the rare occasions when she was noticed, as Euphemia instead of Effie—for Old Chester did not approve of nick-names—filled her with childish rage.

"My name's Effie; I don't like to be called Euphemia," she retorted glibly; and she gave her opinion of Old Chester, in this connection, with great freedom and force to Ellen Dale. "How queer and old-fashioned everybody is here," she said, "and how funny to be called Ellen; it's such an ugly name! Why don't you make your grandmother call you Nellie?"

"Make" her grandmother! Ellen, who was really a year older than the fine young lady who addressed her, shivered; yet there was no other Old Chester child so quickly influenced by Effie Temple as she.

(To be Continued.)

Mrs. Aubrey, of the Pines.

WHO was she, what was she, that young and handsome Mrs. Aubrey, of The Pines? That is just what nobody about the neighborhood of Tooting could have told. No one knew a bit more about her now than they had when she came to the queer old house, four years ago. It had been to let furnished, "with its extensive grounds and good stabling," for a long time. Then suddenly the London agent came, took down the "To Let" board, turned in cleaners, and a week later down came the new tenant, this young widow lady, with an elderly man servant and three women servants, the latter just engaged, and strangers to their new mistress. The man was believed to be an old servant, but he knew how to be silent. All attempts to "pump" Barton were met by a taciturn, even gruff, "My mistress's affairs are her concern, not mine. I know nothing about her but what is good."

She was well off, and free-handed where need or suffering reached her notice. Beyond the good vicar's occasional visits Mrs. Aubrey saw no visitors nor did she visit, but lived her own solitary and sorrowful life. She walked, drove, rode, but always alone save for her attendant, Barton. She dressed well, but not in mourning; so, said the busy tongues, if she was a widow, she must have been one a long time before she came to the Pines. No one could say, however, that she had ever herself said that she either was or was not a widow; nor had the servants, or the vicar even, ever heard her make the least allusion to her husband.

Perhaps even her name was not her own. One thing the vicar noticed, and this was that Mrs. Aubrey was always eager to assist any woman whose distress was brought about by the loss of a child, or of the husband or by her having a bad husband. His own idea was that the mysterious tenant of The Pines was not a widow, but a deserted wife; he kept his conjecture to himself however, as he should, and gave no idle gossip the right to say "the vicar said this, or thinks that."

And by degrees, as time went on four years, gossip died down into a sort of quiescence for want of fresh food.

Of course Mrs. Aubrey's wealth was much exaggerated by gossip, and it was said that she kept valuable plate and jewels at the isolated old house; some added that Barton had grimly hinted that at night both himself and his mistress kept loaded firearms within reach. Which last *on dit* was likely true enough, for Mrs. Aubrey was one of those quietly determined-looking women who have any amount of pluck in reserve, both physical and moral.

One September night, after the servants had retired, and doors and windows were shuttered and barred, Margaret Aubrey threw aside her book and began pacing the drawing-room, locking and unlocking the slender white hands as if mere physical movement were, at least, some relief to the mental pain which nothing could dispel—to-day, too, of all others in the year—her wedding-day, eight long years ago; a happy girl-bride, loving and beloved; ah, surely yes, he had loved her then—wild sinner though she too soon learned he had been, and was again, after a brief year or so of happiness.

Bitter, pitiless retrospect gave it all back now with terrible vividness; the gradual change from lover's devotion to neglect, the yielding to old temptations, dissipation and unfaith, the shame and misery of it all, the cruel heart-break and then desertion.

Time and again, half mad with remorse in the earlier period of his drifting back, he had vowed reform, and she, the wife, had forgiven him; it was shame and dishonor to her wifehood, she told him. She had her own little fortune, and he had the wrecks of his. He had broken her heart and made her forgiveness but a scorn and weakness, and she must separate from him.

"I don't care," he had retorted fiercely, with a bitter laugh; "I'm past praying for, I suppose, so I'll go to the dogs my own way."

And that night he was gone. This was abroad, four years ago, and she, poor heart-broken wife, had come back and hidden her misery and shame in this place, away from all who had once known her under his name. It was

"Only the old, old story,
Sung so often in vain,"

a bitter, sorrowful story enough, Heaven knows, with its end, perhaps, still untold.

She had believed, in the first passion of indignation and anguish after her abandonment, that he had crushed her love, killed it root and branch, but she knew better afterwards, poor heart; all her bitter wrongs could not kill the roots that were bound in with her very life.

Even now she suddenly turned and went swiftly up to her own room, compelled by an irresistible yearning, to look on the treasured likeness of the man who had been the lover of her early youth, and was her husband "till death did them part."

She took the miniature from that locked up drawer and gazed through blinding tears on the handsome face that

seemed to smile up into hers, as it used to smile in those far off days of short-lived happiness. She kissed it passionately, and put it back with a choking sob.

"My own love! my husband! Oh, Heaven where is he? If I could only know that! He may be ill, perhaps dying of want, or——"

"He has fallen lower still!" was the awful thought, but she forced it back with a shudder of horror, and turned to lock the drawer. As she did so she started. What was that sound below from the drawing-room, like the slight shaking of a shutter? Bah, how stupidly nervous and upset she was to start and fancy this or that. Of course, it was the wild wind that rattled all the windows and shutters so this stormy September night—not burglars. Absurd! And, besides, what an unskilful burglar it would be to make any sound at all, even if the late hour and darkened windows (for all the shutters had been closed) made him reckon the household to be fast asleep.

"I will just go and turn out the gas below," Margaret muttered, "and then go to bed."

She moved a step towards the door, hesitated, and then turning back under one of those curious impulses that sometimes master one, opened a bureau drawer, took out a small revolver, and, with it in her right hand, left the chamber noiselessly; not from any definite thought or intention of stealing down unheard, but from a sort of blind instinct that was part of the impulse that had made her arm herself. The front drawing-room door was a trifle ajar, as she had left it, and the gaslight from the chandelier gleamed into the hall; but as she passed in, she stopped, turning suddenly white. Those folding-doors had been shut, and now one of them was opened back.

In that room was her secretaire, wherein was locked her cheque-book, money, and private papers.

As she paused in a moment's hesitation, between advance or retreat, to rouse Barton, she felt a draught, as if the inner room windows were not quite closed, and in the same second she felt the air sweep by her it caught and shut the door by which she had entered.

Instantly there was a movement within the other room, a step forwards, and Margaret caught sight of a tall man's figure in the shadow beyond where the light fell. In that instant the whole terrible position flashed on her—she was shut in with a desperate man—a midnight burglar; for that one moment of time she dimly saw him, and he saw her; she fired, and the man, flinging out his arms, reeled forwards into the light, with a cry that might have come from a lost soul:

"Margaret! Oh, Margaret!"

"Good Heavens! Husband! and I have murdered him."

She dashed the pistol from her hand, and flung herself beside him as he sank at her feet, the blood oozing from the wound in his breast, through his garments; but in an instant after that one bitter cry of agony Margaret was pressing her handkerchief over the wound, lifting the dear stricken head against herself.

