

"It does not matter much now, I suppose, as you are not likely to visit Highbridge again in a hurry, and there is no chance of your meeting them in town. They are not at all in 'our set,' and that you must have known. Marion's rôle is to make herself popular with all his people for her husband's sake, but, I repeat, she had no right to draw you into the same clique."

"I am quite sure Marion's friendship for the Ashtons is founded on far better grounds than desire for Harry's popularity."

Blanche turned round, stared at her sister, and laughed.

"What a dear, matter-of-fact, solemn thing it has grown! But, joking apart, Laura, your looks do not say much in favour of country air. Now I glance at you again, I can see your face has grown pale, and you are positively haggard. Did I not know such a thing is impossible at your age, I should say you are beginning to fade already."

"I am very tired, Blanche. You forget the journey from Highbridge is long, and I was up and dressed before daylight this morning."

"Perhaps that accounts for your white cheeks. I will send you up some tea, and when you have rested a little, you had better go down and see papa. You will find him in the library."

"Does he expect me? I had better go down at once."

"He does not expect you, for he has not been told of your coming home, so you need not hurry."

"Is Mr. Gregory here?" asked Laura, presently.

"No; why should he be here?"

"Well, I supposed there might be a reason, considering he is to marry you so soon."

"I do not expect him until the day before our wedding; that will be quite time enough for him to come. Everything is arranged about business settlements, and such like, and I must say he has been extremely liberal. For the rest, he is much better out of the way."

Laura looked up at her sister inquiringly.

"Yes, I mean it. What do men know about preparing the trousseau? Those sorts of things are simply a bore to them. Laura, I must show you my dresses before they are packed. Some of them are superb!"

"I suppose so," said the tired traveller, wearily.

"Ah, you wish me to leave you alone, I see! Here come the men with your boxes. I will send up your tea directly."

As soon as the promised tea had been despatched, and Laura had donned some indoor costume, she went down the broad staircase to the library, where Blanche had told her she would find her father.

(To be continued.)

STUDIES OF GIRLS.

By the Author of "Her Object in Life," &c., &c.

THE GIRL WHO DARED.

"Something ventured and won."



It is a very trite adage, yet one whose truth some of us never realise all the days of our life, that it takes all sorts of people to make up a world. Many of us adopt pet virtues—generally those which come most readily to ourselves; and then are too apt to regard the complementary virtues as something very like vices. And what is true in this way of individual judgment holds good also with great masses of public opinion. A few years ago, even more than now, the world made over to women all the passive virtues; and its ideal was she who could wait and watch and endure and surrender, perhaps without question whether such waiting and watching, such endurance and sacrifice were really suited to or good for the material in which her life worked. "She has borne so much," was deemed sufficient praise, without much inquiry whether such bearing was right, or in the least likely to bring forth wholesome results.

From the very first, however, the strong hand of inspiration drew no such dim and lightless picture of female excellence. Solomon's virtuous woman stands before us, neither as invalid nor sick nurse, neither as slighted wife nor neglected mother. Her virtues are of the wholesomest sort—those which shine forth without need of the candlestick of other people's weakness or wickedness to set them manifest before the world. She does not imply anybody's wrong by her right. One instinctively respects her husband, who had the sense to choose such a woman in those days of his youth when mere beauty and meretricious sentiment so often have such deadly fascination. One feels that her children turned out well, and that her maidens were good girls who willingly submitted to a strict training in good habits. One even realises that the public opinion of her neighbourhood must have been pure and healthy, or she could hardly have been such a free and busy woman, since one of the first signs of moral corruption and decay in any community is that its women are fettered into indolence. She is not, as so many gifted pens have loved to depict woman, a mournful angel sent down to minister to souls in purgatory. She is a happy citizen in the kingdom of God.

And after all, the girl in whom patience and submission, and all the quiet graces of suffering are really beautiful, is she who has strength and courage and capacity for action. There is no merit in sitting still if one is unable to walk. There is no merit in being silent if one does not know what to say. And if a girl has strength and courage and capacity, she has a right to infer that God intended her to use them until she hears His voice in the oracle of Duty, calling on her to give them up. Then she will have a sacrifice indeed meet for His holy altar—no rusty talent folded in a mildewed napkin, like those worthless traits of undeveloped character which are often idly dedicated to Him, when the world finds no use for them. She will lay her very life under the keen edge of His will, to receive it back renewed in His due time.

"Those also serve who only stand and wait" is a beautiful truth, but not for the indolent and incapable. A good servant does

not only stand and wait while there is anything to be done which it is in his power to do.

