



Girl's Own Paper.]

[From the Painting by W. A. Menzies.

KATE DOUGLASS.

"THEY TRIED THE DOOR ; BUT KATE, WITH CLENCHED TEETH, CLUNG TO HER POST."



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[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

TYPICAL CHURCH TOWERS OF ENGLISH COUNTIES.

PART VII.

SUFFOLK.

In our last paper we described the characteristics of the Essex church towers and their somewhat humble and unpretentious architecture and dimensions. Now the moment we cross the boundaries of the adjoining county of Suffolk a most remarkable contrast is to be noticed in the churches: instead of small buildings with quaint wooden spires, or low towers, we find singularly noble edifices with elegant and stately towers. So marked is this that several of the grandest of the Suffolk examples are within four or five miles of the border, and even the two parishes which we first enter when crossing the latter possess remarkably fine churches—Clare and Cavendish—buildings totally distinct from anything to be seen in Essex. They are, however, far surpassed by the stately minsters of two adjoining parishes—Long-Melford and Lavenham. Unfortunately the former has lost its tower, which was rebuilt about a century back, and so it must yield the palm to Lavenham, though its nave and aisles, lady chapel and magnificent flint decoration, are perhaps even finer than those of the latter church.

The people of Lavenham are most justly proud of their church, and we recollect once hearing a very warm dispute between a local stonemason and an Ipswich plumber. The stonemason declared that Lavenham was the finest parish church in England.

"But," said the Ipswich man, "the men who built it were muddlers who did not know how to erect a square tower. I have just been measuring it for some new lead, and find none of the sides are equal; they differ as much as nine inches!"

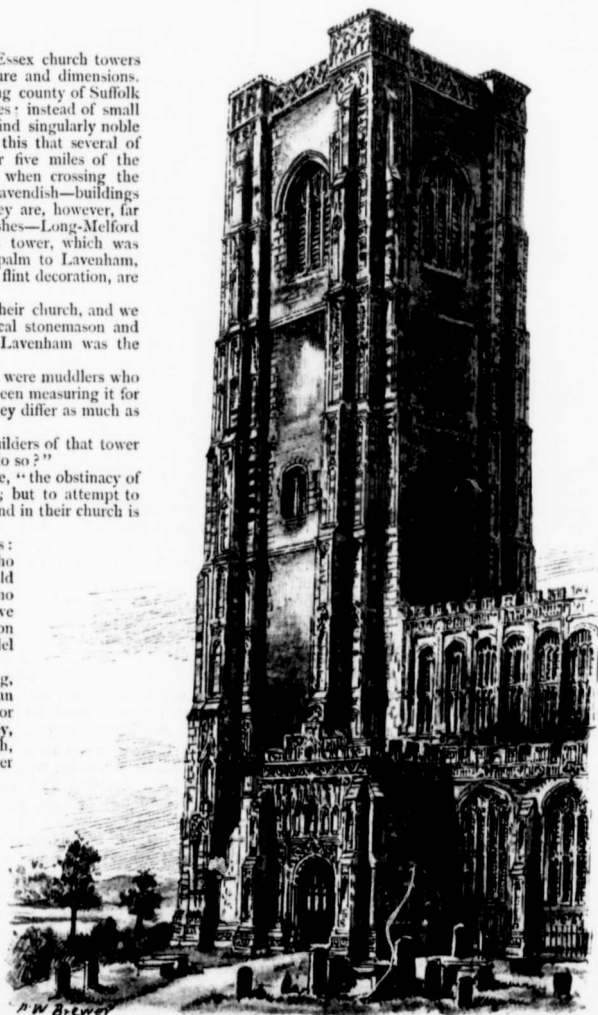
The Lavenham man said, "Do you suppose that the builders of that tower could not have made it square if they had had a mind to do so?"

The Ipswich man appealed to us. "You see," said he, "the obstinacy of these Lavenham folks. Of course they have a fine church; but to attempt to defend the blunders of a builder simply because it is found in their church is too ridiculous!"

We pointed out the fallacy of this argument as follows: "You have yet to prove that it is a blunder. The men who built such an exquisite structure as Lavenham tower could not have been in the habit of making 'blunders.' And no doubt there was some reason for this irregularity which we are unable to discover just as there must be some reason why the sides of the Parthenon at Athens are not parallel and its angles not right angles."

The church at Lavenham is a large and stately building, and from its very favourable position looks even larger than it really is. It stands at the extreme limit of the village, or town, upon a gentle eminence, overlooking a pretty valley, and its lofty tower is thus seen for miles round. The length, including the tower, is close upon 200 feet, the width over nave and aisles 68 feet, and the tower is 141 feet high. The walls are adorned externally with stone panelling and inlaid flint work of a very elaborate description. The chancel is earlier than the rest of the building, and is excellent fourteenth-century "Decorated" work. The porch is extremely elaborate. The tower, though plainer than the rest of the building, is perhaps the noblest portion of the whole, and presents just that combination of massive solidity and grace of proportion which is so very pleasing and striking. Though far less elaborate than the Somerset examples, and devoid of that exquisite feature the spire, so common in Northampton, yet it has so much dignity and boldness that it is impossible to wish it otherwise than it really is. Few architectural works we have ever seen are so eminently satisfactory

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LAVENHAM CHURCH.

from every point of view, yet when we come to examine it we are astonished at its simplicity. There are no pinnacles, turrets, open parapets, or niches; there is only one bellry window on each side. The corners are accentuated by solid square projections, from which the buttresses are set off—a most striking arrangement. No description can account for its peculiar charm. All we can say is, that its architect must have been an extraordinary genius.

The interior of the church is worthy of the noble exterior. The lofty nave with its rich clerestory and elaborately-carved roof, the deep chancel with its elegant rood-screen, carved stalls, chantries, parcloes, etc., produce an effect of richness and solemnity rarely met with in country parish churches.

Unfortunately little of the old stained glass which formerly filled every window now remains, and its absence is not compensated

for by the discordant modern painted glass of the east window—the one blot upon this most noble interior.

This stately church was erected (except the chancel) by the De Veres, Earls of Oxford, and a wealthy family of the name of Spring, who were clothiers of the place, for Lavenham in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was an industrious cloth-weaving village in addition to a rich agricultural parish.

The whole neighbourhood shows marks of former prosperity, chiefly now attested by noble churches. We have already alluded to Long-Melford and Cavendish, both splendid churches remarkable for their elaborate cut and inlaid flint-work and rich tracery. The former of these is said to be the largest village in England, and the present Duke of Devonshire derives his name from the latter. Near at hand are Neyland, Stoke, Hadleigh, Cockfield, Denston, Elmswell, Lawshall, Rattlesden; all

remarkably handsome village churches with stately towers.

The whole county, however, abounds in fine churches, amongst which we must not neglect to mention Southwold, Blithborough, Covehithe—now, alas! in ruins—Beccles, Stowmarket, and St. Mary's Bury.

The monastic remains are numerous and interesting, especially at Bury St. Edmunds, Thetford and Butley. There are several old castles—Framingham is especially noble—and perhaps no county in England is so rich in ancient mansions. Two of the finest are Giffards, Hengrave, the old seat of the Gages—now to be sold!—and Beddingfield.

As the country is picturesque and, for the most part pretty, Suffolk is an agreeable county in which to take a holiday. Everywhere one meets sights of former opulence and well-being, not only of the upper classes, but of those in humbler walks of life.

DOCTOR ANDRÉ.

By LADY MARGARET MAJENDIE.

CHAPTER V.

SUNDAY was always a quiet grave day at the Maison Féraudy, no cooking was done that day by mistress or servants. *Locataires* were warned beforehand, so they could not complain; all was done the day before. The whole party started on foot for Poinville to attend their little temple, about nine o'clock in the morning. Madame Féraudy and Géniewalked together both dressed in black according to ancient Huguenot tradition.

Génie dearly loved that walk in the sweet fresh mornings. The road after passing through wide fields of corn and colza came out on the top of a low broken cliff over-hanging the sea. Here a picturesque flight of rugged steps cut in the rocks led down to the shining sands below. But on Sunday they turned away from these inviting steps and pursued a pleasant path on the top of the cliff for some way. About half-way to Poinville the sea broke in a long narrow ravine far into the land, a beautiful and wild spot. For the sea rushed through the fissure with the impetuous force of wild power constrained. It burst on the black jagged rocks, throwing sheets of snowy spray high into the air, and the roar of the tormented water reverberated from side to side. Over the ravine at a place where for a space an overhanging mass of rock narrowed the width, a slender bridge had been thrown for foot-passengers; the sides were furnished with strong wooden railings.

About half-way across, while Madame Féraudy would hurry on trying not to feel giddy and confused, Génie would linger in intense enjoyment, looking down on the tossing water below, rejoicing when a larger wave than usual broke violently and sent a sheet of spray upwards, the salt drops cool and fresh on her cheeks.

Génie's eyes would dance and shine with the keenness of her enjoyment, and she would pine for a storm, a great

storm in which for once she would see the great waves mad with fury, beating themselves in a wild combat with the forces of the earth.

"It must be a grand sight to see earth and sea at war!" she exclaimed, but Madame Féraudy shook her head. "It is more beautiful to see them at play," she said as she pointed to the sands below. The sea was sapphire blue, and the gentle waves broke softly into shining silver on the shore. In the distance little boats with sails white as the uplifted wings of the swan, scudded along, betraying that out at sea a fresh sweet breeze was dancing on the surface of the waves.

"How beautiful! how exquisitely peaceful!" murmured Génie.

Madame Féraudy gave a little shiver. "I do not love the sea," she said. "It is blue, it is fair, but oh, how treacherous! The young strong lives, the lost hopes, the bitter suspense, the broken hearts which can never be cured till 'the sea gives up her dead.' For all these she has to account!"

Génie looked up at her startled. The stern face was white and drawn, the brows contracted and raised as if the shadow of an old agony had passed over and withered her anew.

Madame Féraudy went on speaking. "You do not know, *mignonne*," she said. "You have never heard that my husband, Alain Féraudy, was a sailor. We had been married five years. It was not very long, looking back on it through the mist of years, it seems to me a little, little time. He was twenty-eight, and I was twenty-five when he was made captain of the *Cygne*, and we went to Brest together to say good-bye. She was a fine ship, she looked very beautiful and Alain was proud of her. I saw her start. A little steam-tug towed her out of the harbour, and I stood on the ramparts and watched her go. It was much such a day as this is to-day, a little rougher perhaps, for the white foam horses were riding on the

waves. The little steam-tug took her out very fast. The sun was in my eyes and the salt mist, it was high tide. When I had cleared my sight, the little steam-tug was ploughing her way home again, and far away the *Cygne* was shaking out all her canvas, brilliantly white in the dazzle of the sun. She caught the wind and scudded before it away into the blue. I think, Génie, I should always tell sailors' women-folk not to watch their ship go out; it takes long, and the picture haunts you ever after. *Mignonne*, your eyes are wet, why? It is all so long ago. Well, they told me the *Cygne* would be home in the late autumn, so I came back to Féraudy and waited till the leaves grew red and brown and fell, and then I knew it was autumn and I went to Brest. I stayed there, and the autumn merged into winter, and the winter into the spring of a new year, and ships came in and ships went out. Time after time, from the stone seat on the ramparts on which I sat every day and watched, I used to see white sails on the horizon, white sails filling out to the breeze which was sweeping them homewards joyously over the waves. Nearer and nearer till the black steam-tugs rushed out to bring them in.

"I was so happy, so joyous, so wild with hope! But at last they would no longer allow me to rush down to see the ships come in, for every time it was the same. Other wives met their husbands, other mothers met their sons, other girls met their young sweethearts, but for me it was otherwise; the *Cygne* never came home."

"My dear, dear madame," faltered Génie, choking with tears.