"Try to hold this kerchief so, whilst I call up Barton," she said. "Can you? Try, dearest."

The man's great haggard dark eyes went up to her's and his bloodless lips moved, a whisper came feebly:

"Let me die! I deserve it! only—at your feet."

"Hush, Ernest, for my sake!"—she was half choked—

"You must live! Try to hold this close." She placed his hand on it—such a wasted hand—and, reaching out to an arm-chair near, got hold of its cushion, on which she laid the prostrate man's head, then rising, she sprang away upstairs to the faithful man-servant's room.

"Barton, Barton," she said, shaking the sleeper's shoulder.

"Wake, wake, and fetch the doctor," as Barton started half up, wide awake. "Your master has come back, and I have shot him by mistake! Ask nothing yet, but dress, and fly for Dr. Fenwick.

"I'll bring him in ten minutes, ma'am," was Barton's answer; and Margaret went back; strangely quiet and collected, as such women are in supreme need; for her just now there was neither past nor future—the first with its weight of wrongs and misery was forgotten and forgiven; the second was a blank; only the present was existent for Ernest Harrington's wife. She only knew that the man lying there, dying, perhaps, shot by her hand, was her lover, her husband—whom she passionately loved. That was all she knew now.

She went and shut the folding-door, then fetched some diluted brandy, and went back to the wounded man, who was lying exactly as she had left him. How ghastly that face looked, how wan and haggard, the delicate features sharpened by suffering and privation. How the woman's very heart was racked at the sight as she lifted the dark head once more on her arm; but he was not entirely unconscious, for when she held the glass to his lips with a soft "Drink it, dear," he swallowed it, though slowly and with effort. A minute after his eyes opened again, his lips moved, and Margaret bent lower to catch the almost incoherent breath that was scarcely even a whisper:

"I was mad—desperate with remorse. I didn't know who lived here—a mad impulse of the hour—let me die; she can—never forgive!"

"Ernest!—hush!—she does, she can; she knows and understands all! My darling! she loves you once and for always!" Margaret said, laying her lips to his forehead, and that kiss was the last thing he knew for hours. He was quite unconscious when, five minutes later, Barton returned with Dr. Fenwick, and knew nothing of how he was carried up to Margaret's room, where the wound was dressed and restoratives administered.

All the wife had said in explanation, when the doctor came, was a quiet, infinitely pathetic:

"Doctor, it is my husband come back; but he entered by the back window I had left unfastened, and in the dark I thought it was a burglar and fired."

"I understand," said the doctor, kindly. And so he did—a very great deal; for the story written in the wounded man's haggard face too surely filled in all the blanks there had been in the mystery of Mrs. Aubrey, of the Pines.

When, much later, the patient had sunk into something of a sleep, and the doctor could leave for a few hours, Margaret followed him out into the corridor, with the first signs of agitation in her manner and low soft voice.

"Doctor, tell me the truth, for Heaven's sake? Is my husband dying? Am I his murderer?"

Her lips were all a-quiver, her whole frame shaking, her eyes burning. The doctor took her hand into his strong kindly clasp.

"My poor child, no, to both questions, I hope and believe before Heaven. The wound is serious, but not mortal in itself; but there is danger, especially if, as I expect, fever sets in. Mentally and physically his strength has been gravely sapped, you see, and Nature is sure to exact the penalty for outraging her laws. But with such loving care as I know he will have, I think we shall pull through. Go and get some rest yourself now, for his sake. Barton is with him."

She thanked the doctor gratefully but, when he was gone, went quietly to that back room, barred the shutters, as well as the damage done to the catch would allow, and then looked at the secretaire.

Thank Heaven, it was untouched. The maddened desperation that in a dark hour had driven her husband to attempt such a deed had failed him at the last moment, and before he could rally she had come upon him.

And then at last a passion of tears came to her relief.

* * * * *

Too soon the dreaded enemy seized its victim and, though the wound went on well, brain-fever raged for day after day, defying all the physician's skill to subdue it. The patient was never violent, but the delirium was incessant and wildly des-

pairing; the whole tenor of his ravings was one long agony of remorse. He had sinned against his darling beyond hope of pardon, he had wronged her past all forgiveness, and he had better die, and set her free; he could never atone, never again be trusted or make her—his poor Margaret—believe that in his heart he had always loved her. All this was the one burthen of his ravings, not actually knowing his tireless nurse (only aided by Barton) for his wife, but always clinging to her and never unconscious of her presence, never quite beyond her power of soothing or control.

But at last the crisis was passed, the fever slowly abated, fighting every inch, as it were, against a constitution, the doctor said, so fine and elastic originally that not all the man's reckless life and the privations of the last year or two had been able to shatter its original fund of strength.

And after the fever came, of course, the inevitable days and weeks of utter prostration when the once strong man was as helpless as a baby. And it was pathetic to see how completely and blindly he clung to his wife. When he could neither speak nor move a hand, his eyes would follow her every movement with an intensity of humble worship, as, indeed, from sinner to saint, conscious in a kind of vague, exquisite quiescence, poor fellow, that he would never be cast out, yet unable to realize such a Paradise for him.

Perhaps it was this inability that made him one day, when he was a little stronger and emotion could lay hold of him, startle his Margaret.

She had sat down on the bedside by him, as she constantly did, softly caressing the wavy locks, while she told him that presently they would go away to some quiet seaside place for change and rest, and be happy together by themselves.

"Just we two, you know, dearest," she said.

"No—no," broke suddenly from him; "you kill me with your love—such maddening glimpses of happiness! I can never atone even by a life's devotion!"

"Husband!—hush, hush!" She put her arms about him, lifted his head to her bosom, kissed the dear lips. "All is forgiven, forgotten forever. Only my love and yours remain, as on our marriage day. You can, you have atoned, my one love!"

"Oh, wife—wife! you heap coals of fire on my head!" And then he buried his face against her and sobbed like a child—only that no child ever shed such bitter tears as these.

But after that he gained strength more rapidly, he began to realize that atonement was possible—"Even for me," he said to his wife, one day, as they stood by the glorious sea—"even for me, my Saint Margaret."

MRS. KIRKPATRICK.

The gracious lady whose portrait adorns this page will scarcely need an introduction to our Toronto friends, by whom she is both known and loved. But there are many of our readers, far away, who have not the pleasure of knowing Mrs. Kirkpatrick, nor of receiving her pleasant smile now and then. And to them we would say that Mrs. Kirkpatrick, the wife of the Lieutenant-Governor and the Mistress of Government House, is one of the handsomest as well as one of the most distinguished society leaders in America. She is the daughter of Sir David, and Lady Macpherson, of Chestnut Park, Toronto, is cultured, travelled, amiable and as able and agreeable in the smallest detail of social life as in the most important function of her exalted position.

THE LADIES AT HOME,

Published at No. 166 King Street, West, Toronto.

The LADIES AT HOME is a handsomely illustrated, 30 page, Monthly Magazine, and is devoted to the interests of its readers.

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TORONTO, FEBRUARY, 1893.