How many girls might be what Kate Barbour is, and do what she has done, if only they would let their lives stand out before them in the clear daylight which shows what is right, instead of only peeping at them in the tinted lamplight of what is easy and pleasant and "usual."

Kate Barbour was left an orphan when she was about seventeen. Up to that time, she had lived with her widowed mother in a quiet country town. Their means of subsistence had been an annuity, which died with Mrs. Barbour. It had, however, been but small, and had required to be doled out with a sparing hand to make it "go round" at all. Kate had been sent to a very plain school of the old-fashioned kind, where few of the "ologies" were dreamed of. Her time there was short enough, for she had been taken away when she was only thirteen, but her real education was carried on during the following four years in their sitting-room. Whether under the influence of her homely teachers or from some innate tendency in herself, Kate had acquired a true taste for reading. Her mother had a small but solid library, and the two together went through many of the great masterpieces of prose and poetry. Their method of study might not have satisfied exacting educationists. They did not enter on questions of philology or archæology. They only discussed principles of human conduct and mysteries of human nature—only caught a vein of high feeling which made Kate sensitive to shrink, not from what was humble and homely, but from all that was small and petty in the life around her.

And then Mrs. Barbour died, and poor, penniless Kate, with a very few relics of her happy childhood, adjourned to take up her abode with a paternal aunt and two maiden cousins in London.

This aunt, Mrs. Dodd, and her daughters, were very much better off than Mrs. Barbour had been; but there was a constant sense of economy, not to say parsimony, about them. They had taken up the rôle of poor-rich people—that is to say, they tried to make every pound do the work of two, and felt themselves "forced" to spend so much money on this and on that, that they rarely had a shilling to do as they pleased with. They were kind-hearted women, and would not have thought of shutting their doors on their orphan relative; but they accepted her with resignation, as a burden, and felt that in her very existence, as in many other things, Providence had not been kind to them.

It was such a strange life to Kate—this life in a row of fifty little villas, all alike, except in their numbers. She felt smothered. Even the daily newspaper seemed to have "nothing in it," because there was nobody to talk it over with, since the Dodd ladies entirely ignored leading articles and reviews. There was no housework to be done, for the little household kept an elderly cook who, from her kitchen, ruled it with a rod of iron, and a small housemaid, who, according to her mistress's report, broke the china, flirted at the area rails, fingered Miss Dodd's lace and jewellery, and was really available for nothing but to open the street-door in a demure face and an immaculate apron. There were not many callers, but their bare possibility was considered a sufficient need-be for this girl's troublesome and expensive maintenance, and also for the Dodds confining themselves and all their occupations to the close little dining-room, that the orderliness of the drawing-room might be maintained in deadly precision.

Indeed, the paying and receiving of these few calls seemed the reason for the Dodds' existence. Dresses were bought, and hours



arranged with reference to them, and to the still fewer evening parties which the spinster sisters attended. They took Kate with them, and Kate tried hard not to yawn through half-hours of disquisition on the weather, or of minute analyses of the reigning housemaid's faults and foibles.

"The truth is," said Jane Dodd, wearily, one morning when this functionary had been finally detected in theft and summarily despatched to her friends, defiantly declaring that "she never had seen such a place before, no, never, though she'd a many"; "the truth is, we can't expect to get a nice girl. Gibb (that was the cook) won't put up with a raw, untrained one, and, indeed, she wouldn't look well at the door either, and if a girl is passable in appearance and has a little training, she can command better wages than we can offer, if her character is really good. So we must just endure what we can get."

Kate's heart burned within her. They were maintaining her, she knew, out of pure kindness, in a wearisome, idle existence, which bored her and made her feel wicked. Kate had often envied the servant the tasks she had grudgingly performed.

"Cousin Jane," she said, suddenly, "why need you keep a girl at all, now I am here? I can do all she did. I have always been accustomed to do a great deal more, and it will be so much more pleasant not to have an unreliable person about the house."

"It is not to be thought of for an instant," said Miss Dodd, shortly.

But her younger sister, Lavinia, remarked gently, "There might be something to be said for it. Kate is old enough to have some independent allowance for dress now, and yet we can scarcely afford to give it. If she spared us the servant's wages, there would be those. I have often thought how much well-bred, middle-class girls would make of the money that these poor things squander so heedlessly."

"It is not to be thought of," returned Miss Dodd, with energy. "We might consider it, if it was not for answering the door. Lavinia, reflect. Your own father's niece! What would the world say of us!"

Kate could scarcely press the matter after that, for she could not urge her relatives to do what they considered would disgrace themselves. So another girl was hired, and the usual domestic grievance went on. Kate soon found that the only usefulness permitted her was to constantly alter and remodel her cousin's dresses and bonnets and furbelows to keep them in a good conceit of themselves when they went to talk about the weather and the fashions with their acquaintances.