Madame Féraudy walked slowly on, her eyes were fixed on the far horizon. She went on speaking.

"It is best to know. In those days I used to envy those who had, at least, certainty, who knelt by death-beds and left their farewell kiss in the silent coffin, but when the certainty came,

then I knew that the loss of that small ray of hope meant utter darkness. I was only twenty-five when my ship went down, and now I am past seventy. Alain was very handsome, *mignonne*, he had the Breton's blue eyes and fair hair and tall stature."

"But how—how was it? Did you wait long?"

"Two years on the ramparts; two years in spite of all they said, for they could not prove it, so why should I go when any day, any hour of the day or night the *Cygne* might come home. But at last we knew. They brought home a sealed bottle, some homeward-bound ship had picked it up and opened it. There was a message in it—a paper headed by the name—the *Cygne* and the latitude and longitude in which she foundered; then—'We are sinking fast. God help us. If this reaches the hands of any Christian, for the love of God let him convey the news to Brest. We sailed the 1st of February, 1848, for St. Pierre in the *Terre-neuve*.'"

"It was signed by all the boat's crew, and just under the signatures I found what was meant for me, a few words roughly traced of an old Breton song he loved and used to sing to me:

"'Mon âme à Dieu, mon cœur à toi.'"

"And that was all? all you ever heard or saw?" murmured Génie.

"That was all? Surely it was a most perfect will—'Mon âme à Dieu, mon cœur à toi!' And some day, *mignonne*, some day—"

"But life is so long!"

"It will not seem long when we look back from the further shore. It does not seem long to Alain, *ma chérie*.

Come, dry your eyes, Génie. See, we are almost at the door. My child, I did not mean to upset you thus. Sit down on this low grey wall and compose yourself."

Génie sat down and fought hard to recover her self-command. The pathos of the simple story had gone into her very heart. When she could look up she saw that Madame Féraudy's face was quite calm and had resumed the rather stern expression which her firm features habitually wore.

The village of Poinville was built on the side of a hill which sloped down in rocky terraces to the sands. It was very picturesque, with narrow stony streets and over-hanging eaves. The little Protestant temple stood back from the street in a rough bit of ground where heather and gorse and coarse grass made a pleasant tangle of colour. Some pious hand had planted *noisette* and briar roses against the rough-hewn walls, and these clambered over the plain un-ornamented building in profusion.

Inside all was rigidly plain and stony; strong as the strong faith which in this handful of men had survived the persecutions of ages.

Madame Féraudy and Génie seated themselves on a hard bench without cushion or back, and the worshippers strolled in; they were mostly fishermen, many of whom had curiously illustrious names, half forgotten under the universal habit of the use of *sobriquets*, but nevertheless a subject of pride, for men of their race had perished in the St. Bartholomew, and were written in golden letters in the book of martyrs.

The service was taken by a stranger,

a young Pasteur Lamotte, who had exchanged with the old pastor of Poinville for the sake of the change and holiday. He was a good preacher, and the sight of the rugged faces of the hard-living fisher-folk touched him.

He preached on the "Light of the world," and with vivid heart-stirring words he described the storm on the lake, the danger, the terror as "they began to sink," while throughout the Saviour slept.

Génie listened with rapt attention. Those words brought back to her the vivid picture that her old friend's story had called up. The ship with its living freight of young, eager happy lives going down, down fast. The gurgling sound of the cruel water as she settled. She covered her face with her hands.

But the Saviour was in the boat. When the deep voice of the preacher thrilled through the temple uttering the "Peace, be still!" a profound sigh broke from many of the listeners.

Presently it was over, and the *pasteur* gave out the glorious old hymn, "O God Our Help in Ages Past!" and began to sing it himself in a great bass voice which rolled through the narrow windows and which gave them courage to sing their very best and loudest.

After the service was over the *pasteur* came up to Madame Féraudy and Génie and introduced himself. He had brought his wife and little children to Poinville with him, and promised to bring them all over to Féraudy the following day, at Madame Féraudy's hospitable invitation.

(To be continued.)



ALL ABOUT WATER.

WATER for domestic purposes is obtained from the following sources—rain, springs, wells, streams and rivers. In mountainous countries it is also obtained by melting snow.

Waters may be divided into hard and soft. If you have ever tried to wash with soap in sea-water you will have noticed that the soap will not lather, but as soon as it is dissolved it floats to the top as a greasy scum. It is a typically hard water. When washing in rain-water the soap lathers beautifully, therefore rain-water is a soft water. The degree of hardness of water is estimated by the amount of soap which is required to make a fine lather.

The hardness of water is of two kinds, temporary and permanent. Temporary hardness is removed by boiling and is due to the presence of bicarbonate of lime and magnesia. When water containing these ingredients is boiled, the soluble bicarbonates are changed into the insoluble carbonates, which deposit as the "fur" in kettles and boilers.

Permanent hardness of water is not removed by boiling. It is due to the presence of either sulphates and chlorides of lime (which are precipitated by adding washing soda to the

water) or of chloride of soda (common salt), in which case nothing short of distillation will render the water soft. Such water is only found near the sea.

For drinking purposes a hard is preferable to a soft water, because it is more sparkling; soft water is very flat and unpalatable. If the water has to flow through lead pipes it will take up less lead if it be hard than if it is soft.

As I have said, boiling destroys the hardness of water, and in consequence boiled water has a very flat taste. In times of epidemics it is better to boil all water used for drinking, however much it may spoil its taste; but in cities it is usually unnecessary to boil water used for drinking when no diseases are epidemic.

If you live in the country and take your water-supply from wells or springs, always boil it, as you cannot be certain of its purity. This is really important—boil your water in the country, have nothing to do with filters.

For washing purposes a soft water is most desirable, as it very materially saves the soap. A large factory in the north used formerly to use a hard water, but for some years it has been supplied with soft water. I forget what

was the exact number of pounds saved per annum in soap since the change, but I know that it ran into thousands.

Rain-water is a very soft water, and though pre-eminently suitable for washing in is totally unsuitable for drinking.

Do not think that because a water is sparkling, clear, and has a pleasant taste that it is necessarily free from disease germs; a minute admixture of sewage with drinking water is said by some to improve its flavour! Whether this is true or not I do not know, as I hope that I have never partaken of such water; but sewage certainly does not give any unpleasant odour or taste if mixed in minute quantities with water.

As regards the cistern I will only say that it should be made of earthenware if possible. If this is impracticable, owing to its enormous weight or to any other reason, galvanised iron is the best substitute, not lead or zinc, and above all not wood.

The cistern must have a cover. London cisterns usually promptly lose their lids and become the watery graves of defunct cats, not to mention mice, birds and other such trifles.

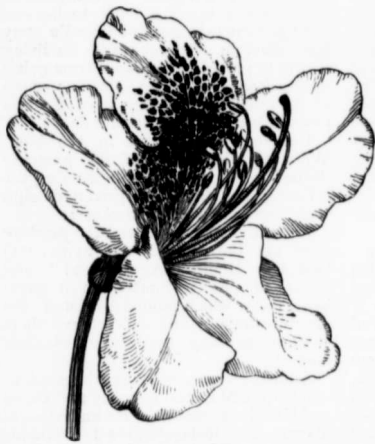
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RAMBLES WITH NATURE STUDENTS.

By ELIZA BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Wild Nature Won by Kindness."

HONEY GUIDES.

It is interesting to observe the markings upon the petals of flowers which serve as honey guides for the bees. For instance, in the rhododendron the stamens all curl upwards and the richly coloured spots are placed on



RHODODENDRON.

the upper petals to direct the bee where to alight. As it passes down into the flower to obtain the honey it is seeking, it cannot help brushing pollen off the anthers, and thus, its hairy body becoming covered with the powder, it carries it to the next flower it enters and ensures what is called cross fertilisation, that is the pollen of one blossom being placed on the stigma of another.

In the gladiolus the stamens are differently arranged, and the bee is required to enter below instead of above the stamens; there are therefore three honey guides on the lower petals, and the bee, all unconsciously, bears a



GLADIOLUS.

load of pollen on its back and performs its useful office of fertiliser to each flower in succession.

In the iris the lower petal is usually covered with a rich pattern of coloured stripes, which all lead up to the narrow passage where the bee must enter and push its way, necessarily brushing pollen off the anther in its progress to reach the honey at the base of the petal; as it enters the next flower it cannot fail to leave the pollen on the stigma at the entrance, and this wonderful contrivance can be traced in the



LARDER FLY. (Magnified.)

delicate stripes of the wood-sorrel and very many other flowers where distinct way-marks are afforded to guide the bees in their most useful work of fertilisation.

It adds an interest to our walks to know that the infinitely varied beauty of flower-tints and markings have this useful purpose in view.

The close connection that exists between insects and flowers has been much studied of late, and it has been ascertained that many plants cannot produce seed unless their flowers are visited by insects.

When orchard-houses were first built and stocked with peach, nectarine and other trees scarcely any fruit was produced, because no provision had been made for allowing bees to enter and do their useful work.

This was the case in my own peach-house years ago, so a bee-hive was introduced when the blossoms were ready for fertilisation, the busy insects did their work effectually, and a good crop of fruit was the result, but the poor bees could not find their way back to the hive and they nearly all died.

To obviate this sad disaster the gardener has learned to fertilise the peach-flowers by brushing them lightly with a hare's foot, which detaches the pollen and conveys it to the anthers without injuring the blossom.

THE COMMON HOUSE-FLY

(Musca Domestica).

It is rather surprising that, as a rule, so little is known about the life history of the common house-fly.

The creatures abound in our houses, we have been familiar with them from childhood, but, where they come from, how they propagate, and what are the stages of their life-history, who can tell us?

Perhaps it may be interesting to throw some light upon this domestic plague, and more especially will this be useful because a little knowledge about flies will enable us greatly to reduce their numbers.

The common house-fly lays its eggs in vegetable refuse, decaying cabbage stalks and such like; it is therefore important that such matters should be burnt instead of being thrown into the dust-bin.

The eggs hatch into small white grubs; these, when full grown become chrysalides and the flies emerge in due time.

The blue-bottle fly is only attracted by a meat diet. These flies find out any dead animal or bird and quickly deposit dozens of very small white eggs upon it. The eggs hatch out in a few hours into small white maggots (known to fishermen as "gentles") of a peculiar shape, being pointed at one end and flat at the other.

These creatures devour any kind of flesh with wonderful rapidity, so that Linnaeus



BLUEBOTTLE. (Magnified.)

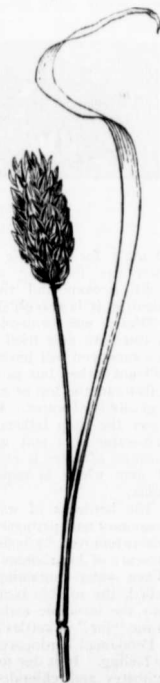
declared that "Three bluebottles could eat an ox as fast as a lion could." The bluebottle is a very determined character. Even when meat is covered by a wire sieve this insect will often drop its eggs upon the joint through the interstices of the wirework, so that to make a larder really fly-proof the windows should be protected by fine wire gauze. The smaller green-bottle fly has the same habits, and

spends its life in laying eggs on dead or decaying substances or else basking on leaves in the sunshine.

When seen through a magnifying glass its body glistens like a precious stone, or like burnished golden-green metal; although this insect is so common it is well worth examination for its beauty really baffles description. Its many faceted eyes and the formation of its feet should also be observed by the student.

The larder-fly (*Sarcophaga carnaria*) is the largest of the genus, being half an inch in length; it differs from the other flies in depositing its young alive upon decaying animal and vegetable matter, and, sad to say, it sometimes places its grubs upon living animals.