PREFATORY.

THE LADIES AT HOME herewith makes its *debut*. As the title implies it is devoted specially to home topics. It is published at a price easily within the reach of all, yet the aim will be to make it of the best. Talented writers will contribute original articles from month to month. And we would here respectfully ask the ladies who have good ideas which they wish to share with others to send the same to us for publication.

**

SISTER AGNES, in this number contributes the first of a series of charming "Talks." These will be, throughout, the heart-breathings of a true woman to her sister women, upon various themes which concern that most sacred of all earthly places—Home.

**

TRIAD, in the musical department, presents "Some Thoughts" which should lead to kindly responses from kindred minds. "Triad," as every reader may, perchance, not be aware, means "the common chord." Whether or not she has touched "the common chord" in this issue remains to be seen.

**

THE very thoughtful article on "The Poetry of Sound," by Rev. John Thomson, M. A., will, we feel sure, prove most instructive and entertaining to many. The writer is one of the most enthusiastic, as well

MRS. KIRKPATRICK.

well as one of the most accomplished and versatile of Canadian amateur musicians, and one who delights in using his talents to provide wholesome enjoyment for his fellows. But not only by pen or by musical instruments does Mr. Thomson edify and entertain. He is a pleasing singer. And, occasionally, he finds time to deliver lectures upon musical themes.

**

BELLE will continue "Fashion Notes" each succeeding month, amply illustrated, calling attention to the newest and most important things Dame Fashion is preparing for her devotees. A special feature will be designs for pretty and useful articles for the home which clever women may make, or have made, for themselves.

**

STORIES and sketches, well written and pure in sentiment, and choice home miscellany will also be special features. The culinary department will give the ladies such hints and helps from time to time as should, we think, put the LADIES AT HOME on very good terms with the lords of creation as well as with the gentler and more refined portion of the community.



FASHION NOTES.

INQUIRIES about Fashions, Etiquette, the Toilette and other matters of general interest to women will be cheerfully answered by the Editor of the Question Corner. Please address QUESTION CORNER, LADIES' COMPANION, 166 King street, west, Toronto, Canada.

IN nothing else is fair Woman's inherent love of change more apparent than in the constancy with which she follows the variations of style in her attire. Fashion is a fickle dame, who never appears content to "let well enough alone." Last autumn, hats with large bows and five or six anthers, raised directly in front, were brought out. Now, small bundles of aigrettes, in a form borrowed from the First Empire, are in much request. Hats with low crowns and broad brims of velvet, with a single tall plume raised from front or back and slightly curled at the top, and a few loops of ribbon, are popular. Some prefer two or three plumes, placed separately. I saw an exquisite pink velvet hat with a white silk passementerie edge and a single white and pink plume, curled slightly. Another, of cream velvet, was a lovely combination

of pale green, pink, ecru, and white plumes arranged with loops of ribbon in corresponding colors. Many young ladies affect a close turban of felt, or velvet or fur, with only a bunch of quills or aigrettes rising from one side.

FOR visiting, the Empire hat is most in style. This has a high black velvet crown, with black lace brim, which rises high in front and has a point in the back. Under the brim, in front, is a bow of black velvet and, at the side, nearly over the ear, is another bow. Feather tips rise over the crown in the eighteenth century style. This is somewhat like the old-fashioned "poke." Lace on winter hats is one of the features of this season, and it is not unusual to see lace and fur on the same bonnet.

IN veils, pale blue, lavender and scarlet are worn, but are not, generally, very becoming. Long veils with striped or embroidered edge, falling over the wide brim of the hat, are considered very stylish.

SASHES have a large bow of wide ribbon in front of the bust, the ends pass under the arms and are tied at the back, the skirt of the dress falling loose in front to the feet; the waist is thus not defined.

A CHARMING COIFFURE.—Illustration, shown here, is of a water-waved head-dress, with a jarted fringe, made of natural curled hair.

THIS winter the sealskins are more than ever suitable to the middle aged; they are well developed garments, very nicely lined, and very becomingly trimmed. Wolverine, Persian Lamb, Mink, Beaver, Otter, and the always useful and economical Skunk, are amongst the popular furs, and they are all of a softening and refining nature. Mink is a luxurious fur and one which is used in great quantities as lining for cloaks and as carriage garments.

LACED boots are quite the latest style; they should be foxed with patent leather, and it should run continuously around to the heel. Pointed toes have superseded the "common-sense" for those who have put their own common-sense out of the question, but the good old-fashioned calfskin is the fashionable material.

For evening, the great *chic* now is to wear one single diamond star above the forehead, in the midst of the fluffy curls. It is kept in place by an invisible elastic band run through the hair.

THE new velvets, in soft, melting colors, are quite the success of the winter; they are used either for complete dresses, or in combination with satin or faille, and with cloth.



A DINNER GOWN.

This charming dinner gown is of white satin brocaded with colored roses; the bodice and front of skirt are rimmed with embroidered net, draped *au style d'Empire*. The bands across bodice and down sides are of embroidered gimp. The revers on the sleeves are of turquoise velvet, the sleeves themselves being embroidered net.

RIBBONS are more highly in favor than ever before. Little collars and collarettes are made of many loops of narrow ribbon. Telerine collars are made of row upon row of frills of ribbon, and neck bands like the dress have narrow ruffled ribbon at each edge.

AN Empire effect may be given to waists not cut in that special style, by trimming them with a cluster of four or five close folds of satin or velvet, put entirely around the figure just under the arm holes, then adding a large bunch of loops on the bust and another at the back. Waists must be made round, seamless, fastened on the shoulders, without fullness, and drawn down with easy folds under the sash.

REVERS surmount everything; these may be softly reposing on the shoulders and front of the dress, extending to the waist, or they may be stiffened like the sails of a boat, and give the wearer the appearance of being under full sail. Small fur muffs are worn, and very tasteful ones are made to match the walking suits. Long fur capes, descending to the knees, and even to the feet, tax the purse-strings of those who can afford them, for seal is higher priced than ever and mink is not a cheap fur. Astrachan of all grades is still favored, and a comfortable garment, indeed, it is, lined with silk.

GLOVES follow the shoes in color. The window of a glove store is now a display of almost endless varieties in coloring, for handwear may be seen in all shades, from the brightest red to the most delicate gray. Long wrists are universal, and for short-sleeved dresses these reach almost to the shoulder.

BOAS are as much worn as ever this year, and, if warmly underclad, young ladies need wear no other covering over their walking costume. These are universally seen at five o'clock teas, when overcoats, cloaks and heavy jackets are left in the ante-room or hall.



TWO SMART GOWNS.



A NEW WINTER CLOAK.

IN Paris plaids maintain their place, especially in rich silks; diagonal stripes have one of the stripes thicker than the other, and this gives a ribbed appearance to the cloth. Velvet sleeves, shot in colors of the stripes, accompany this material when made up, and the corselet is of the same material. A band of fur edges the skirt, wrist and neck of all such dresses. Indeed, there are very few out-of-door costumes which are not edged with fur this season, and mink is the favorite fur for this.