"And was this a meet product of a human life?" Kate asked herself. She had a full realisation of all the sweet uses of needlework, when it is applied to give warmth or comfort or beauty. She had quite enough tender sentiment to understand that a pair of stockings knitted by loving fingers are snugger than the best we buy. But to put her whole life into driving flimsy fabrics through one fashion after another, each uglier than the last, and that for no object more noble than to give her cousins the false appearance of spending more money on their dress than they really did! This was more than Kate could bear.

"It is as bad as hiring oneself to walk about with a board advertising an adulterated article, or a mock auction!" said Kate to herself. But what she said aloud was to give her cousins a hint how she felt that, instead of preying helplessly on their bounty, she ought to be trying to make a way for herself in the world.

"She is really very useful to us," said Miss Jane. "I'm sure she made my old satin dress like new, by her graceful admixture of cashmere."

"But, perhaps she is not very useful to herself," timidly suggested Lavinia.

"Oh, well—if she thinks of nothing but herself!" retorted Miss Jane, aggrieved. "If she is not to consider us all—why, then, perhaps—"

The sisters were alone during this conversation. "She may be considering us," said Lavinia. "You know you felt it rather hard lines to have her come here."

"I did not then know she would be so handy," observed Miss Jane, "so handy and so unobtrusive. And I'm sure we have been very kind to her. She is not the sort of girl whom I should have imagined would turn ungrateful."

"She has scarcely been with us six months," said Lavinia, "not longer than an ordinary visit among old friends: and she has made herself most useful. If such slight kindness fails to bind her in slavery to us for the rest of her life, is it fair to call her ungrateful?"

"I see you mean to take her part," said Miss Jane, ungraciously. "I suppose this comes of the new ideas about women's rights."

"I suppose every woman has a right to do her duty—if she can find it," submitted Lavinia.

"It is a wonder you never wanted to run away yourself," snapped Miss Jane.

Lavinia sighed.

But somehow the heaven worked in the little household. Miss Jane was one of those who object to everything at first on principle. But presently she began to reflect that if they were spared Kate's maintenance, after their resources had proved equal to it, they might surely indulge themselves a little more in pleasant expenses. And when Kate's diligent needle had set Miss Jane's wardrobe in ornamental order, which might serve her for a year, that lady reflected that the girl would certainly be back again upon their hands before that time had elapsed, and that the sooner she went the better.

Old Mrs. Dodd herself objected very faintly, partly because she was a faint and feeble person, and partly because she had often mistily wondered what would become of Kate when she herself died, and her money died with her, and of the income, which would so meagrely provide for four, there would remain but two-thirds to provide for three.

Miss Jane, having decided to object no more, took the matter into her own management, and persisted in writing out poor Kate's advertisements, and, what was worse, in urging her cousin's merits and claims upon her friends.

"She would be invaluable," she said, "to anybody who wanted a nice, lady-like companion. Salary would be no object compared with a refined home and light duties, such as reading aloud—Kate was a good reader—or playing—Kate was no performer, but could manage dance music prettily—or a little millinery or fancy work—nothing menial, of course. It was no wish of theirs that Kate should go out at all, only they felt bound to respect her spirit of independence."

O how thankful Kate was when one after another of Jane's "circle" civilly replied that they would bear her cousin in mind; but there were so many such young ladies, and so few suitable openings for them, that they could hold out little hope, &c., &c.

Jane's first advertisement announced:—"As companion.—A young lady requires an appointment. Nothing menial. Salary moderate."

That went into the papers for a fortnight, and there was not a single answer. Then Jane varied her announcement:—"As governess.—Can teach French and music. Salary not the first consideration."

"But I can't really teach French and

music," pleaded Kate. "I am fit for little but plain reading, writing, and arithmetic."

"You know as much of them as many governesses," said Miss Jane.

And Kate held her peace then, thinking it would be time to protest firmly if any answer came. And only one arrived from a lady who had five daughters, whom she wished, she said, "to be brought up *accomplished*," for which result she could offer a salary of £10 per annum and a comfortable home, "sharing everything with my girls, even their bedroom."

Then Kate took the matter into her own hands, gently, but resolutely. The result was:—

"Advertiser wishes situation. Can teach the rudiments to young children. Is skilful in all kinds of useful needlework. Has been accustomed to domestic duties. Is active and healthy. Aged 18."

"You will be little better than a servant," fretted Jane. "And you need never expect to make a good marriage."

"I thought you said no woman should allow herself to think about such things," said Lavinia, while Kate laughed gaily.