Réaumur calculated the number of young produced by one fly of this species to be about 20,000, we may therefore imagine how valuable such an insect is in speedily



CANARY GRASS.

removing decaying substances which would otherwise tend to pollute the air.

CANARY GRASS (*Phalaris Canariensis*).

Although bird-keepers are familiar with the canary-seed with which they feed so many of their pets, yet comparatively few people see the canary-grass growing or even know that there is such a grass.

I am apt to have a patch of it sown in some of the garden beds every year, as it is a beautiful sea green colour and makes a charming variety with other flowers. The stems are about two feet high, the leaves lance-shaped and the soft round heads of flower are pale green streaked with darker markings.

If we have but a few pots on a window-ledge canary grass can be grown. About a dozen seeds sown in good soil and kept watered and sheltered from frost will result in our seeing the pretty flower heads in due time. April or May would be the best time to sow the seed either in a pot or in the ground.

Canary grass is said to have been cultivated in this country in order to supply singing-birds with food ever since the days of Queen Elizabeth. It was introduced from Central Asia. It is largely grown in Kent and in the Isle of Thanet.

THE TRINITY FLOWER (*Trillium erectum*).

This plant rejoices in a variety of names. In North America it is known as the wood-lily, three-leaved nightshade and Indian shamrock; its Latin name is *Trillium*, the number



THE TRINITY FLOWER.

three seeming to be the order of its being. It possesses three leaves, three green bracts which look very much like the sepals of a calyx, and three perianth leaves differing from petals only in that those terms petal and sepal are never used in describing plants of the lily family.

I watch for the flowering of my *trilliums* each spring with keen interest, not only for their own exquisite beauty but also on account of the halo of poetic charm woven around this flower by Mrs. Ewing in her sweet legend of *The Trinity Flower*. I will not attempt to quote from it, but would advise my readers to

obtain the little book* in which it may be found, and then they will be able to understand my reverent love for this charming flower.

My plants were imported some years ago from Massachusetts, but they now can easily be obtained from dealers in herbaceous plants at home.

Trillium grandiflorum has large snow-white flowers and is the most beautiful of the sixteen species.

The illustration is drawn from *Trillium erectum*, which is called in America beth-root,



BEECH CATKINS.

Indian balm and lamb's quarters. It has green bracts striped with purple and reddish-purple perianth leaves. From its root a medicine is prepared which is valued for its curative properties.

This wood-lily is perfectly hardy, only requiring a light soil and a shady damp situation.

It comes up year after year, appearing in April and flowering early in May.

FLOWERING TREES.

In this month so many different trees produce their flowers or catkins that we must be on the alert to study them before they fall to the ground or are blown away by the wind.

Nature keeps us almost breathless in the attempt to overtake her marvellous energy. Every day something fresh appears; wild flowers are springing up, buds are opening, even early horse-chestnuts

are to be met with in full leaf, and growth is so rapid under the increasing warmth of the sun that sprays of opening buds, which we may be wishing to paint, are expanded into leaves before we have time to record their beauty in an early stage. Amongst other trees we must not fail to notice the hanging sprays of

* *Dandelion Clocks*, by Mrs. J. H. Ewing. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (one shilling).

larch with their yellow stamen-bearing flowers, the pollen from which falling upon the delicate crimson blossoms on the same spray will enable them to become the cones of next autumn, the wind being the agent in this process.

Many years ago, before the cultivation of the larch was understood, two seedling plants were sent to the Duke of Athole, and his gardener, with the best intentions, treated them as ashothouse-plants, which speedily brought them to such a dying condition that they were thrown away upon a rubbish heap. Hardly had they taken up this ignominious station than they revived and began to grow. When I visited Dunkeld many years ago the guide pointed out with pride two magnificent larches which were the aforesaid specimens now flourishing under favourable conditions.

The larch is a native of the Alps, and the roofs of the picturesque *châlets* in Switzerland are covered with shingles cut from this tree, the turpentine which exudes from the wood tending to make these roofs impenetrable to rain.

No one can fail to be struck with the curious catkins on the beech. The female blossom, which will become the beech-nut, is seated on the spray, whilst the male catkins hang down in clusters shedding out their pollen upon every passing breeze.

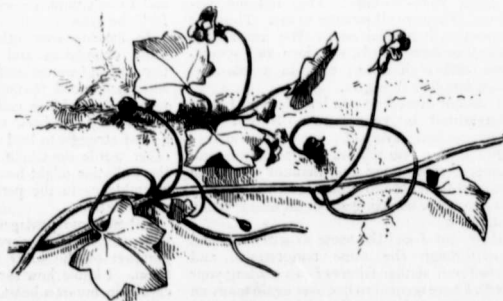
The beech-tree usually flowers every alternate year, so that possibly we may light upon a tree with leaf-buds only, and must then search further for another specimen bearing its catkins.

The limits of space will not admit of a special notice here of other trees, but knowledge of the fact that this is the flowering season will lead to some enjoyable study in hedgerows and woodlands.

Let us not grudge some time and trouble spent in becoming acquainted with the inconspicuous, but always interesting blossoms of our common trees.



LARCH BLOSSOM.



IVY-LEAVED TOAD-FLAX.

IVY-LEAVED TOAD-FLAX
(*Linaria cymbalaria*).

At this season the charming little ivy-leaved toad-flax may be found in the crevices of old walls, where its thread-like roots feed upon the decaying mortar. Penetrating deeply into the fissures of the brickwork they both keep the plant firmly in its place and render it independent of cold, heat and dryness. The cheery little plant holds its own and looks green and flourishing when prolonged drought is making other vegetation appear faded.

The winter and spring rains soak into the mortar of an old wall, and the horizontal roots of the toad-flax, protected as they are between the layers of bricks, have their store of moisture to draw upon and keep the plant in health and vigour.

If a root of this small creeper can be found within easy reach, it will repay a little careful observation through the summer. It possesses

several points of interest besides the delicate beauty of its tiny lavender and yellow flowers. It is closely related to the large snapdragons but differs from them in having a spurred flower.

From its wonderfully prolific growth, this plant is popularly known as mother of thousands, and its drooping slender stems throwing a sort of veil over crumbling masonry must have given rise to its other familiar name of maiden hair.

The leaves are like miniature ivy, and when young are of a purple colour on the under side.

The chief interest in watching this plant is to observe its remarkable mode of sowing its seed.

As soon as the small capsule is formed it begins to turn towards the wall until it finds a crevice, and in that it places itself, just as we should put a small parcel on a shelf, and it remains secreted there until ripened by the warmth of sunlight, when the capsules split open, the seeds are shed out and lie upon the

crumbling mortar ready to germinate as soon as rain shall fall and afford them the needed moisture.

I often show this plant to my young friends as affording a remarkable instance of vegetable instinct and adaptation.

I am tempted to quote from Miss Ann Pratt's *Flowering Plants of Great Britain* an interesting incident connected with this humble flower.

In 1850 a deputation waited upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer respecting the abolition of the window tax.

A spray of *Linaria*, which had grown in the dark and produced only dwarfed and blanched leaves, was shown in contrast with another spray gathered from the same plant which, on its sunlit side was of a rich green and covered with flowers; this mute appeal was well calculated to show the evil and depressing effect of darkened dwellings and the consequent cruelty of the window tax.

IN THE TWILIGHT SIDE BY SIDE.

By RUTH LAMB.

PART VII.

AN OPEN EVENING.

"Fight the good fight of faith" (1 Timothy vi. 12).

"Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. vi. 9).

HITHERTO, my dear girls, I have done all the talking at our twilight gatherings and you have been only listeners. I came to the conclusion some time ago that we ought to have an "open night," so that such of you as chose to speak might give the rest the benefit of your experience.

I think I hear you ask "How can this be done? Is it likely that any one of us would care to open her heart to all the rest? When we last met, did you not say how hard girls find it to speak even to their mothers about the most important subject of all?"

True. But many of you have written unreservedly to me, and, as I believe it will be equally interesting and beneficial for us all to exchange thoughts about the subjects considered at our twilight sittings, I am going to make portions of your letters the text for our talk this evening. Be assured, however, that in doing this I shall be guilty of no breach of confidence, or give one moment's anxiety to any of you who have honoured by trusting me.

In most cases your heart-to-heart revelations have been accompanied neither by real names nor addresses. If all of you, who have met with me for eighteen months past, were to pass singly before my eyes, I should not recognise one of my correspondents.

As to hand-writings! They tell me nothing. They are all strange to me. Thus our connection is a dual one. We are at the same time dear friends, who love and sympathise with each other, and, in a personal sense, absolute strangers.

I cannot express to you how deeply I have been stirred by your letters. Stirred with truest motherly sympathy by your troubles; regret at what you tell me of your failures and disappointments; joy and thankfulness when you have been able to report even a temporary victory over a besetting sin or an oft-recurring temptation.

Have not I had the same experiences, and gone through the same temptations, and grieved over similar failures? In reading your words, I have seemed to live over again many an incident in my own past life, and to walk beside you on the path you find so rugged and thorny.

If you, in writing to me, have yielded to that natural longing of which we spoke when last together, you may be assured I have found it terribly hard not to be able to answer you individually. This is impossible, but I want each and all of you who have written to me, to believe that I feel for and with you. I am deeply grateful for the many sweet words of appreciation which prove that our twilight meetings have not been in vain, but that, by God's blessing, they have been helpful to so many friends, and of such varying ages and positions in life.

Often the reading of a few simple lines from a young "general servant" or an equally hard worker in some other daily round of toil, has brought a song of thanksgiving from my heart to God, and tears of joy to my eyes. You, who have written the glad tidings of the blessings which have come to you through our gatherings, can hardly imagine how rich I have felt as I read your words.

There was one sweet sentence which has often recurred to my mind. "I am only a young girl and have not many Christian friends, so that every crumb seems to cheer and help me. Before writing this, I knelt down and asked God to help you very, very much, and also to bless all who have written both to others and myself."

What a sweet, unselfish spirit is manifested in such a prayer. What blessings might we look for if only each heart and voice amongst us were uplifted in like manner. Yet the writer, whilst owning her desire to be a true and consistent follower of Christ, grieves over the fact that old sins and failings still have a strong influence over her.

"Utter selfishness is the worst of them all, and I don't think I could have a worse, could I?" she asks.

In looking over other letters, I find the same complaints and regrets about hasty tempers and words, selfishness, want of perseverance, good resolutions and scanty fulfillments, the yielding easily to temptation and gradually going back to the old ways, after a brief struggle to lead the "higher life." In other words the Christ life, though at best, the imitation might bear only a very shadowy resemblance to the perfect pattern given for our imitation.

I shall quote passages from several letters, because I attach a very great value to such glimpses of the inner self as are given by them. I know how they touched responsive chords in my own heart, and I doubt not they will in like manner stir you to whom I speak. They will make us all feel that our meetings

have been the seeds from which have sprung golden harvests.

You know it is always said there is no teacher like experience, and we never fully understand a thing unless it has, in a manner, become part of our own lives. But we may learn most valuable lessons from the experience of others, and the misfortune is, that we are too often unwilling to be taught by anything which does not concern us personally. Still, I feel sure that you, dear girls, listening, as I tell you the actual words of other girls, will acknowledge to yourselves, "I too have felt the same longings, grieved over the same failures, experienced the same difficulties and need for guidance and strength. Yet I have kept silence to all around me, and alas! I have not gone to Him who has said, 'Come unto me,' and promised, 'Ye shall find rest unto your souls.'"

Now listen whilst I read a few passages for the benefit of us all—of myself, as much as any.

"I am only just starting in the 'narrow way,' and feel very much to need help in many things, or rather to have them explained, but I could not possibly speak to anyone. I long to tell a dear, Christian friend of God's goodness to me, but I cannot. Is it wrong of me not to speak? I do love God and I want to be a true follower. Will you explain that verse—'Do all to the glory of God.' It seems by it that we must not do anything unless we glorify God by doing it. I suppose one can hardly do that at a dance or a play—can they? Yet these seem very harmless things if not carried to excess. I am very fond of dancing, but if I could really see that it is unfitting a Christian I would give both up."