HAT.—This hat is of fine biscuit felt, trimmed with bows of ribbon, long laurel-green feathers and an aigrette.



A CHARMING HAT.

A VERY elegant dress is of white satin, trimmed at the foot with a flounce of white lace, headed with a twisted band, and rosettes of yellow satin ribbon; the bodice, with long ends at the back, is of reddish brown velvet, with cut steel buttons; folded vest of silk; collarette of lace; long white suede gloves. Flat velvet cap, hat of white satin, with rosette of yellow ribbon. Bouquet of yellow flowers.

BELLE.

A NEW WINTER CLOAK.—This elegant cloak, which is made of a somewhat novel material—a black astrachan closely striped upon a dark red ground—may either fasten across and button at one side with three big buttons, or be turned back with velvet-faced revers, and show a front of red cloth, with a yoke and belt braided in black. The dainty little toque which crowns this gem of the cloakmaker's art is of red velvet, trimmed with sable tail, and the combined effect, when worn upon a neat figure and a dainty head, is loveliness itself.



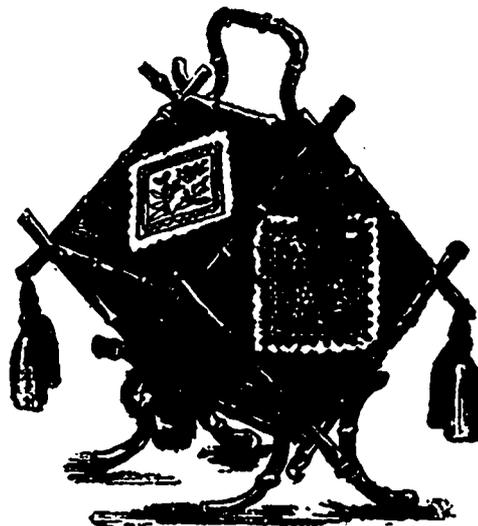
TRINKET BOX.

TWO SMART GOWNS.—One of the prettiest of dresses is made of black and white checked material, trimmed with ruffles of black velvet, and with velvet trimmings on the bodice. Nowadays, the bodices are so difficult to make, owing to the lack of seams, that it is at least advisable, if not positively necessary, to employ a good dressmaker to ensure the best effects. Another successful gown is of red diagonal cloth, with deep revers and trimmings of black velvet, and a particularly prettily arranged sash of black silk, and this is also very suitable for a neatly arranged trimming of light fur if so desired.

USEFUL AND ORNAMENTAL.

DEvised FOR DEFT FINGERS.

WORK-STAND.—The stand is of black bamboo, with sides of pale terra-cotta satin, ornamented with small squares of Oriental embroidery and silk tassels.



WORK STAND.

TRINKET-BOX.—The box is of papier-mache, in the form of a Christmas log; it is lined with wadded silk, and is ornamented with a band of congress canvas, worked with silks of various colors, edged with silk and chenille cord.

WORK-BAG.—The bag is composed of a square of moss-green velvet, embroidered with a spray of flowers. The inside is lined with maize satin. A running slide is put inside, in the form of a circle, which leaves the corners to turn over. In drawing up the bag with cord, the fulness is all pushed to the ends to make the bag have a square appearance.

A PINCUSHION.—Cut a trefoil in card, two pieces are needed; they are covered with satin, and are divided by ribbon $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide. An opening must be left to pass the sawdust through, with which it is filled. The top is covered with violet velvet, edged with gold galloon, and a ruche of



WORK-BAG.

ribbon ornaments the lower part. A ring is fixed to the upper point by which to suspend it.

To obtain admission to the bar in Florida is a difficult task for a woman, but Mrs. Lydia A. Dent made a successful entrance and stands on record as the first woman lawyer in the State.

❁ MUSIC. ❁

For the LADIES AT HOME.

SOME THOUGHTS.

BY TRIAD.

It is with considerable trepidation that I have consented to become a contributor to the Musical Department of the LADIES AT HOME. In some circles the expression, "Crotchety as a musician," has become an adage—and one which I should fain hope has arisen out of the fact that musicians have so much to do with "crotchets," "quavers," etc., and not because the term "crotchety" at all describes the mental condition of musicians in general. For myself, I am very fond of turning in thought and mentally communing with "Music, heavenly maid!" And it is in large part because I believe that among the readers of this magazine I shall find many whose lives have been sweetened through loving intercourse with this divine maiden, and who will be inclined to be charitable in judgment and mild in their censure of any shortcomings on my part, and who will be glad to meet with me monthly in these columns, that I have begun what I trust may prove to be a very pleasant employment. It is only as a simple lover of music desirous of being helpful to other lovers of music; as one wishing to do good and to receive good that I shall endeavor to meet you here. Severe criticism let us leave to others more able, and to whom such may be more congenial than, I hope, it ever shall be to you or me. To my readers a cordial invitation to correspond, and so to carry on pleasant interchanges of thought, is extended. Letters addressed: TRIAD, care of LADIES' COMPANION PUB. CO., 166 King St. West, Toronto, will be gladly received. Replies will be given through these columns.

* * *

During hours of practise, or in leisure moments, original thoughts, or thoughts which at least seem to us original, will often come into our minds. Stick a pin here, dear readers, and resolve with me that such fugitives shall henceforth be captured whenever they are detected hovering about our mental domains and secured, in bonds of black and white, to be brought forth at some seasonable time to do service for their captor and her friends. A book in which to make jottings of any thoughts or reflections which may occur to us would be a capital addition to the "cosy corners" in all our homes.

* * *

I love to think of instrumental music as the expression of the finest thoughts and feelings of which the human mind is capable. I have found much enjoyment in doing thus: I will play a few bars of a piece and then halt and think over it. After practising the piece a number of times I often find myself trying to imagine what were the thoughts and feelings of the composer who wrote it. My conceptions may not be right; I may in my imaginings only be unconsciously trying to put my own "wee" self in the place of some notable musical genius, but surely even this is preferable to a mere mechanical and therefore soulless mode of treating a new selection. One evening when practising one of Mendelssohn's Songs Without

Words, the Hunting Song, the sadness which runs through all the productions of that great composer affected me deeply. As I paused I saw in imagination a vast forest, the trees clothed in their autumnal garb and the subdued sunlight tinged all with golden splendor. I seemed to see ladies and gentlemen in gay attire and to hear the sounding of horns and the deep baying of hounds, while at intervals laughter rang out from lips overflowing with merriment. The gaiety of those I thus seemed to see jarred upon my feelings because, I suppose, sadness filled my heart. Shortly afterwards, in reading a biographical sketch of Mendelssohn I learned that he was not given to looking on the gloomy side of things, but was very lightsome, free from care and cheerful. So I must have dwelt too much on a single phase of the piece I was trying to interpret and have thrust myself into the place I thought the great master was occupying.