"I'll take Cousin Jane's advice in that respect," she observed. "I'll leave God to care for that for me. As 'a prudent wife' is 'from the Lord,' I presume so is 'a good husband.'"

Before that advertisement had appeared twice, Kate had several answers. Some of them were dated from localities and were of a style which led Kate to feel that they were from shabby-genteel people, anxious to get a servant and call her a governess as a sign of good social status. These she laid aside. And the one which she finally took into consideration came from Shetland. It was from the partly-invalid mother of several children, the eldest a girl not much younger than Kate, who found the sole responsibility of the little ones too much for her.

"I think you may be happy with us," wrote the lady; "we are very happy among ourselves, and should be almost self-dependent if I were only strong." She forwarded references from the parish minister, and professed readiness to pay the expenses of the long journey.

"I'll go," decided Kate.

"I should not wonder if they expect you to milk the cows," warned Miss Jane.

"I hope they will, if they'll take the trouble to teach me how," laughed Kate.

"It's very far away," said Jane, but there was a tone in her voice as if that was not an unmixed calamity, as it was in the eyes of Mrs. Dodd, who had the poorest opinion of her neighbours and the greatest dread of the unknown.

The night before Kate's departure, Lavinia came to her room.

"You're quite right to go, dear," she said, "though I'm sure I'll miss you. I see we have got to begin early to make life worth living, if we are to begin at all. It is soon too late. It is a terrible thing to look back down one's life, and feel as if nothing would have been a bit different if one had never been born at all. Perhaps it is something to be thankful for, if one does not seem to have done any harm. Only one never feels sure of that. I often think that mother and Jane would have done quite as well without me—better even—for they get on best when I'm away, and seem to enjoy me a little when I come back. But they wouldn't have liked me to go. It is not always so easy to see what is right, as it has been in your case, dear."

Kate often smiled in her Shetland home to think how Jane's worst prophecies came true. Milk the cows!—that was nothing. On some occasions she helped to shovel

the snow, and once she and one of her boy pupils dug out a sheep! It was a very happy family, and the life in it was full and busy, and yet easy and occupied. But over and over again the invalid mother told Kate that she had been the greatest blessing which had come to them for many a day—supplementing the sister's influence over the wild boys by her own, towards which they felt the restraint and deference due to new authority. Her pretty "dance music" kept their restless feet in harmonious motion on winter nights. She introduced them to the master minds who had swayed her own girlhood, and whose works had stood on their shelves hitherto as honoured but unfamiliar guests. She taught them new handicrafts, and showed them the beauty and use of their old-fashioned wood-carving and net-making. She saw one after another of them go out into the world, and followed them with her graphic letters, which their own mother and sister could admire, but could not emulate.

She stayed there till she was what she called "a staid woman of thirty-two," when there came to her an unexpected legacy of five hundred pounds.

Jane wrote to her that surely now she would give herself a breathing time. Mrs. Dodd was dead, and she and Lavinia had often said what a mercy it was that Cousin Kate was surrounded with plenty, instead of staying on there with their diminished income. But now the interest of this little fortune—

Jane could tell her where good interest might be got—would make all easy, and the little fortune itself was a nest egg for old age.

Kate wrote back, thanking her cousin, and saying that she often wished that she and Lavinia were not so very far away. But she could not leave her friends, as they had not ceased to want her. Besides, she added, she did not want her money to help her to leave off living, but to help her to more life.

The end of it was that two or three years later, Kate went out to Canada with two of her ex-pupils, fine young lads of fifteen and seventeen. Their father wished them to settle in the Dominion, but had no money at the time to buy land for them. So Kate went out with the boys and invested her little property in acres of virgin soil, and lived on them in a two-roomed log shanty till a better one was built, and there she looked after the lads, and toiled for them and kept them straight, and saw that they did justice to themselves and to her, till in due time their portions came out and they started on farms of their own—her near and helpful neighbours.

Even that is years ago now, and Miss Kate Barbour, of Pine Field, will tell you she has lived a great deal since then. There is a look on a bright face which only their faces have who have given up their best to God, and know that He keeps it safely. She has naturally much influence in the hamlet, which has grown up around her, and in some matters perhaps she is a little despot. One of her

ex-pupils says she chose his wife for him, but that he could not have done it so well himself. She has taken up and trained several of the destitute London children whom good people send out to the new country. She is Miss Kate Barbour still, and will remain so: there is a grave in the little cemetery which she keeps bright and trim—the grave of one whom she had known in Shetland, and who came out to Canada after her, and died by an accident before he had time to *change her name* from Kate Barbour. It is an old story now, but never old to her; the strong hearts ever keep safe places for their own romances.