"The talk on 'He that is slow to anger' was a great help, as I have a very quick temper. I believe that God has helped me to control it lately, but it is dreadfully hard to keep back the sharp words when provoked."

In regard to that same talk, the correspondent whose first anxious letter suggested it, writing again tells me: "What you said kept me from getting angry for the rest of the day, and has helped me since a great deal. I feel sure you will pray for me every day, and the feeling that you do so, will, I think, often help me to gain a victory over myself. I shall also pray that I may give less love to self and more to others. I shall 'strive on, work on, fight on,' and pray that not only I but all who unite in spirit in the Twilight Talks, may have strength to persevere and in the end to conquer, and that I may be able to tell you that my victories are more in number than my defeats."

Another of you tells me the usual story of the soul's first awaking, followed by alternate happiness and almost despair at the little progress made; the falling back into old ways and of the temper which "becomes unbearable" when daily tasks press too heavily upon you. "Temper and day-dreams are my greatest troubles. I am not earnest enough in prayer, and I do not love my Bible as I ought. I have a brother and I am leading him anything but a good example. I have tried lots of times to get help in various ways and have failed. The Twilight Talks from time to time have helped me. I hope you will not mind me writing, but I feel sure you can help me, if you will."

Let us listen together to one or two others before we answer or comment on what we have already heard.

"I have never seen you or even known your dwelling-place," writes another, "but I feel in you a very dear friend, helping me by your 'talks' to live more and more Christlike. I am sure a good many more like me have the same help. It will be encouraging to you to think that some of us 'dear girls' are being influenced for higher things."

"It is a grand thing to feel you are influencing somebody for good; because there are so many bad influences for us young girls especially."

"I have been brought up to attend church regularly, and have had plenty of outside Christian influences; but until your talks began, I never really felt the need of God; but I will never regret that I have come to Jesus and asked Him to take me for His service. My chief fault that causes me often a great deal of sorrow, is my want of courage in speaking a word for Jesus. I am naturally nervous and sensitive, and too much afraid that my companions will think that I am calling myself a saint and scoff at me. I am longing and praying earnestly that I may be made strong and not afraid to speak of Christ to any one."

"I would like you to take this subject next month, as it may help others as well as me."

I am almost bewildered with the number of such confidences as I have quoted from, and I feel quite anxious that each of you should speak to all the rest through your written words to me. Here one tells me:—

"It is quite true what you say about passages from God's word coming to mind just at the time we need them most, and I will tell you of one instance of mine. It had been an unusually trying day. I felt very tired when I found there was more to be done than I had thought, and the idea came into my mind 'It is too bad.' I had not given expression to it, when I thought I heard the words 'Do all things without murmuring. . . .'"

The dear writer realised that the passage of Scripture committed to memory, perhaps long before, had been brought home to her just when she wanted it, by the unseen power of the Holy Spirit.

Only bits here and there can be quoted, but as I glance from letter to letter I see a sentence in one which bears a Jamaica post-mark, telling how the writer, a married lady, is always with us in spirit as we sit "In the Twilight Side by Side," and how she rejoiced that the talks, which she calls "To me helpful and loving bits of counsel," were to be continued.

The Antipodes has furnished its contribution towards this open night, in sweet words of thankfulness from one who writes that when joining in our Twilight Talks she seemed to hear again the voice and words of her own beloved mother.

Could any testimony be more precious than this? It was a sweet answer to the desire of my heart when we began our gatherings, that in speaking to you, dear girl-friends, I might be regarded as a sort of deputy mother; that thoughts of home and of the real mothers who

loved you and cared for you, might make you the more willing to listen to me and to believe that, because I had daughters of my own, you would think it possible I could sympathise with you.

One, who in writing to me, said, "I am a motherless bairn, and I have no one down here to tell my secret thoughts to," hardly realised how that word "motherless" impelled me to sit down and straightway answer the letter which gave her real name and address—a very rare thing for my correspondents to do.

My heart fairly glows with happiness as I recall the words of another amongst you, not an English girl, but the writer of a letter which I shall treasure always, and the contents of which call forth a thanksgiving whenever they recur to my mind. She will forgive my quoting a portion of them and calling upon you all to join me in thanking God for this and every other instance of blessings which have resulted from our talks together.

"Allow me to tell you that amongst your many girl friends whom you gladden every month with your 'Twilight Talks,' there is an Austrian girl too, who is ever so much thankful. . . . I cannot tell you how intensely grateful I feel for your motherly advice, and I am indebted to you for some progress in my poor, weak character, and much sweet comfort in a great cross which our Lord has put upon my shoulders."

The dear writer adds words that are a little poem—a song from a pure and loving heart—written in what is to her a foreign tongue, but charmingly expressed.

"I am," she adds, "a Roman Catholic, but we are nevertheless brothers in the love for our Saviour Jesus Christ; we are equals in the essentials of our faith in His goodness. May He grant us the same love in work and deed."

By a further expression the dear writer shows that she considers English girls have special opportunities for usefulness. I trust that all of you to whom I speak will justify, by your lives, the good opinion formed by her of my young countrywomen, and endeavour to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things."

So far we have listened to the words of those, who, despite discouragements and failures, have had something to say which has suggested a feeling of thankfulness that we were ever led to confide in each other.

The last letter from which I shall quote has no bright side to it. It is a cry for help, a sort of despairing cry, and a confession of faults, so serious and so many, that it is pitiful to read. The writer says—

"I am selfish, vain, self-conscious in every act, look and thought, indolent gluttonous, with no strength of will and not a particle of honest, unselfish love in my heart for anybody. I know the fault is in myself, and the remedy is to have love—which is one of the fruits of the Spirit—in my heart, but how shall I get it? I have prayed for it for three years, but I am no better. Once I started to be a Christian, and was happier for a little while, but—" I will not quote the rest. It is one list of self-accusations and petitions for help, soon, for "One who is miserable."

What can we do to help this despairing member of our meeting? Her whole appeal, of which I have given only a short extract, shows that she knows where the only true help is to be found, as well as any of us do. She is only twenty-three years of age, and lest we should imagine that illness has to do with her unsatisfactory condition, she says that she is in perfect health.

If only any of us knew her personally, and could induce her to throw off her indolence, and share in some useful work, that would be a good beginning and take her off the perpetual self-seeking of which she complains. Nothing helps us to forget self like work for others. Failing the ability to aid her by

example, partnership in good doing and cheering, spoken words, we can only send her a united message, begging her to put forth the strength that is in her, to try and look at the brighter side of things, to read persistently the invitations, promises and encouragements contained in God's word, and to pray, not hopelessly and despairingly as she seems to have done, but trustingly and as if expecting to get the help she needs.

All we can do, is to ask God to answer, strengthen and guide her into paths of usefulness, happiness, and spiritual peace. Dear girls, whom God has blessed and whose lives are brightened by the thought of His love in Christ, His faithfulness and the words, "Lo I am with you always," ask like gifts for this despairing sister. "It is not the will of your Father, which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

Before we part, I must say a few words to these whose words we listened to early in the evening. To you who grieve over failures, efforts at self-conquest and poor results, victories at one time and defeats at another, let me answer, "Yours is the experience of every one who wishes to be a true servant of God. Our spiritual life here is one of warfare and we have to fight the same enemies, again and again, and not always successfully. But what would you think of a soldier who had fought under a great leader and shared his triumphs again and again, yet ran away when called upon to face the foe once more? His would be a poor record to leave. How much more would it be so for the soldier who follows the great "Captain of our Salvation, Jesus Christ"?

In one of our earliest talks, December 26, 1890, we entered into this subject of good resolutions, failures and new beginnings. I should like you to recall it to mind, as I think it will be helpful, especially to those of you who did not meet with us at that time. Better still, read the testimony of St. Paul as to the Christian warfare. "For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. When I would do good, evil is present with me."

From the heart of that brave, strong soldier of Christ went up the cry to God, "Who shall deliver me?" and the answer follows instantly, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Later he says, "I can do all through Christ which strengtheneth me."

St. Paul did not fight in vain. A prisoner at Rome, and daily expecting a martyr's death, he wrote to his young friend, Timothy, whom he had known from a child, "I am now ready to be offered. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

Do you ask "How can a weak girl's strength be compared to that of the great apostle—so strong, so brave, so wise?" In a sense it cannot, but neither can your needs be compared to his. He lived and worked amidst distress, persecution, tribulation, famine, and with the sword of martyrdom hanging over his head at all times.

You have just to meet and battle with the common difficulties and temptations of daily life, in a land where Christ's name is honoured; and you can worship and serve Him in public and private, none making you afraid. Best of all, you have the same God who is as ready to hear and answer you as St. Paul found Him to be, and of whom you can say with confidence, if you are a disciple of Christ, He is "a very present help in trouble."

When we next meet, I hope we shall be able to talk of some of the other subjects you have named in your letters.



POINTED OVER-SKIRT, AND GOWN TRIMMED WITH ROULEAUX.

FROCKS FOR TO-MORROW.

By "THE LADY DRESSMAKER."

On all sides I hear that there is to be a great revival of those fashions of the "forties," in which flounces and peleries and mantles all flourished together; and I have no doubt that those who go in for extremes will find plenty of them. It seems likely, however, that we shall all have a choice, and that plain skirts will flourish beside those covered with flounces. The tightness of the upper part of the skirts is something wonderful to see, but round the feet they run to four or even five yards round. And, after all, they are not ungraceful, and the flounces even may be arranged to make us look slight and tall, for they are not as those of old, gathered on the skirt, and so rendered bunchy and ugly; they are in general cut so that they are of the same width, and so can be put on with no fulness at all. The number of trimmed and tucked skirts is very great, and the trimmings follow no special rule, but run vertically, horizontally, or across, just at their own sweet will, or rather that of the dressmaker who put them on. One of the new styles of trimming is seen in the *rouleaux*, which are either gathered, or plain, over cord. Folds of material and tucks are generally worn, and braiding of all kinds. Some of the tucks are quite astonishing; they are so very tiny, and so beautifully done, especially where the new blouses are concerned. The folds of material vary in width, from half-an-inch to three or four inches.

The French circular flounces, about which I have spoken, require very exact putting on the foundation, and should be pinned at every quarter, and even half-quarter, so that they may not be stretched out of shape, but lie flatly on the under portion. It is best to have a pattern to cut by, and the seven-gored under-skirt is thought to be the best to use for the foundation-skirt. These flounces are put on in all ways, even in a sharply-accentuated point at the front, the back being set in to the band of the gown, quite as full as the skirt itself. One of these pointed skirts is illustrated; only in this case it is not a flounce, but a kind of small over-skirt, while the flounce is below. This gown is of fine summer ladies'-cloth, the bodice is made with a basque, and an under-waistcoat of white satin, with cream-coloured lace over it, and the usual large bow of lace and *chiffon* finishes it at the neck. The edges of the skirt and *pevers* are trimmed with very narrow velvet bands. The figure at the back wears one of those dresses which are so popular at present, trimmed down the fronts in a straight line, the trimming being continued round the edge of the skirt. The bodice is also one of the season's novelties. It is cut down low over a yoke of white or a contrasting colour. In the present instance, the dress was made of one of the new *crêpons*,

and the trimmings were of blue silk, to match that in shade. This style of trimming is very dressy, and is used nearly always for the princess gowns with much advantage, as it takes off from their plain effect, which is generally most trying, save to those who rejoice in very good figures.