* * * *

Up in what was then the "Queen's Bush," away back in "the sixties," a raw pioneer lad went to the musical genius of the village near which he lived to be instructed in the mysteries of "fiddling," as practised by that worthy. After several brave attempts the lad was one evening gravely informed that before he could learn to "fiddle" he must have one requisite article of which he was not yet the possessor. "You must," said the musical oracle, "before you can learn anything more, get a capacity." The youth inquired where such a thing might be obtained and, on being directed thither, went to the druggist's in search of a "capacity," only, of course, to be informed that none were, just then, in stock. Capacities are not yet kept in stock in either rural or urban shops, as far as I can learn, but I feel sure that here and there are many young persons who would like to ask questions or tell of their musical perplexities or their joys; their triumphs or their failures, who can speedily develop a capacity for writing nice little letters. Who shall be the first to open a correspondence with,

TRIAD.

For the LADIES AT HOME.

THE POETRY OF SOUND.

By REV. JOHN THOMSON, M.A.

MUSIC is the poetry of sound. That is not the same as the sound of poetry, for true poetry has both sense and sound. Dr. John Duncan delighted to roll out these syllables of Coleridge's *Kubla Kahn*:

"In Tanadu did *Kubla Kahn*
A stately pleasure dome decree,
Wherein a silent river ran
Down to a sunless sea."

"I don't know what it means," he said, in quoting it, "but it is very melodious." And so it is; and so are many verses that might be quoted merely for the pleasure of the sound. Tennyson's "Brook" is so melodious, in the ripple of its syllables, that it seems almost an affront to set it to music. After hearing George McDonald read it I have no wish ever to hear the words rendered in any other way than that of good recitation.

I am tempted here to make a digression in regard to elocution as a companion art to music, and to say of it that it resembles Portia's conception of Mercy—twice blest—seeing it blesses him who reads and also him who listens. And what more soothing exercise than to entertain one's own ear and mind in a quiet evening walk by repeating the rhythmic lines of a favorite poet?

Music, again, is the poetry of sound, but not the poetry of noise; though there is such a thing as the poetry of noise. Read Norman McLeod's "Enjoyment of City Life," and you will know what I mean. "People talk of early morning in the country, with bleating sheep, singing larks, and purring brooks. I prefer that roar which greets my ear when a thousand hammers, thundering on boilers of

steam vessels which are to bridge the Atlantic or the Pacific, usher in a new day, the type of a new era."

The following line: of Frances Ridley Havergal, too, give us the poetry of noise, but more as it approaches the realm of music:—

"The murmur of a waterfall far away,
The rustle when a robin lights upon a spray,
The lapping of a lowland stream on dipping boughs,
The sound of grazing from a herd of gentle cows,
The echo, from a wooded hill, of cuckoo's call,
The quivering through the meadow grass at evening fall—
Too subtle are these harmonies for pen and rule,
Such music is not understood by any school,
But, when the brain is overwrought, it hath a spell,
Beyond all human skill, to make it well."

Some may object to my calling this the poetry of noise, because such sounds are so closely related to music. Invent another term then, if you will, and I shall readily acquiesce. Call it, if you like, the poetry of non-musical sound but do not lose the idea of the inspiration that comes to us in such waftings of sweet disturbances blended into harmony.

But I must draw back my concession. There is, after all, no poetry of noise; no poetry of non-musical sound. There is in these cases only the poetry of the landscape, or the commonwealth, of which "these subtle harmonies" are but a part, and a part, too, which cannot be taken out of its setting without being robbed of its charm. The poetry of noise is really then the poetry of Nature. If sound is uppermost it is like the voice part of the song to which the accompaniment is not an *ad libitum* but an *obligato*. Who would think of treating a single element in the following symphony as anything short of an *obligato*?

"My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one and come away. For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one and come away."

In this orchestra of nature no single instrument of sight, sound or smell could be dispensed with. Neither could any of them be taken out of the fraternity and yet remain as poetical as before. It would have been otherwise if, instead of the singing of birds, we had the music of the flute and the lyre; especially if such music had attained the perfection of modern days. The music of flutes and lyres, as these are represented in the resources of the modern orchestra, may, with perfect safety, be transplanted from its setting in the most dream-like of garden scenery to the darkness of a prison cell. Instead of the music losing anything by the transference its effect will be enhanced. Goethe has somewhere said that the best way to hear music is with the eyes shut. If anyone demurs to this, I'm afraid he cannot be reckoned among the class of true musicians. Such an one, possibly, goes to the garden party for the poetry of sociality, or of courtship; to the opera for the poetry of character and scenery; to the children's concert for the poetry of human sympathy, but in no case does he go for the "poetry of sound" alone.

And there you have the distinction between music proper and those things which are only the audible or the visible adjuncts of poetry in other forms. For love of the poetry of mere *sound* will the true musician go to the organ recital, the chamber concert and the orchestral symphony. For this he purchases Mendelssohn's "Songs Without Words." For this he enrolls as a student of harmony and counterpoint. For this he is willing to plod with patient laboriousness in the effort to acquire the requisites for the production of sound, whether these are movements of feet and fingers upon the organ, or the skillful management of the lungs and larynx in that most wonderful and most useful of all musical instruments—the human voice.

Music is always the result of a combination of two things—mechanical technique and artistic inspiration. If you have only the first, I "had as lief," as Hodges might say, the street organ grinder "had spoke my lines." If

you have only the second, you will be as helpless as the colored "fiddler" who awoke at the last moment to the dreadful discovery: "I've fatched de fiddle, sure enough, but I've done forgot de bow!"

Music is the triumph of mind over machinery. But, like Alexander's world, the machinery must be there before it can be conquered. And, oh, what machinery nature and art have furnished for the true poet to operate upon! Are we aware that the reed which vibrates with the wind sings in chords like an Æolian harp? Are we aware that the plating machine, too, sings in chords? Are we aware that one string of the violoncello is in itself a world of harmony, or, that the same is true of the monotonous repetition of one low note by certain bass voices selected for certain choirs? Carwen says, in one of his books on worship music: "Some of the bass voices in Russia are so deep that they sing a special part, generally moving an octave below the ordinary bass, and hence they are called 'octavists.' I am told on the best authority that all these men take the 'C' on the second leger line below the bass staff, and that the best of them can take the 'F' on the fourth leger line below the bass staff. These deep voices throw up harmonies which enrich the upper parts and add a wondrous fulness to the harmony." The study of this array of machinery is the fairy land of acoustical science into which we are led by such books as those of Tyndall and Blaser. But only the true poet knows how to use aright this wondrous machinery after he has acquired possession of it. That marvellous Russian basso is only a bit of machinery until the poet for him composes what he shall sing, and the poet *within* him tells how he shall sing it.

One thing more about limiting music's sphere to sound alone; we must not mix up the music with even the words to which it is set. Music and words might quite dissolve partnership in many cases without loss to either. We want no music to Tennyson's "Brook." We need no words to Hadyn's "Hymn to the Emperor." Each is a complete poem in itself. Each has a melodiousness of its own. Each has an imaginativeness of its own.