And now Miss Jane Dodd and Lavinia are coming out to live with her. For Miss Jane invested her money at such very good interest that—she lost the capital. "What a good thing it is for me that I didn't always get my own way," admits Miss Jane, "or Kate would not have a home of her own to open to us. But the wisest of us make mistakes sometimes."

We can read between the broad lines of Kate Barbour's history a long story of constant energy and courage and self-denial and cheerful surrender. But she herself always says that she never felt anything so hard to resist as the sluggish atmosphere of the Dodds' house, and the sense of Jane's disapproval of her ventures. "I often wonder how I dared run counter to so much which surrounded me," she says. "And the lesson of my life is, that even that must be done sometimes."

BOUND TO EARTH.

By the Author of "Phil's Fortune," &c.

CHAPTER X.



"RACE," said Helen, after a long silence, "can you think why Edward did not say 'good-bye' to me?"

"Perhaps to spare you dear," Grace

suggested, "or perhaps he was out and did not even know anything of what had happened."

"But he has never before gone out until he has seen me and told me where he was going."

"You were not down this morning, you know," suggested Grace. "He may not have been able to wait."

Helen caught at the idea. "That must be it," she agreed, "and he will be sure to write when he hears what has happened, but I should have liked to have seen him. He was to have spoken to Mr. Leslie this morning, you know. That is why I am anxious. Can there be anything wrong? If I could only have known, it would have helped me so to bear the home trouble."

"We must not anticipate troubles," Grace said, cheerfully. In her heart of hearts she felt no comfort in the matter. She had formed her own opinion of Edward Leslie, and it was not a very flattering one. Indeed, his character had appeared to her in so weak and unstable a light, that she could only marvel how Helen could have been attracted by it. To a girl of Grace's disposition, and carefully trained as she had been, it would have been impossible to give love where she had not already given esteem.

Mr. Mackenzie was most thoughtfully kind. Having seen to the luggage, he took his place in the railway carriage, burying himself in a newspaper in the corner farthest from the two girls, apparently oblivious of their existence. Grace and Helen were thus able to converse together in low tones which were quite hidden from his ears by the noise of the train.

As they drew near the end of their journey Helen's spirits, which had somewhat revived, began again to droop.

"You will come all the way with me, Grace," she said, imploringly. "No one will be better able to cheer up poor mamma."

"Oh yes, darling, you will do that much better than I should," Grace replied. "Remember I am a perfect stranger to her. She may not care for me even to know what has happened." Grace had vividly in her mind the words, "If a man disgraces himself he

disgraces his family." What shocking revelation was awaiting poor Helen?

Helen looked up in quick alarm. "You are no stranger to her," she said, "I have told her so much about you; and what could there be that you mightn't know? I shall tell you all as soon as I know it. I am sure it will not make any difference to you whatever it is."

"No, indeed," Grace replied, warmly, "but I will not come, dear, you must see them alone at first. You will have a Friend near you, who will help and sustain you better than I or any other could. Try to let that comfort you, dear."

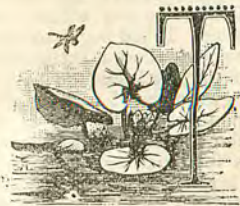
But alas! it did not comfort Helen much. She had never been taught to make religion a part of her daily life. Naturally amiable, affectionate, and pure-minded, she had ever been, as Grace had said, a good upright girl, but rather because goodness attracted her, than as the result of any deep-rooted principles. Had her disposition been otherwise, her conduct would have been different, for it was not founded upon careful religious training as Grace's was. Yet Helen had some general notions of religion, and she tried to believe that God would help her out of her trouble, although somehow she was very little cheered by the thought. You see there is a great difference between believing steadfastly in God's help, and *trying* to think He will help us, and again Helen was endeavouring to think He would help her *out* of her trouble,

STUDIES OF GIRLS.

By the Author of "Her Object in Life," "The Other Side of the World," etc.

PART II.

THE GIRL WHO ENDURED.



HE cleverest girl we have had for years! She has such originality, and so much energy. She must prove to be something remarkable."

It was Miss Wilde who spoke. Miss Wilde was the principal of a large girls' school in the cathedral town of Radcaster. This was one of its gala days, when the dean came to give the prizes, and Miss Wilde was in her best brocade and her Limerick lace, in high spirits too, and very proud of the bright and promising pupil of whom she whispered to the select group of canons and their wives.

"One of our townspeople, I suppose?" observed a clerical dignitary. "I did not catch her name. What is it?"