With regard to colours in dress, I think I am not mistaken in saying, that one person in ten appears to me to wear a mauve or heliotrope gown. Next to it in favour comes green, which is generally trimmed with black, while much of the heliotrope is trimmed with white. I have also noticed an increase in the

popularity of blue; the new blue being almost of a corn-flower shade, which seems to go best with black as a trimming. For millinery, there is a lovely shade of *bleu rose*, and also some young greens, of the exact colour of the shoots on the trees. White hats will be much in favour, and I think, when the summer fashions are really here, we shall not find the hats so vivid in their colouring as they are just at present. The straw hats, especially, are a perfect feast of gay hues to the eye, after the dulness of the winter. Green straw hats with black trimming, and pale blue straws with mauve,



TWO NEW CAPES.



A DOUBLE SKIRT.

and dark blue velvet, are the prettiest combinations I have seen this year.

The effect of the new double skirt is seen in our illustration, which is made of striped taffetas, the silk which is to take the place of foulards. This gown has a saddle-shaped

yoche of lace at the neck, which has lines of black velvet at the edges. It will be noticed that the sleeves where they fall over the hands are pointed, and at the top, below the puffs, are trimmed with bands of velvet.

There is not much change in the shape of skirts made of washing materials; and the white linen collars will be used as much as ever. The tie bows are much smaller however. There are quite as many blouses as ever, and some of the prettiest of them are made of lace, in the same style as the French one illustrated in a recent number. The only change is that, in some cases, while the blouse itself is made of lace, the sleeves may match the gown. A striped black and white silk was made in this manner, and the effect was excellent. This idea would be a very good one to apply to the re-making of one of last year's gowns, where the bodice was worn out.

If we any of us thought that capes were going out of fashion, we must have discovered our mistake before this; for they seem to be as much worn as ever. Our illustration gives two of the new ones; the first being of velvet with an *appliqué* of white and black *passémenterie*. It is lined with white satin. The other cape is of drab cloth, and forms a pretty spring wrap, which is light enough to be useful during the summer, when everyone needs a smart little one of the sort. Perhaps the prettiest thing just at present is the little

blue cloth coat with rather a short basque, braided in black, with a Medicis collar, and rather wide lapels lined with white satin, and covered with *guipure* lace. These little jackets are worn with any coloured skirt, and are made by the best West End tailors.

Blue is a favourite colour, but they are worn in white, fawn, and greys. There are plenty of black capes trimmed with *chiffon* frills and ruffles, and some of these are pointed at back and front, and have a double ruffle.

The hat of the most recent shape is rather like an umbrella in style, and droops like the old mushroom shape; but the toque seems to be quite the most popular thing, as it is so universally becoming to people of all ages. They are also very easy to make, and so are acceptable to those who manufacture their headgear at home. One is sorry to see that the wings and feathers of the poor little birds are more used than ever they were, in spite of all appeals to the kind-hearted to spare them. I have seen hats with, at least, half-a-dozen wings to decorate them, and on some of the French hats entire birds are placed. The rosette bow, and the full *choux* (or cabbage) as the French call it, are the two popular bows for hats; and the use of the silk *chiffon* seems to supersede flowers at present. I am told that the popular flower for this summer will be the rose, and that roses of every shade of pink and red will be worn on one hat. The newest hats on which violets are used, have them arranged in bunches, and the leaves are placed regularly round just like the bunches sold in the streets. They seem rather formal, perhaps, but look very well, and form a pleasant change.

Very wide sashes are worn on many of the new dresses, for day wear, as well as for the evening. The ends are often handsomely embroidered and ruffled; and there are some handsome wide lace ones on the more expensive gowns. Scarves of lace *chiffon* and silk are used, tied with a large bow in front, and we are promised a revival of the old-fashioned shoulder scarf, as worn in the early Victorian times.

A great deal of jewellery is worn; chains of all kinds, with or without the everlasting heart. Bracelets with all sorts of things hanging from them. Charms, seals, coins, and lockets jingling together as the wearers move their hands, are universally worn, and more rings grace the fingers than I have seen for some years past.

I suppose my readers have heard much of the rather heated discussion, which has been going on in the papers, about the prevalence of smoking among women and girls, and many good people have been much distressed by the idea of its being a universal fashion. But I have not found it so personally; and I do not feel obliged to put smoking into my chronicle of the last fashions. I do not find that the best class of women smoke; and, indeed, I have only seen one or two do it; and those appeared much more in fun than earnest. I do not think that Englishwomen will adopt the habit at all, and I am sure that all fears of it are quite groundless. It is not a nice habit, to say the least of it; and most women consider it rather fast, and quite unfit for a gentleman to adopt.

VARIETIES.

CHARACTER READ IN THE EYES.—Restless eyes, says a writer on physiognomy, denote a deceitful, designing disposition; greenish eyes mean falsehood, malice, and a love of scandal; blue eyes tell of a tendency to coquetry; black eyes mean a lively, passionate, and sometimes deceitful character; eyes with a yellowish bloodshot white usually betoken strong passions and hot temper; grey eyes mean dignity and intelligence; and brown eyes a tender, true, kind and happy nature.

SELF-CONFIDENCE.—There are a good number of men and women who always feel certain they could do anything they have never tried to.

UNDER GOOD GUIDANCE.—Nothing in the world is more pleasing than a mind under the guidance of reason and conscience.

MELTING AWAY.—Riches and honour acquired by unrighteousness are as a floating cloud.

BE THANKFUL.—"We can be thankful to a friend for a few acres or a little money; and yet, for the freedom and command of the whole earth, and for the great benefits of our being, our life, health and reason, we look upon ourselves as under no obligation."—*Seneca*.

WHO HAS THE GREATEST COMMAND OF LANGUAGE?—The girl who has the greatest command of language is she who can say "yes" and "no" at the right time.

IN SPITE OF ALL.

By IDA LEMON, Author of "The Charming Cora," "A Winter Garment," etc.

CHAPTER III.

SOME one was singing when Beattie was brought to the drawing-room door, so that not to interrupt the song she came in quietly unannounced and stood just within the *portière* till it should be finished. In those five minutes Michael Anstruther lost his heart to her.

There were not many people in the room, and, as Mrs. Gilman had said, they were all young. The cessation of the song was the signal for a buzz of lively talk and bright laughter. Mrs. Gilman greeted Beattie and then led her up to the singer.

"This is Miss Margetson, Norah," she said, and Beattie found herself face to face with a girl to whom she was at once attracted. She looked older than her eighteen years, and she was not exactly pretty, but she had a wonderfully sweet and pure expression and a charming voice.

"I have heard so much of you from cousin Alice," she said. "And Eva is always talking about you."

Mrs. Gilman left the two girls together, and very soon they were talking with ease to one another. To Beattie every new person was interesting, and Norah, whose experience of life had been deeper and sadder than Beattie's, could appreciate the spontaneous and unaffected manners of the latter. Michael Anstruther from his corner watched the two girls. Presently, drawn by the magnetism of his gaze, Beattie turned towards him "those eyes," and completed the conquest. But it was not till much later in the evening that he spoke to her. Everybody wanted to talk to Beattie, and Mr. Gilman was rather disposed to monopolise her. She was only a child to him, but he was very fond of her and Beattie liked him too. He was a solicitor, a clever man, somewhat cynical, as one of his profession may be pardoned for being, and yet genuinely kind and good-hearted. He had a great many friends and was thought highly of. Mrs. Swannington was right in saying it was he who attracted interesting people to his house, though Mrs. Gilman's gentle and gracious manner was perhaps not without power to draw them there again.

"Mr. Gilman," said Beattie presently, "who is that gentleman sitting all alone? No one seems to talk to him."

"Why, it's Anstruther. Hasn't my wife been looking after him? Poor fellow! Suppose we move across to his corner. He has hurt his leg, and that is why he keeps in one place. I am afraid he is finding it rather dull."

To Anstruther's joy, and somewhat to his embarrassment he saw his host and

the young girl move towards him. Mr. Gilman introduced them. And that very moment his wife called him away to sing. When the song was over he did not return to Beattie.

"I am so sorry to hear you have hurt yourself. I was wondering why you did not move about at all," said Beattie. And she regarded her companion with a sympathetic gaze.

"It was very good of you to think of me," he said. "I only sprained my foot at tennis. But I can't get about much. I shouldn't have come this evening to be a nuisance, only I wanted to see Norah Gilman. Her father is the parson in my old-home, and I was anxious to hear all the news."

"But she isn't talking to you at all, is she?" said Beattie, prepared to be indignant at his disappointment.

"Oh, yes," he said laughing. "It is all right. I dined here."

Beattie looked relieved.

"Don't you live at home, then?" she asked.

"No. I am studying to be a doctor. I am at Guy's now, but I am going to Paris in two months' time. My father has a friend there who is a great doctor, and I shall live with him. I want to see the Paris hospitals and learn all I can."

He spoke quietly, but his eyes kindled, and Beattie saw he was enthusiastic about his profession. She thought of Margaret and said: "I have a friend who is going to Paris too. She intends to study painting."

And then she began to talk to him about Margaret, and of how clever she was and how ambitious, and how she cared for nothing in comparison with her art. Anstruther listened with interest, but all the time he was thinking not of Margaret, but of Beattie. He thought he had never seen anyone so pretty and apparently so lacking in self-consciousness. Her sympathetic manner and ready talk set him at his ease, and he found himself answering her confidence with his own. In half-an-hour they seemed to have become old acquaintances. Mutual knowledge of this kind is an intuition as often as an acquirement.

A little stir in the room reminded him that he might lose his pleasant companion, and he said—

"If you don't mind a limping partner may I take you down to supper?"

And so the interview was prolonged.

When he stood up Beattie saw that he was a very tall man. His face was still boyish, but it wore a look of determination. He had a large chin of the type that denotes obstinacy, kind brown eyes, and dark smooth hair. He was plain, but his face was redeemed from ugliness by its indications of intellect and goodness. There was nothing mean or ignoble in its development.

Not that Beattie analysed his appearance. She was not very observant, and

seldom criticised. But she had strong instincts, and what she liked was generally worthy of her liking. Where she could exercise a choice, as with friends, she chose wisely.

The time passed quickly, and though Anstruther lingered in the supper-room as long as he could, he had to take Beattie back to the drawing-room at last. And almost directly her carriage was announced.

"I wonder when I shall see you again?" he said, as she held out her hand to him.

"I am afraid it won't be for a long while," Beattie answered simply. "We are going to Crabsley in a day or two, and when we return you will be starting for Paris, I expect."

Anstruther's eyes flashed. He was thankful he had not yet made any plans for the beginning of his summer holiday.

Before she left Beattie invited Norah and her cousin to tea the following afternoon. Mrs. Gilman refused for herself, but said she would send Norah. She wanted the girls to be friends with each other, and was glad they seemed mutually attracted.

Beattie did not see her aunt when she got home. Mrs. Swannington always retired early when possible. It was to this excellent habit she attributed the youthful appearance on which people sometimes congratulated her. At breakfast she asked a few questions of her niece, but though she had no reason for concealing his name, nothing was said that caused Beattie to allude to Michael Anstruther.

"Amateur singing and playing and chatter! it sounds dull enough," said Aunt Ella. "I wonder Mrs. Gilman did not get up a little dance, but after all Mr. Gilman's friends use their heads better than their feet, I fancy. But it is absurd to think young people care to hear each other's performances."

"I enjoyed myself very much," said Beattie. And her uncle looking at her bright eyes and fresh complexion said—

"Dissipation will agree with Miss Beattie, I expect. You will have to do a vast amount of chaperoning, Ella."

Aunt Ella shrugged her shoulders.

"I shall not over-exert myself, even for Beattie," she said.

In the afternoon Norah came. Mrs. Swannington was out driving, and the visitor was shown into Beattie's room.