I have already referred to the melodiousness of the poetry of literature; but something remains to be said of the imaginativeness of the poetry of sound. Some persons simply do not believe in this imaginativeness of the poetry of mere sound. Music, to them, is realistic or it is nothing; sweet to the ear as jelly to the palate, sweet to the mind as recollections to the memory; sweet concords *plus* dancing and marching rhythms, suffusing the senses and suggesting scenes of gaiety. When the associations of the garrison town and the evening dance have been exhausted the music has to join affinity with the words of a song, comic or otherwise, else its popularity will cease.

But while the imaginativeness of "Songs without words" is not believed in by some, it is believed in by others who nevertheless fail to make it a reality in their own case. In his "Chapter on Ears" Charles Lamb has the following: "Above all, those insufferable concertos, and *pieces* of music, as they are called, do plague and embitter my apprehension. *Words* are something; but to be exposed to an endless battery of mere sounds; to be long a dying; to be stretched upon a rack of roses; to keep up languor by unintermitted effort; to pile honey upon sugar and sugar upon honey, to an interminable tedious sweetness; to fill up sound with feeling, and strain ideas to keep pace with it; to gaze upon empty frames, and be forced to make the pictures for yourself; to read a book, *all stops*, and be obliged to supply the verbal matter; to invent extempore tragedies to answer to the vague gestures of an inexplicable rambling mime—these are faint shadows of what I have undergone from a series of the ablest-executed pieces of this *empty instrumental music*." It is refreshing for those

who have been bored by drawing-room performances, without knowing why, to have their feelings thus articulated by so poetical a mind. Charles Lamb was at home in the palace of imaginative literature, nor did he ever lose the key to that. But the palace of music was as a prison to him, the key of which he never possessed.

To all those imaginative minds who would claim the author of *Elia* as a kind of big brother, there is this word of comfort: Be content to have a good song, set to good music, provided you can hear what the singer says; as for the rest, leave it to those who can honestly enjoy what you honestly describe as, to you, "empty instrumental music."

But are there those who can find in instrumental music, apart from its local associations, a boundless store of wealth for the imagination? I answer, yes. Read F. R. Havergal's poem on the *Moonlight Sonata* and you may learn how full of imaginativeness, to her mind, is that wonderful piece of "empty instrumental music."

Another instance of such wonderful fulness, we have in one of Mendelssohn's letters. At Milan he visited Madame Ertmann, one of Beethoven's friends, who told him: "When she lost her last child, Beethoven at first shrank from coming to her house; but at length he invited her to visit him, and, when she arrived, she found him seated at the piano, and, simply saying, "Let us speak to each other by music," he played on for more than an hour, and, as she expressed it, "he said much to me, and at last gave me consolation."

Many of us stand somewhere between Charles Lamb and Madame Ertmann. I do not say which extreme is the safer one to approach. All I want to show is that both extremes exist.

In regard to music and words, there is, strictly speaking, no such thing as vocal music, except when a solo voice is accompanied by other voices in a humming accompaniment, as is done admirably in some parts of Dudley Buck's arrangement of *Annie Laurie*. What we usually understand by vocal music is in reality music of the larynx plus the inflections of elocution. Still, what is called vocal music is the great need of the hour. We need more of good articulation, and more of a much neglected thing among those who have many other musical acquirements—the power of singing at sight. These form the best basis for a musical education and also the best crown for the edifice.

Whatever may be said of the colossal tone creations of such masters in the realm of "empty instrumental music" as Mozart and Beethoven, and I could go a long way in saying it, when we come down to the needs of the home and the school, the sick room and the sanctuary, there is nothing else that rewards us like Milton's compound of "Lydian airs married to immortal verse."

MUSIC: AN ODE.

Was it light that spake from the darkness, or music that shone from the word,

When the night was enkindled with sound of the sun or the first-born child?

Souls enthralled and entranced in bondage of seasons that fall and rise,
Bound fast round with the fetters of flesh, and blinded with light that dies,
Lived not surely till music spake, and the spirit of life was heard.

Music, sister of sunrise, and herald of life to be,

Smiled as dawn on the spirit of man, and the thrall was free.

Slave of nature and serf of time, the bondman of life and death,

Dumb with passionless patience that breathed but forborn and reluctant breath,

Heard, heheli, and his soul made answer, and communed aloud with the sea.

Morning spake, and he heard: and the passionate silent noon

Kept for him not silence; and soft from the mountain moon

Fell the sound of her splendor, heard as dawn's in the breathless night,

Not of men but of birds whose note bade man's soul quicken and leap to light;

And the song of it spake, and the light and the darkness of earth were as chords in tune.

—A. C. SWINBURNE.



TALKS WITH WOMEN, ABOUT WOMEN'S AFFAIRS.

COME, let us pull our chairs together, dear sisters; you, with your knitting-basket, dear old grandma; you, with your darning-ball and great stocking bag, thoughtful mother; you, with your scrap of linen and your pattern sheet, sweet young wife; and you, my girl, who are neither wife, mother, grandmother, or anything but your own lone self! That makes a fine circle, does it not? And while the back log snaps and flames, and the shaded lamps cast soft gleams over each of you, I will talk and you will listen, or vice versa, in turn, and so, month by month, we will grow to know, and, I humbly hope, like one another!

* * * *

It must always be in the evening that we talk, in these short winter days, for you and I are busy folk, and have enough to do all day; but it is so much cosier round the hearth these long evenings, so much easier to speak out, and so much pleasanter to think, after the day's work has been fully accomplished, than while we have still the coming and going, the trotting and the trying, which unsettle us all day long. I cannot hear you speaking, yet, but I hope before long the postman will be our constant messenger, and I can have the joy of response, the joy of receiving as well as the privilege of giving. If you are puzzled about the boys, uneasy about the girls, worried about the bill of fare, sick or sad or weary; if you are glad and merry, won't you let me share it all? In another country I have known this pleasure, and, often yet, a message from the far away friends, whom I have never seen, follows me like a benison and makes me glad. I hope a grandma will write, in her wavering handwriting, just trembling enough to shew that she is growing ready for the wonderful step from life to Life! And, by the bye, dear grandma, would you not like a knitting-needle sheath? I notice that you have to hold that old needle in your mouth, or stick it in your grey braids of hair, where it doesn't keep quite as polished as it should. This is the way I made a needle-holder for our grandma, yesterday. I took a narrow piece of whalebone four inches long, and covered it with black silk; then I took two pieces of chamois-leather, an inch wide and six inches long, and stitched them together down each side and across one end, with cardinal silk. Then I stitched three rows of stitching from the closed end up to within half an inch of the open end. After that I sewed a big hook on the silk covered whalebone, and then sewed the whalebone on the under side of my stitched pieces of chamois. Then I sewed a big eye to match the hook on the band of grandma's apron, and after I had pushed her four needles down into their four pockets of chamois, I hooked the whole business on to grandma's apron-band. My! but she was pleased to have it so handy.