"Helen North," answered Miss Wilde. "The Norths are scarcely Radcaster people. They only settled here after the father's death. I should imagine he must have been a very superior man."

Perhaps the last remark seemed a little inconsequent, made as it was without any other reference to the late Mr. North's position or history. The explanation was, that as Miss Wilde's thoughts had turned to the North family, it had occurred to her that Helen had certainly not derived her talents or her force of character from her mother. And to own the truth, in the short silence which followed Miss Wilde's last remark, her mind went on to ask itself how, if Helen really resembled her father, such a man as he must have been could ever have chosen and loved such a wife as a lack-a-daisical, sentimental, selfish Mrs. North.

"And how many prizes did you say she has won this year?" asked a gentle old lady.

"Six first prizes!" answered Miss Wilde, her wandering thoughts promptly returning to the matter in hand. "A thing that has never happened to one girl before since I have kept school. But even that does not really represent the distance which separates her, intellectually, from her schoolfellows. For instance, our English composition prize is usually counted well-earned by clearly-expressed commonplaces, set forth in good grammar and neat style. We cannot give prizes for genius, you know," she added, with a smile, "because we have no right to expect it. But Miss North's essay shows genius. At least, so Mr. Matthews says, and so I think."

The object of this praise—a slight maiden—was now standing before the little dais on which the dean's chair was placed. If there were fine markings about her brow and strong lines about her chin, they were apt to pass unnoticed in the general girliness of her appearance, though, perhaps, by some subtle contrast they increased it and gave pathos to it. The young face was so quiet and grave that it needed an acute observer to detect the fire burning behind it, and only rarely making itself manifest in a flashing glance. Quite in keeping with face and figure was the dark brown dress, simply made, and set off by tiny white ruffles at wrist and throat, where they were fastened by a small brooch, whose dusty old gems, like Helen's eyes, gleamed only now and then. Certainly in appearance she was

as little of a blue-stocking as a coquette, nothing but a simple, earnest girl, with whom excitement would be enthusiasm, and who could never relax except to recreate.

"She does not seem much elated by her triumph," whispered one lady.

"I don't fancy Helen North thinks of it as a triumph," said Miss Wilde, gravely.

"I doubt if she remembers how she has excelled her schoolfellows. It is her firm persuasion that nearly all of them could do better than she does, if they would only try more. And when Mr. Matthews praised her essay, she only said, 'I liked doing it, but I ought to have done it a great deal better.'"

"The true temperament of genius," observed the cathedral organist—"joy in work, and dissatisfaction after it."

"Is not that an unhappy state of things?" asked another visitor. "Would it not be better even to be restless while we are at our work, and then quite satisfied when it is done?"

"Poor work is done so," thought the gentleman, silently; but he added aloud, "There is such a thing, you know, madam, as 'divine discontent.'"

"I think we read that God looked upon His work and saw that it was good," observed a comfortable-looking rector.

"Man is not God," rejoined the organist.

"The Son is not yet as the Father."

"Well, well, I grant that," admitted the rector; "but surely he has got far enough to be able to take comfort in feeling he has done his best."

"If he can honestly feel so," said the organist.

"It does not matter how he feels about it, so long as God knows it," whispered the gentle old lady. Her aged eyes, soft with tears, were resting like a benediction on Helen North's face. The aged can see far before them, because they know so much behind them. They can read destinies, because they have read histories. In all that happy assembly it was only that one old lady who guessed what was the truth—to wit, that at that moment the girl's thoughts were not of her "triumph," nor even of her work, nor of anything of herself or her own.

Helen's thoughts were in her home, whence nobody had come to see her in her moment of success and glory. Mrs. North did not set much store by her daughter's talents and their reward, but under some circumstances she would have liked to come forth and pose a little under the congratulations of her neighbours. And Aunt Lydia would certainly have come, for she appreciated diligence and capacity, though she might have understood her niece's better, had those qualities been made manifest in old-fashioned samplers and bed quilts, instead of in essays and problems. But Aunt Lydia was sick—suffering from a severe, strange chill, caught by walking through heavy rain a night or two before. It had not been done in recklessness or thoughtlessness, but for the sake of one whose life lay like a shadow on the little household—Helen's elder brother Jem.

It was his absence which made the shadow unusually dark just now; for Jem had run away. It was not the first time. The two women and the young girl made common cause in their desperate hope to hide the fact from their neighbours. It was only Helen who had any suspicion that they did not altogether succeed.

It was the old story of the indulged boy and the indulgent mother, which is, after all, only an euphemistic way of describing a selfish boy and a selfish mother. It may sound severe, but it may be said that Mrs. North had no idea of love but as a form of selfishness. She could not have comprehended that true ideal which teaches the loving to seek no pleasure

except what may be found in the good of the beloved. It pleased her to caress and gratify and excuse Jem, whether this did Jem good or harm. She mis-called this "motherliness."