Beattie's room had been nursery, then schoolroom, and was now to be her sanctum. In the great cupboard were many of the discarded toys, and on the shelves the now discarded school-books; a few story-books lay there also, but these were not often read. Beattie was not very fond of literature in any form. She had several pets which Aunt Ella permitted on condition that they were not brought near her. A cat and a family of kittens lay on the hearthrug. Two or three cages were hanging on

the walls, and when Beattie practised on the old piano their occupants added trills and turns to the scales. There had been white rats, but when one of them escaped Aunt Ella forbade them ever after. There was a parrot which a friend of her father's had brought to Beattie, and which had learnt to use bad language on the voyage; and last, but not least, there was a stuffed monkey which Beattie loved as if it had been alive. The poor monkey had been a great joy to her. She had made a little hat and jacket for it, and petted it like a child, but Jacko had gone into consumption and coughed distressingly till finally death overtook him. No one grieved except Beattie and James, the footman, who helped to look after all the creatures, and he it was who had suggested that the form of their favourite should be preserved to them. A Christmas present from her uncle had enabled Beattie to pay for it, and often afterwards she prepared her lessons with Jacko sitting on the table before her, his comical red-capped head on one side, and his glass eyes watching her face.

The room was shabby. Aunt Ella had proposed its being done up next spring and being made more fit for a grown-up young lady, but Beattie loved it as it was. There were marks on the table-cloth which had been made with spit ink, and saucepans containing hot coffee, and fruit which had been given to the animals; there were also sundry stains on the carpet, and beaks and claws and paws had left their impressions on various articles in the room, but yet somehow its untidiness was cheering rather than depressing, and as Norah looked round her she exclaimed heartily, "Oh, Miss Margetson, what a delightful room."

Beattie had ensconced her in the arm-chair and perched herself on the rocking-horse which was her favourite seat.

"I am glad you like it," she said, "I prefer it to any room in the house. But Aunt Ella never comes in if she can help it. She says it is like a boy's room, but then she is not fond of animals. Are you?"

"I like horses," said Norah.

"Oh, so do I; I just love riding. You ought to see Queen Bess. My uncle gave her to me when I was fifteen. She is a perfect beauty. I wonder if we could ride together."

"I don't ride," said Norah quietly. "I love horses, but we can't afford to keep them. My father is a clergyman, you know, and we are very poor."

Beattie blushed.

"We keep a pony for driving though," went on Norah, smiling at her reassuringly, "a quiet old thing that is nobody knows how old. But she is safe, and that is a good thing, for father himself drives very often, and he is absent-minded and near-sighted so I should be afraid if he had a spirited creature."

"Mr. Anstruther lives in your father's parish, he said," remarked Beattie.

It was now Norah's turn to blush, a slight pink blush that Beattie did not observe.

"Yes, his father is the squire."

"Tell me about him," said Beattie. "He seemed very nice."

"There isn't much to tell," said Norah. But nevertheless she began to talk about him, and he was the subject of conversation for quite twenty minutes.

"Lady Anstruther is very sweet," said Norah. "She has been like a mother to me. My own mother is dead, you know. She is not pretty, but she has eyes like—like Michael, and she has such a gentle manner. Sir John never comes to church. He doesn't believe in—things. He is rather bitter sometimes. The eldest son turned out badly. But he is dead now. And then there is Geoffrey who will come into the property. He is a soldier. Some people like Geoffrey best, but I—we are all fond of Mike."

"Is that what you call him? It sounds like a dog," said Beattie laughing. "Well."

"Well, he is going to be a doctor, as perhaps he told you. The property is heavily mortgaged, and there isn't much money, so it was much better for Mike to be quite independent of the estate. Sir John will buy him a practice when he wants one."

"I should think he would be a nice doctor," said Beattie. "Aren't there any girls?"

Norah shook her head.

"There was one, Evelyn. She died when she was sixteen. That is what changed Sir John, I think. He is never very nice to me when I go to the Hall. He gets out of my way if he can. I am not in the least like Evelyn, but I suppose I remind him of what he has lost. She and I were almost the only girls in Woodfield. The doctor's wife is young, but she is married and of course that makes a difference. Evelyn and I were often together. I haven't made any friend since."

"Didn't you go to a school?" asked Beattie, thinking of some twenty young women who all counted themselves her friends.

"No, father taught me. The boys have to be educated at school though."

"Oh, have you any brothers? That must be nice. I often wish I had How many are there?"

"Two, Cyril and Walter. They are both younger than I am. I have to be their mother, you know, as well as their sister."

"I suppose that is what makes you seem so much more grown up than I do," said Beattie. "I can't feel as if we are almost the same age."

"Yes, that is what makes me rather lonely, I suppose," said Norah with a sigh which she stifled. "I am too old for my age."

"I wish you could come and stay with me some time," said Beattie impulsively. "I know lots of nice girls, and I could introduce you to some of them."

Norah looked pleased.

"It is sweet of you to think of that. But I don't want any other girl-friends if you would be one."

"I," said Beattie. "Why, of course I will gladly. Shall I write to you sometimes?"

"Oh, would you?" said Norah eagerly.

She was generally very reserved, but few people maintained their reserve long with Beattie.

"Perhaps some day," said Norah, "you will be able to come to Woodfield."

"I daresay Aunt Ella would let me," said Beattie, "as she knows Mrs. Gilman so well. But speaking of Aunt Ella, I had forgotten all about tea. It will have been in the drawing-room ever so long. Let us go down."

Mrs. Swannington had had her tea, but she was still in the drawing-room reading a novel. She looked with some envy at the two young girls able to eat chocolate cake and almond biscuits without any ulterior thought as to their fattening or indigestible properties. Her tea had consisted of dry toast, very thin and crisp. She found her novel, which was in her native tongue, more interesting than the girls' chatter, but she laid it aside for a little while, and talked to Norah.

Norah had a pretty and somewhat deferential manner, not too common in these days. Aunt Ella liked to be treated with respect, and she was more favourably impressed by Norah than with most of the young ladies Beattie had brought home from school. These latter generally showed their relief when Aunt Ella left them and their chagrin when she appeared, but Norah talked to Beattie as naturally as if they had been alone, and answered all Aunt Ella's questions without resenting them.

She was not consciously anxious to ingratiate herself with Mrs. Swannington, though she did want to see more of Beattie. She succeeded in doing the former however, and Aunt Ella was quite affable to her.

"I like that Norah," she said to Beattie when the girl had gone. "She has manners. That *gauche* Margaret is far less pleasing to me. She has no respect for her elders. But she is dowdy, this Norah. Did you observe her sleeves? And the way her hair is done! It grieves me to see a girl not make the best of herself."

"She is poor," said Beattie.

Aunt Ella shrugged her shoulders.

"But no. She is English. The feet of an Englishwoman alone spoil her." And Aunt Ella regarded her dainty Pinet shoes with evident satisfaction. "No Englishwoman has pretty feet or good taste."

"I am English," said Beattie laughing.

And Aunt Ella answered—

"Yes, but I help you to conquer the fact. When you are older you will better appreciate my aid. Besides your uncle has assured me there is Irish blood in the Swanningtons. That has saved you, Beattie. For your Englishwoman undiluted I have a detestation, so dull, so heavy, and so insular. Still, what would you? One must have acquaintances, even if they bore one. But oh! the British matron!" And with a sigh Mrs. Swannington resettled herself in her low chair, and returned to the perusal of her French novel.

(To be continued.)

INFLUENZA: DIET AND TREATMENT.

By W. GORDON STABLES, M.D., C.M., R.N. ("MEDICUS").

My Girton girls must not be shocked, when I tell them that down here, in Bonnie Berks, influenza is familiarly though not affectionately called "The flue." The word influenza is of course Italian, the symptoms of the horrible complaint having been supposed to be caused by the influence of the stars. I don't say, mind, that there may not be a grain of truth in the notion, for scientists have discovered that when there are but few spots on the sun, deaths from colds and coughs are more rife in this wee morsel of a world of ours, and *vice versa*.

Influenza is well named epidemic catarrhal fever, and the French call it la grippe.

But what's in a name, after all?

"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." The bother of it is that when you have got la grippe, or rather when la grippe has gripped you, you cannot smell at all.

In my county, and in my own little village, the epidemic has been raging fearfully and many have died.

Symptoms.—A well-known medical authority in one of his books gives the symptoms somewhat as follows:—Shivering or sense of chilliness down the back, followed by heat and dryness of skin; urgent frontal headache; aching pain about the eyes; coryza and sneezing; tenderness in the back of the throat; harassing cough and shortness of breath; pains in back and limbs; perverted taste with disordered stomach; nervousness and muscular debility.

Now influenza has been epidemic among us off and on for many years; but this time it seems to have changed its tactics somewhat. I believe I was at sea when it was last raging, but anyhow, I am told that it then attacked the lungs with greater vigour than now, for in this epidemic it seems to divide its attentions impartially between the bronchial tubes and the organs of digestion. The appetite flies and takes its own time in returning, and there isn't the slightest use in forcing food.

In a paragraph to a local paper, I described my own experience as follows: (It must be remembered, however, that the symptoms are never precisely the same in any two individuals, so much depends on idiosyncrasy and condition of body).

"Briefly speaking, my own symptoms were these: A kind of mixture of rheumatic and neuralgic pain in every limb, with a general tired feeling, so that, after sitting for a short time, I found it somewhat difficult to stand up again; loss of appetite; running at the nose, followed by bronchitis; frontal headache, and terrible coldness of body and feet. This was followed by diarrhoea, which I did not check, as it seemed to relieve the headache. The worst feature of the cough was that it kept me from sleeping. I may say, however, that the coldness of the skin is not an invariable symptom, but when it is there, why, it is there; no fire-coddling and no amount of clothing can banish it, and one feels as if sitting all the while in a tub of iced water."

I may add that I think the pains in the limbs were the first symptoms, and I feared I was going to have another attack of the rheumatism from which I was invalided from the Royal Navy. It was a sort of tired feeling at first. If I knelt down to stoke my wigwam fire, I had to put my hands on my knees to get up again. Cycling was impossible. Soon the tiredness amounted to actual pain. Then came the other symptoms.

The frontal headache was terrible, and has only left me for a week, so I have been a whole month ill. As to sneezing, I really

thought I should sneeze my head off. And a splendid head it is, you know. N.B. That last little sentence is "wrote ironic." Well, or rather "ill," my tongue was very white, and my heart seemed to do very much as it pleased without consulting me. For an hour or two it would laze along, as if it had half a mind to stop altogether, then make up for lost time by rattling on as quickly as the Scotch express. When it did so, my face flushed and my eyelids felt as big as Spanish onions and as hot as curried kidneys.

Well, now, the treatment usually laid down by the best authorities is somewhat as follows: You are to keep to bed in a fresh, well-ventilated room for three or four days, and drink plenty of barley water, which will quench the thirst and support the system also. But raspberry vinegar in effervescent lithia water—which you can buy in syphons—is also good. So is tea with milk in it. It will not do to eat solid food. I should just allow chicken broth or barley broth with a morsel of toast, because, mind you, the stomach is in a bad state, and so weak that it *must* have a rest.

As a rule medicine is hardly necessary, unless the cold is very bad, when a mixture containing conium and ipecacuanha, which any chemist can prepare, will do good, or ten grains of Dover's powder at bed-time, but you must keep your bed next day. Sometimes there is constipation and the liver goes on strike. In this case I think a dose of Apenta water will put things straight.