* * * *

Do you know, mother dear, if I were you, I should never darn that awful hole, criss-cross as you're doing, so patiently. It will take you half an hour. No, nor I wouldn't "throw away" a good stocking either, just because the "heel is out." When you know me better, you won't think I would! But I noticed that you did throw away that hopeless pair, which have been darned and darned. Now I should use them to patch.

that heel. And when I had cut my patch from a good place, and basted it on with white thread, I should darn it on carefully, but not with that heavy wool you are using for filling up the big hole. Some of that fine cotton mender, or very light Saxony yarn would be quite heavy enough; and, if you like, you could run it a few times in and out clear across your patches. Try it, and see how it will wear.

* * * *

I NOTICE that our bright-faced young wife is sewing very dainty Valenciennes edging on her little tiny garments. It costs a good deal, and the laundry women don't mind how soon they tear it into strings. Perhaps, some day, when your wash comes home, my dear, you will cry bitterly over ten dollars worth of rags. I know I did! Let me coax you not to use any lace on the expected King's underwear; put it on the cradle, the bassinette, but not on the wee shirties and nightrobes. What you save from this self-denial, (for it is self-denial to curtail one dollar in your preparations for the coming of the loveliest, sweetest, most wonderful baby ever seen on earth!) put in some Savings Bank for it when it comes. You see I say "it," because Queens come as well as Kings, and I like to be on the safe side. It is a sensible and wise plan to thus lay by something for the wee treasure, and then, you know, you won't have those tears over the laundry wreck!

* * * *

I WANT that woman who is yet alone in the world, to sit right next to me, for her affairs are more sacred, more private, more hard to discuss than any of yours! She still has her ideals of love, of marriage, of motherhood, and life's disillusion may not, please God, come to her just yet. What you and I accept, and cease to worry about, of disenchantment and practical knowledge, she will fight against, and refuse, at first, as we did. She only believes in one kind of Love, ethereal and devoted, and when she realizes that Love is not built to stand the strain alone, but must have Wisdom, Patience, Forgiveness, and a host of other things to strengthen and complete it, she will, at first, say Love is no good at all. Bless her! let her sit very close to me, while I whisper that the poet who said Love was "woman's whole existence," was a very short-sighted man, and didn't know as much about women as—even I do! And should it happen that Love came not your way, my girl, there are lots of things which can make up a lovely life beside love. That sounds Irish, I admit, but, mind you, it is very true.

* * * *

I HAVE had great fun over our family mending on Friday evenings, when we sat about the table, darning, piecing, stitching, chatting, or, if ideas came slowly, reading some entertaining book, which was passed round the circle, each one having half an hour's rest from the needle, for the purpose of reading to the others. Sometimes there is only one little lone woman to mend a great many duds, but, surely, each of us can coax our John or George to read this, or, some other, magazine or good book, or even the daily paper, aloud. I wish we had more companionship among husbands and wives, such as the French middle-class and peasant folk have. It is comical to hear the French talk things over and discuss their little matters so earnestly. They call each other "my friend" sometimes, in such a pretty way, and they are so bright and charming together. Sometimes, however, they get together as we do here, just a lot of women, and they do some wonderful talking; I can assure you; I know, for I am part French myself, and I love to join in, and chatter with the best of them. Good-night, dear new friends, (that means everyone who reads this page) I hope you will answer me very soon, and address me as your

Sister Agnes

For the LADIES AT HOME.

THE DEBUTANTE.

(Illustration, first page.)

Just on the border land she waits—
Her hand upon the flowery gates—
And there, mild rosy, scented air,
Float visions bright beyond compare.
Sweet mirth, may every dream come true.
May love and joy crown life for you—
May sorrow, with her fingers taunt,
Ne'er touch your heart—sweet debutante!—*Lancelot*

THE HOUSEWIFE.

POP OVERS.—One cup sweet milk, 1 egg beaten very light, 1 cup flour and a little salt. Bake in a quick oven. This makes nine or ten.

COLD WATER CAKE.—One cup butter, 2 cups brown sugar, $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour, 1 cup of cold water, 1 cup chopped raisins, 3 eggs, 1 teaspoon soda. Spice to taste.

FRITTERS.—Two eggs, 2 cups sour milk, 1 tablespoonful soda, 4 tablespoonfuls butter, flour to thicken. Fry in boiling lard and serve with maple syrup. Layer cakes turn out better, if the pans are first greased and then dusted over with a little flour.

LEMON PUDDING.—2 cups of sugar; dissolve 4 tablespoonfuls cornstarch in a little cold water, stir in 2 cups boiling water and juice of 2 lemons; add yolks of two eggs and mix with a teaspoonful of butter. Bake 15 minutes.

STEAMBOAT PUDDING.—1 loaf of baker's bread, cut off the crust and crumb into a 3 pint basin; a layer of bread and then a layer of raisins, etc. Then make a custard of four eggs, a little more than a pint of milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar; pour it over the bread and raisins. Set the dish into a steamer, keep the water boiling and steam 2 hours. Make a thick syrup of sugar and water and rub on the dish instead of greasing it.

CRANBERRY ROLLY-POLY.—For the crust mix together 1 quart of flour, 2 tablespoonfuls of butter or drippings, and sweet milk enough to make biscuit dough, with 2 dessert spoonfuls of baking powder. Roll out $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch thick, and in the centre pile up cranberry jelly or jam. Wet the edges and pinch together, then bake in a moderate oven $\frac{1}{2}$ of an hour, or tie in a thin cloth and steam an hour. Serve with liquid sauce.