In her boy's childish illnesses she had to be held aloof from him—her approaches to his bedside watched and guarded, lest her "motherliness" should be unable to withhold dainties or deny whims which might have cost him his life. Jem had always turned to her to conceal his youthful peccadilloes from his father, knowing that she would not even spare a few little lies if they seemed necessary to secure his immunity. Burned into Helen's heart was one memory of which she never spoke—the memory of a day when her father, all unconsciously, had asked a simple question, to which in agony and shame his little girl had given a truthful reply, and so had revealed the cruel weakness with which his wife had defeated his paternal discipline. She could remember the look on her father's face, as, without a word to her, he turned to seek an interview with her mother. She could recall the sound of her parents' voices as they reached her through the closed door, her mother's hasty retreat to her own room, in a flood of passionate tears, her father's slow step downstairs, the dead silence in which he laid his hand on Jem's shoulder, and passed on alone into his little study, where Helen found him an hour afterwards, his elbows resting on the table and his face buried in his hands. She had crept to his feet and sat there, laying her head against his knee, and presently one hand had stolen down and stroked the bright curls.

After that, Jem had been sent away to school. And Helen noticed that henceforth her father never asked her a single question on any matter touching Jem, nay, that his very eyes avoided hers when Jem's name was mentioned. He had no right to ask his child to bear witness against the foolish woman whom a pretty face, a little fortune, and genteel family connections had tempted him to make the mother of his children—his partner in the arbitration of their destinies. At the same time, Mrs. North herself was more guarded in her proceedings. Helen was quite sure that she secretly supplied Jem with the pocket-money which his schoolmaster advised and his father decided he should not have. But Helen knew this less by information than by that strange intuition which love and fear often give, teaching the significance of external signs which might otherwise pass unheeded. At times the girl would blame herself for her silence concerning her fears and suspicions. At others, she would blame herself for the fears and suspicions themselves.

But they all proved true on that other terrible day when a letter came from the schoolmaster requesting Mr. North to remove his son immediately, as he had been detected in practices of secret gambling and sensual indulgence which threatened to corrupt his more innocent schoolfellows.

Helen's father was ill when that letter came. Not very ill, they thought. Only he never got better. All through those last days Helen remembered that her father, speaking of her mother and brother, always said, "Your poor mother," and "poor Jem." At the very last, when voice and sight were failing, and consciousness seemed gone, the weak hand groped about, and the weak voice faltered "Helen!" To the daughter's heart there was more in the dying tone than could have been expressed in a thousand words. There seemed in it a charge laid upon her, an injunction given her, a hope held out to her, a world of regretful tenderness poured upon her. Was all that in that sinking tone, or was some of it in her ear? Who can say?

She felt as if she could never atone to her mother and Jem for that last word being hers

and not theirs. It was half a relief and half a blow when she discovered accidentally that they had never noted it!

Immediately after Mr. North's death the family had removed to Radcaster. James North had not gone again to any school. His mother was sure he would be quite fit for college if he had a little private cramming. Tutor after tutor was dismissed as "too severe," and as "not possessing the art of making study attractive." At last the college idea was given up, simply because James himself scouted it. Then he was articulated to an architect. Then his articles were broken. Next his uncles got him into a London office, and put him to board with a relative of his father's. The relative soon asked for a change in this plan, as it did not suit her domestic arrangements to have an inmate who seldom rose before noon, and would like to pass all Sunday in bed. So Jem went to lodgings, and soon something happened at the office which brought telegrams to Radcaster, and there was a big cheque filed in, and a hasty journey to London, and a melancholy coming back without Jem, and days of waiting in shamed suspense, till a post-card arrived that "J. had enlisted in the — Regiment, and sent his love, and hoped there would soon be a war (which was likely) and then he might get out of everybody's way, and trouble nobody any more."

Mrs. North was frantic. She would not listen to her own brother and her brothers-in-law, her lawyer, or her doctor, when they urged that it might be truest kindness to let the young scapegrace reap as he had sown, before the crop should be too heavy—and that strict discipline and the harsh rule of necessity had sometimes made worthy men even out of as poor material as he. No, no, come what might, Jem must be bought out. And she went again to London to meet him, and liberally replaced the comfortable wardrobe which had utterly vanished, and brought him home in triumph. She said that Jem's "self-respect must be restored"—as if that was possible until he had been first wholesomely humbled—and so she even brought forth the dead father's signet-ring to bedeck the prodigal who neither by word or deed had yet owned "I have sinned."