A friend of mine wrote me, saying, he did not wonder at me catching the "flue," as I sat all day at the open window. But he is wrong; you must inhale the specific poison before you get down with influenza. But I must confess that I myself did not give in to the trouble, and in this I was very foolish. Though pretty prostrate, I just kept kicking about round the garden and among the dogs, until one bitterly cold day, when I caught what is called a second chill, and my bronchitis was increased tenfold. As Artemus Ward said, I just let things slide. Well, warmth in bed, if the sufferer is one of those contented beings who can lie in bed, is very serviceable. I cannot say that doing so can kill the bacilli, but it helps to prevent secondary symptoms. Warmer clothing when out of doors; as much light, nutritious food as can be taken; aperients; stimulants only if ordered by the physician, because their action is only temporary—they are merely cheques drawn upon the bank of health, and they have got to be paid for, as reaction is certain to follow. If they seem to warm the blood they in reality cool it. As to medicine proper, some find great benefit from quinine, while it increases the headache in others. Of course, the patient should let the doctor see to the prescribing. Nevertheless, the medicine called antipyrine, taken by itself, generally relieves the headache in a few hours. At the same time, a mixture of salicylate of soda and bromide of potassium does much good.

I don't want my readers to do as I do, but to do what I advise them to do. I myself am a headstrong Highlander, a son of the heather, and though far indeed from fat, as hardy as the heather, though no one should boast of his strength.

Now the debility that follows influenza is very bad, even if you have been ill but three days. Though it is nearly a fortnight since I rounded the corner (this is the 12th of March) I am far from strong yet, and, with stooping to write, my back aches most wearily.

I am taking real Scotch porridge and milk

every day, however, and can highly recommend this. It must be thick, and medium oatmeal, not the Irish pin-head stuff, should be used. I do pity the English bodies at my hotel, whom I see sitting shivering of a morning over a saucerful of thin, unsalted stuff, imagining they are having porridge. Well, before I took to my porridge, I took beef-tea or Bovril, eggs switched up with milk, raw eggs alone. I tried wine and spirits, champagne and Scotch. They only flushed my face and made me uncomfortable. So I gave them up. When sleepless, I found fifteen grains of the bromide of potassium in water soothed me.

Though eating solid food now, I am using plenty of fruit and drinking coffee. Fruit is highly to be recommended. I use sweet oranges, English grapes, tomatoes, and bananas eaten with a glass of milk.

Now here is a curious experience. I determined a week ago to take my cold bath again, which I had been obliged to omit for about a month. It was only six in the morning, and the frontal headache was pretty bad. "It is kill or cure," I said to myself. So I stripped and entered my dressing-room. The windows were hard-frozen, but I wouldn't look at them for fear of lessening my courage. Well, I took the bath, using a sponge that holds about a gallon of water. I shan't say it was not cold, but as soon as I had done towelling and had dressed, I found myself marvellously better, and the headache had flown up to the moon.

Frost or not frost I have taken the bath every morning early since then.

By-the-way, every week I receive letters from people thanking me for having recommended the cold morning tub, in my usual journalistic columns.

"It has made quite a new man of me," writes one correspondent.

"I would not miss it now for all the world," writes another.

"I feel so cheerful and clear-minded after it," says a third.

Well, that is just what I myself do. I am fond of music, and I am no sooner dressed than I begin to sing. I can no more help singing than the mavis or blackbird can, when I am fit and in good form. Alas, when the influenza was at its worst, there was precious little music in me, and so weak was I that, had I played a plaintive air on my violin, tears would have fallen from my eyes, and that would have spoiled the varnish.

As regards food during the debility of convalescence, you cannot be too cautious. Do not venture to eat meat until the appetite is quite restored, and even then, but little for a time. Cod or haddock, or any non-oily fish is far better. Soup is good, but it must not be too strong. Really well-made Scotch barley broth is best; the fish with mashed potatoes to follow. But the potatoes should be really mashed, not the tiniest lump should be left in them. They should then be well stirred with a little cream and salt and put on the range again to get thoroughly hot. A good tomato may be taken, and then some white pudding with good jelly or jam, blanc-mange, rice or tapioca pudding.

After this go and rest for an hour on bed or sofa, and you may have tea at four, but unless really hungry do not eat anything with it.

Get out all you can into the fresh air. Do not drive, nor ride either, but walk.

It is very wrong and deleterious to attempt to excite an appetite by condiments or stimulants. Beware of eating too much. The food that is unnecessary is simply poison.

HAUNTED.

By NORMA LORIMER, Author of "A Sweet Disorder."

CHAPTER II.



DID not see Lucille Ivory until dinner-time; and even now, all these long years since, I can recall the surprise her beauty gave me. She was the most exquisite creature I had ever seen, but so fragile and childish for her years I could scarcely think of her as a woman. Her eyes had retained the pure expression of a child's, and her skin was delicately veined, but too clear for health. I was irresistibly drawn to her, for goodness and gentleness radiated from her in such a way that even the rough boys who were inclined to class such girls as 'muffs,' looked up to her with almost reverence. Of course no one expected much from Lucille but passive gentleness.

"After dinner she fluttered over to where I was sitting in a deep recess in the window and sat down beside me. 'You know my Robin,' she said, 'so we must be friends, and of course you are clever, for Robin always likes clever people, and I am so stupid.' She smiled with the shadow of a sadness in her great childish eyes, and sighed. 'I don't know why he wants to marry me, for I can't enter into any of the things he takes most interest in, and I sometimes feel jealous of girls I hear talking to him about things I don't understand; but perhaps love has nothing to do with that sort of thing, for I should love Robin just as much if he were deaf and dumb. Do you think men like clever women for their wives?' She said this with an expression in her voice which asked for a denial. 'No man could want anything better than you for a wife,' I said, 'your beauty would make up for everything.'

"We were almost strangers to one another, but here we were conversing as old friends, and, Lal dear, my heart had gone out to her, so that I scarcely grudged her the happiness that might have been mine. I made up my mind to write to Robin and implore him to forget all I had ever asked him. I could not be the means of breaking her poor simple heart, and so we sat and talked with the sympathy of old friends until the post came.

"In that out-of-the-world old place the daily post which did not come in until nine o'clock at night was the most important event of the day. Ah! how well I remember all the bright faces eagerly questioning my hostess as she unlocked the old leather bag and distributed the letters round to the different members of the household. That night there were only two letters, and some papers. One letter was for Lucille Ivory, and the other was for me. I little thought at that moment that they were both from Robin. I slipped mine into my pocket in case she should notice the handwriting, and I saw Lucille hold hers in both her hands like a child with a precious toy.

"'I know you want to go to bed now, Lucille,' my hostess said, smiling tenderly at the girl's happy face. 'That letter is much too precious to be read in public.'

"Lucille at once said good-night all round, like a child that has been sent to bed with something sweet to comfort it. And from the open door I watched her going slowly up the stairs, halting now and then to look at the

dear hand-writing; her beauty as the candle threw a bright glow over her face sent a cold thrill to my heart. Mine was nothing compared to hers, and Robin's admiration of it had taught me how much men love a beautiful woman. I looked at myself in a glass as I passed; how proud and cold I looked beside her, and my eyes had deepened into grey beside hers which were so rarely blue.

"When she had left her room my hostess said, half aloud, and half to herself, 'What a dainty thing it is to be sure, and yet I can quite understand.' She never said what, but I knew by the expression in her eyes.

"Then she turned to me—I was waiting to bid her good-night. 'Mind what I said, children, no one is to mention a word about the stupid ghost to Lucille. I had a letter from her doctor when she arrived, and he does not speak very hopefully about her health.'

"I started, for I had forgotten about the ghost, and my promise to sleep in the room. My hostess saw this, and asked me if I repented of my promise.

"There was an exclamation from the boys. 'No, you don't, do you? We know a promise from you is 'plumb straight,' you won't back out?' 'No, I won't back out,' I said, 'I don't care a rap for the ghost. I'll let it in if it knocks, and take a photograph of it for you.' Ah, my proud boast, when that awful moment came, how did I keep it? Not 'plumb straight' as Jack said, I'm afraid.

"When I said good-night the boys escorted me to my room. It was not a very inviting room, I must confess, for it was panelled with dark oak, and the light from the candles only gleamed up in the centre of the room, and left the corners in shadowy darkness. There was nothing modern in any way about the room, and I thought longingly of the brightly upholstered light little room I had vacated at the other end of the wing.

"The richly-carved four-poster looked like an ancient Gothic tomb in some side chapel of a cathedral. It was just the sort of room where an army of ghosts might lurk in every corner."

"Aunt Net," I interrupted, holding both her hands in mine, "I hate corners, I think round rooms are best for women, don't you?"

"Don't be nervous, child," she said, "what would Ned say?" And then with a deep sigh she went on. "After whispering a good deal so that Lucille should not hear what we were saying—I knew she would not, for I could picture her with her bright head bent near to the candle devouring Robin's letter—I put my hand in my pocket and touched mine, and then I grew impatient to be left with it alone. How I envied Lucille with her proud right to show her joy in receiving his letter. I said good-night."

"At last I was alone. The old oak-door shut so closely and so well did it fit, that it was difficult but for the bolt to find it in the panelling. I sat down to read Robin's letter, and, Lal dear, I shall never forget the agony of that moment. He had written to me not knowing that I was visiting at the old manor, and his letter had been forwarded to me.

"It was to tell me that he was going to write to Lucille to tell her that he could not marry her without first confessing to her that he had only a brotherly affection for her, and that he had given his heart to another woman. 'For it is impossible,' he said, 'to make love

obey one's commands. I will not marry any other woman but you, Lucille, for even if I wished to do so, she whom I love is too honourable for that, but I feel that it is my duty to tell you that my love for you has never been the love of a passionate lover.'

"That is almost word for word of what he told her, and I had urged him to say, 'I am willing to marry you and I will make you a good and true husband if you are still ready to be my wife.' There was little else in his letter to me except to bid me good-bye for ever. If Lucille gave him up, he was going out to X—. There was not one word of love in the letter, but, dear heart, I knew what suffering it had cost him to write it."

Tears were streaming down Aunt Netta's cheeks, and a bright flush had gathered on her cheeks.

"Don't tell me any more, sweet," I said, "if it grieves you so much; let me light the candles and I will play you something."

"No, Lal. It will do me good to tell it to some one, for the memory of it has been for me alone to bear all these years. I put the candle and the matches near my bed, and as I blew out the light I noticed how the moonlight filled the old room with weird shadows; but Robin's letter had driven the ghost almost out of my memory, and as I lay down to sleep I scarcely gave it a second thought. But I found it hard to sleep; I thought of Lucille and what misery Robin's letter must have caused her. No doubt now her pillow was wet with tears; then I wondered how long she would sorrow for him, and if her nature was capable of a lasting grief, or if like a child, she would turn over a new leaf in her life's scrap-book and smile sweetly at the next picture.

"And then at last I fell asleep and dreamt that Robin and I were floating down a rapid stream in a frail canoe, and that Lucille was left standing on the bank weeping and wringing her hands.

"I must have slept for more than two hours, for it was past eleven before I dozed off, and I was awaked suddenly by the church clock striking two. It was strange that the striking should have waked me that night, for my other room was much nearer the church, and the clock had never waked me before.