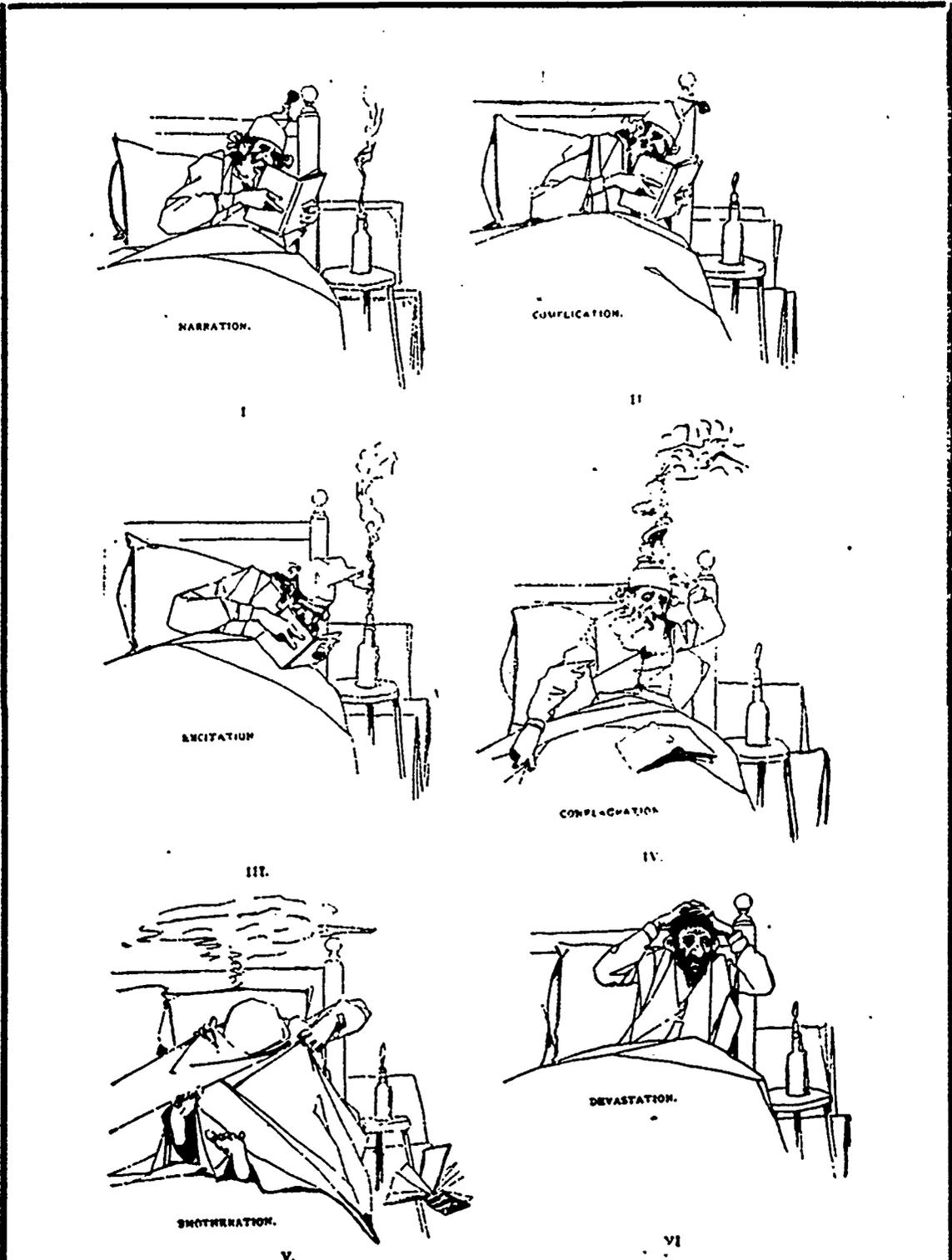
GUEST'S PUDDING.—8 oz breadcrumbs, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint boiling milk, 4 oz suet, 3 oz crushed almonds, 3 oz candied peel, the rind of a lemon, 4 eggs, 4 oz of sugar. Pour this milk, boiling, over half the breadcrumbs, lay a plate over the basin, and let it stand till cold; then stir in the other breadcrumbs, suet, salt, crushed almonds, lemon-juice cut in thin slices, and grated lemon rind; lastly, add the eggs and sugar, pour into a buttered mould, and steam two hours.

CHESTER TARTLETS.—Puff paste, jam, 3 eggs, 3 oz ground almonds, 3 oz powdered white sugar; roll the puff paste $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, cut it into rounds, put them in patty pans, press them out with the finger and thumb, and put in a little jam. When cooked cover with the following mixture: Put the yolks of 3 eggs, almonds and sugar, in a basin, mix well and spread a little on each tartlet; bake for five minutes, dish on lace papers.

LEMON PIE.—The grated rind and juice of 1 lemon, 1 cup of sugar, 1 large tablespoonful of cornstarch, the yoke of 1 egg. Mix all together, then add 1 cup of boiling water, put on the fire and stir constantly until thickened, then add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cold water. Stir it well and pour into a large pie plate, previously lined with puff paste. When baked, spread the top with the whites of eggs beaten with a little sugar; set in the oven for a minute. This filling is good to put between layer cakes.

BAKED ALMOND PUDDING.— $\frac{1}{2}$ lb sweet almonds, 4 bitter ones, 3 oz butter, 4 eggs, $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint cream $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of milk, 1 glass sherry, 2 tablespoonfuls of sugar. Blanch the almonds, pound them, add a little rosewater, mix these with the butter, which should be melted, beat up the eggs and the grated rind and juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon, add these with the cream, milk, sherry and sugar to the almonds, stir well together, line a dish with puff paste, pour in the mixture, and bake $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.

BOHEMIAN PUDDING.—3 oz of candied orange peel, 6 sponge cakes, 4 eggs, 1 pint of milk, 6 oz of sugar, 1 gill of cream. For the sauce: 2 oz sugar, 1 glass moyeau, a few drops of cochineal; butter a mould and ornament with the candied-pear chopped finely, lay in the sponge cakes broken in pieces, then beat the eggs, sugar and milk together, and pour over the sponge cakes; cover with paper and steam 1 hour; whisk the cream with the sugar and moyeau $\frac{2}{3}$ for half with the cochineal, turn the pudding on a dish, and put the cream round in alternate colors.



READING IN BED.

Object lesson for the benefit of wives trying to break husbands of this alluring practice.

Cherish of April

A VALUABLE PREMIUM.



THIS cut is an exact representation of the style of the life-like Crayon Portraits given as premiums to those getting up clubs for this Magazine. The portrait from which this was taken may be seen at our offices. The frames are of two colors, or shades, and are made of a finely gilded and massive-looking moulding, fully four inches in width. These premiums are offered so that capable workers all over the country may be induced to help us quickly place this journal at the head of all Canadian periodicals in point of circulation. The Crayons are the work of one of the foremost artists in that line in Toronto, and it is only because our orders are so numerous that we can supply them at a cost less than TEN DOLLARS each. They are good enough to adorn any home. The size is 20x25 inches.

PREMIUM OFFER NO. I:—To each sender (previous to March 15th.) of a club of ten yearly subscribers to the LADIES' COMPANION, at one dollar each, we will

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N.B. Write all addresses plainly, and in full.

CAN YOU FIND



"THE HARP that through Tara-ra's Halle
Now sounds no Boom-de-ay!"
(It is in the room with the musicians). If so, mark HARP and send this picture, with 50 cents for 3 months subscription to LADIES' COMPANION; or 6 months, to LADIES AT HOME; or 12 months, to OUR BOYS AND GIRLS, to 166 King street, west, Toronto, Canada.

No. 1--Ladies' Companion Premium List.

To first subscriber finding harp, as above, we will award \$100 in Cash; to the next \$50; to the third \$20; to the fourth a Gold Watch; the fifth a Silk Dress Pattern; the sixth a Silver Watch; the seventh a Gold Brooch; the eighth a Banquet Lamp; the ninth a Silver Five O'Clock Tea Set; to the next ten, each a Crayon Portrait of sender or any friend, in massive frame, valued at \$10; to the middle, and ten following subscribers each a lovely Silk Plush Casket containing fruit knife, solid silver thimble, etc., valued at \$5. Subscriber sending letter bearing latest postmark previous to April 15th will receive a Gold Watch; the next to last, a Silver Watch; the five preceding each a Crayon portrait, valued at \$10.

No. 2--Ladies at Home Premium List.

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No. 3.--Our Boys and Girls Premium List.

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