"My dream had made me nervous, and I woke with a disagreeable alertness, as if I was expecting something to happen. The moon had gone down and the sky was at its darkest before dawn. I had almost forced myself back into calmness, when I heard a gentle tap-tapping at the door. My heart for that moment stood still, and the next second began beating so violently I could almost hear it in the horrible stillness of the room. Then the second clear tap-tapping came, and my heart almost leapt out of my mouth. I had no power left to speak, and a deadly sweat was trickling over me; and now the third tap-tapping came, and an imploring voice said, 'It's only me, please let me in.' Then, child, I plunged below the clothes, far down in the big, carved bed, and stayed there panting like a frightened hare. Where had my courage flown? I could not think nor breathe. I almost suffocated, and yet I could not help listening. Gradually I calmed down, and shrinking with fear I put my head to get some air, dreading at the same time to meet the sound of the tap, tap, as to hear the pleading, gentle voice. But all was still, there was not a sound to be heard, and I turned heavily in the bed to make it creak, for I felt I must do something to break the stillness, or in my

imagination, if not in reality, the tap-tapping would begin again. Then I suppose nature came to my rescue and I fell asleep; but I did not sleep soundly, and I was awake before daylight had quite come in. And I lay waiting impatiently until I thought it was time to get up and go out, for I was feverish and restless. I thought that if I was out I could think more connectedly and write a letter to Robin before the morning post went out. Before six o'clock I rose and dressed quietly and unbolted my door. The servants were sure to be up and about soon, so I could go down and wait until the front door was opened. I tried to open the door cautiously, almost wondering at my fear of the night before. Daylight brings such courage, Lal. I pushed it gently but it refused to open. All the doors in the old part of the house opened outwards, and I pushed it still more firmly. Something had caught it, I supposed, perhaps it was the mat. Then I tried to shove my way out, and almost fell over something heavy on the mat. I righted myself by catching hold of the lintel of the door, and looked down at the bundle that had caused my fall—it was Lucille Ivory. She was lying there, all huddled up in a pitiful heap, with her great mass of shining hair spread over her like a golden crown. I lifted up her head and threw her hair back from her face; thrice I looked in horror. Ah, Lal, there was no mistaking the expression on the cold drawn features. Death was written there as plainly now as life had glowed on it so proudly the night before. I moved her poor lifeless body out of the crushed heap in which she had fallen, and covered it reverently with the soft, white nightgown. I could not speak or cry out. Something like a nightmare held my tongue. But in a moment a complete understanding came to me of why she was lying there crushed against my door. Her candle, which had fallen from her hand, had rolled some distance along the passage, and so my ghost of the night before had been Lucille. She had felt ill and come to my door for help. Three times she had knocked in vain, and then she must have fainted, and I in my cowardice had not heard the fall; after the third tap-tap I had plunged beneath the clothes. Then I remembered her weak heart and the doctor's warning. But what had disturbed her? My thoughts flew to Robin's letter; she had read it and the shock had killed her. Feeling one of her attacks coming on, she had come to my room just as she was, in her nightdress and bare feet. I had never seen death before, and here I stood alone in the early summer morning with the sweet, cool air blowing in from a high lattice window, which stood open to ventilate the corridor. How the birds sang and chirped and disturbed the trees in the Nun's Walk below, as if to assert their joy that a new day had begun, and I was there alone with the dead. There was

plenty of assistance near at hand, for three members of the household slept only a few yards off, but I stood as if rooted to the spot. I could neither call out nor leave the poor chilled body, that looked so fair and fragile, stretched out on the dark oak floor, and although death had been a stranger to me till now, for I was too ill to see my father when he died, I knew by instinct that Lucille had been dead some hours. She was so far removed from things earthly; it was strange how utterly severed she was, and yet it had all happened between the dawn and the daylight. If you have never seen death, Lal, and the one who is dead was something beautiful and pure, you can never realise the intensity of separation. No oceans or continents can really separate those who love and live, but the great master, death, had taken Lucille at the first hour of the new day into that infinite space where thought cannot travel nor mind transmit sympathy, and he had left lying at my door an awesome thing, with all colour and meaning and humanity gone.

"Suddenly I heard a noise in the house below; how welcome at that moment was the sound of active life, for I was still watching on the floor by Lucille. Soon I heard the great house-door open; the butler must be down, and then a great flood of cool fresh air came wafting up the stair and swept over the pale thing by my side for a moment and surrounded me. Softly I went downstairs; the man started when he saw me at that early hour dressed and ready to go out, and when he looked at my white face and staring eyes, he thought I had lost my reason.

"Nash," I said in a miserable dazed way, "Come with me, don't make a noise, for Miss Ivory is dead. Quick, don't you hear me, Nash, why don't you come?" I implored, for he stood staring as if he was afraid to come near me. "Go to your room, miss, you've been dreaming," he managed to say. "Miss Ivory's all right. I'll send you up a cup of tea directly."

"Nash," I said, "for pity's sake come or I must call for help." My senses were beginning to act, I suppose Nash saw this, for he went upstairs in front of me."

Here Aunt Netta paused and her poor pale face which had been so drawn and pained, relaxed and a flood of tears broke the strain. I let her weep for I could not comfort her, my mind was too full of the story she had just told me, beside the dusk which had deepened into darkness seemed to hold my voice.

At last I whispered, "And did you never see Robin again, Aunt Net?"

"Yes, child, but only once, and that was at her funeral. He and I alone knew the true cause of her death, he and I standing by her grave knew that he had killed her, for they gave him the letter she had written that night in answer to his."

"And did she give him up?" I said. "Oh, poor, proud Lucille!"

"Yes, Lal, she implored him to marry the girl he loved. 'Even if it should break my heart,' she said, 'my love is so great that I can spare you to her.'"

"And it did break, Aunt Netta," I said, "but that was God's way of solving the problem. There is one more angel in heaven instead of one more broken heart below."

Aunt Net sighed gently as if the thought comforted her and answered, "Now, Lal, you will know never to call me courageous again."

"You have been courageous to live, Aunt Net, and not accept what Lucille died to give you."

"No, Lal, we could not do that. Robin and I are true to her memory with a continent and sea dividing us. Neither of us could have known happiness at such a price."

"Hark," I said, "that's Ned." And I listened for a familiar footstep on the stone stair that led into the great hall. The door was flung open and Ned stood there blinking into the darkness.

"What two brave women," he said, "sitting in this great place alone in the dark, but I wouldn't mind betting that Lal has got tight hold on you, Aunt Net?" The next moment he tripped and nearly fell over the heavy abbot's chair. More cautiously he groped his way towards us. "Have you heard the patter of the little goody-two-shoes, or felt the draught that blows from behind the tapestry, or seen any other form of ghost? for you two seem to have been inviting the presence of spirits to-night." Laughing he flung himself down beside us in the old oak settle and folded us both in his arms.

"I think I'm the luckiest fellow in the world," he said, "to have the two nicest women in the world for my sweethearts. Have you fixed the day for our wedding, Aunt Netta?"

"Which of us is to be the bride?" I asked, pushing more closely up to his side.

"Both of you if the parson will allow it, but I'm afraid they are very mean about such matters. And surely no one man was ever lucky enough to have two beautiful women ready to marry him?"

I felt for Aunt Netta's hand, and she pressed mine closely on hers, for again our spirits had met, this time more truly than before.

"Yes, two women love you, Ned," she said, "but only one is ready to be your wife; the other rests content to look on."

"Onlookers see most of the game, Aunt Net, so you'll have to act as umpire for Lal and me in the great game of love and life."

Then the candles were lit, and I knew by Aunt Netta's face that what had passed was sealed for ever, to live only in her memory and in mine.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MISCELLANEOUS.

IRISH GIRL.—We do not think it would be well to write to people for their crests and escutcheons. You could obtain a good many through a stationer printed—as specimens of the engraving—on cards. We will keep your envelope and send you a few shortly.

MUREN should get a small bottle of muriatic acid and a small flat camel's hair brush and sweep the acid over the outer crust of the shell, washing it off continually, to see that the burning is effectual, though not excessive. Mark the bottle "Poison."

Ivy.—You had better show the description of the slipper-stand for a flat-iron at a first-class ironmonger's shop, and simply give an order for one. If they have not got any, they could write to London, Birmingham, Manchester, or Liverpool, whichever may be the place whence they get their supplies.

J. L.—We cannot undertake to alter your face, although we can help you as regards the roughness and chapping of both face and hands. For this trouble, by far the best thing to get is a little tube of glycerine, honey-jelly and cucumber. As to the shape of your nose, we do not endorse the plan once suggested by a reader of ours, to confine the broad tip within the grip of glove-stretchers or a stiff hair-pin during the night. Leave it alone, a sweet expression will amply correct all defects in form. Be assured of that.

MIRABEL.—We never heard of any special cause or reason for removing a ring from one hand to the other, by either man or woman, excepting to place it where it may fit the best, or suit better with, or make place for other rings.

Snowdrop should go to a hairdresser and have her hair dressed in the newest way. She can then adapt it to herself and find out whether it will be becoming to her.

MISS PRYLE.—We have no guild for the sale of decorative art work, nor work of any description, in connection with our magazine, but there are such societies to be found. For example, there is such an institution at 17, Sloane Street, S.W.; also Messrs. Simpson, 100, St. Martin's Lane, W.C., employ ladies in various branches of decorative work, including china and glass painting. We fancy that there is probably a greater demand for such work than for that of the needle.

EKA.—You read to improve yourself, and if in reading, you find any book exercising an evil influence over you, or causing you to think lightly of holy things, do not continue it. This is the test, and it lies with you to apply it.

PANSY.—A knowledge of fine needlework is necessary for anyone who intends to undertake the work of making children's clothes. You would have to apply at some shop where there is a vacancy, or else advertise.

NOW READY.

No. 7.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

MONTHLY SUPPLEMENT
TO
THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER.



A FLOWER OF LIGHT

BY
SARAH DOUDNEY.

AUTHOR OF
"A Cluster of Roses," "Pilgrims of the Night,"
etc.



LONDON:
"GIRL'S OWN PAPER" OFFICE,
56, PATERNOSTER ROW.

OUR NEW STORY
COMPETITION.

SUBJECT: {" THE G. O. P. SUPPLE-
MENT FOR MAY."

Examiners: MISS SARAH DOUDNEY AND
THE EDITOR.

We are, so far, much pleased with the care and interest taken in making Miniature Stories from our Supplements, and each month we expect to find greater merit in the work and to be conscious of more and more of this interest.

Miss Sarah Doudney and the Editor hope to have great numbers of essays on "A Flower of Light," which is a story in the writer's best method, and which will afford ample material for writing charming one-foolscap-page "Stories in Miniature." In fact, what to leave out will be the chief difficulty in writing the essays.

On deciding with the writer which Miniature Stories are best, the Editor will forward TWO GUINEAS to the very best one, ONE GUINEA to the second best, and HALF-A-GUINEA to No. 3.

In addition to this a card bearing the signatures of the Author and Editor will be sent to the Prize Winners, and also to all receiving Honourable Mention.

Each essay must be signed by the writer, followed by her full address; but a *nom-de-plume* may be added by those who do not wish their real names to be printed. Post to the Editor of "THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER," 56, Paternoster Row, London. The last day for receiving the papers is May 20. Papers cannot in any case be returned to the writers.

OUR NEW PUZZLE POEM

ADVICE TO SOLVERS

Do not be afraid
to send in your
solutions.

BECAUSE

It is not likely that
there will be any
perfect ones.

MYGRDMA

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PRIZES to the amount of six guineas (one of which will be reserved for competitors living abroad) are offered for the best solutions of the above Puzzle Poem. The following conditions must be observed:—

- 1. Solutions to be written on one side of the paper only.
- 2. Each paper to be headed with the name and address of the competitor.
- 3. Attention must be paid to spelling, punctuation, and neatness.
- 4. Send by post to Editor, GIRL'S OWN PAPER, 56, Paternoster Row, London. "Puzzle Poem" to be written on the top left-hand corner of the envelope.
- 5. The last day for receiving solutions from Great Britain and Ireland will be June 16, 1898; from Abroad, August 18, 1898.

The competition is open to all without any restrictions as to sex or age. No competitor will be awarded more than one First Prize during the year (November 1897 to October 1898), but the winner of a Second Prize may still compete for a first. Not more than one First and one Second Prize will be sent to any one address during the year.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE of one guinea will be awarded to the competitor, not a prize-winner, who shall receive the highest number of marks during the year for Mention. Very Highly Commended to count 10 marks; Highly Commended to count 7 marks; Honourable Mention to count 5 marks.

This will be an encouragement to all who take an interest in the puzzles and who cannot quite find their way into the front rank of solvers.