And then Jem had idled about at home. Friends and relatives shook their heads to each other and said there was no use in trying to do anything for the lad, for the foolish mother would be sure to interfere. Once Jem was again within the range of her spoiling and petting, Mrs. North herself seemed to feel no uneasiness, nor to be troubled with any thought of the future. Jem lounged and dawdled, and indulged in habits of thought and speech which made Helen weep with shame and sorrow. But to Mrs. North, what the idol did was either right or excusable. She did not seem to notice the destruction of the simple household amenities—how neighbours held aloof—how Helen never gave herself the treat of the visit of a school-friend. Helen would plead with her brother sometimes, generally meeting but a sneer or a scoff, but occasionally arousing some strain of sentiment which would start in her heart a sickly hope, almost more exhausting than despair. Aunt Lydia spoke out her mind at last, and warned Mrs. North that she was not doing her duty, but she only received the retort that an old maid could not be supposed to appreciate a mother's heart. Had she then no motherly consideration for Helen, Aunt Lydia had inquired? It was in the bitterness of this household jar that Jem took occasion to make another flight, and that Aunt Lydia, goaded by her sister's reproaches into terror lest her simple justice had been cruel severity, tramped at midnight through a blinding rain to a neighbouring town in the hopes of catch-

ing Jem there before he took the London train, and would be lost in the mysteries of the great metropolis. Her errand failed, and while Jem's place remained still empty, her exertions had thrown her on a bed of suffering.

And so Helen was alone on the day of her glory—alone, with bitter fears in her heart—alone, with none to hear the praises which never stir a woman's soul unless they reach it through loving ears.

When the prize-giving was over, and the more social festivities of the afternoon began, the young prize-taker slipped into sudden insignificance. Other girls were surrounded by their own relatives or familiar friends, to whom they were merrily doing the honours of the school-house. Other girls had light hearts and merry faces and gay laughter. She could be merry herself, thought poor Helen, if only she might! And a drop of bitterness entered her heart for a moment. But then came the reflection that perhaps her sad, solitary, solemnised life had had something to do with the earning of her prizes, and that there might be a perfect compensation in all things, even in the bitterest pain or loss. And so Helen devoted herself to assist the flurried teachers in their tea-making, and presently she heard herself laugh, and by a sudden stinging remembrance of the shadow at home realised that she must have forgotten it, at least for a moment.

It startled her, as if the indefinite whisper in her own heart was suddenly audible outside, when the gentle old lady visitor took her hand, and kindly looking into her eyes said—

"And so you are Miss Wilde's clever girl, my dear! Well, well, let us be thankful for all God's gifts we take, my love, but ever most thankful for those He lets us give. Sometimes it is our giving that leaves room for His gifts. But we must not think of getting—only of giving—nor of doing, only of being—and not even of being loved, but only of loving. That is the daily dying, my child, which keeps our souls open to the fountains of eternal life."

And then she passed on, and Helen felt as if a clear eye had reached the very heart of her life. The next moment she wondered with a jealous doubt whether the lady had heard some report of her home troubles. That doubt often occurred to her afterwards, but it faded away as she grew wiser, and learned to understand that a soul may recognise a soul and comprehend its proper burdens and divine its peculiar "weird" without knowing every step of its earthly way.

Often, indeed, in years to come did Helen recall that lady, and her gentle manner and solemn words. The girl's life had seemed to her dark and dreary on that school-holiday, but how would she have borne it had she known what was to follow? For Aunt Lydia never rose again from her bed of languishing, but stayed there, racked with anguish. At first, they thought it would be only for days, but the days passed into weeks, and the weeks into months, and the months into years. And Jem came back once more: not penitent, not humiliated, only more degraded, and therefore more defiant; more utterly reckless of all the wrong and misery he had wrought. And Mrs. North petted and fondled him, and poured deadly indulgences upon him. As it was not his first going away and coming back, so neither was it his last. Helen could scarcely say whether it was an added torture or a subtle relief when their household skeleton could no longer be shut in a cupboard—when they could no more dream of keeping it a secret from their neighbours, and when their neighbours felt it no longer necessary to make believe they did not know of its existence. At any rate, when further concealment was hopeless, life seemed more honest. Sin bears no bitterer fruit than when it makes

the sweet reticence of life feel like one long act of deception.

The Norths had never been rich. If Jem had done justice to his opportunities, and had relieved the family income of his maintenance, even without adding to it, their circumstances would have been much easier, but as it was he was a constant drain upon them. Such of her little property as Mrs. North could freely dispose of soon vanished in the provision for Jem's unceasing wants and the payment of his self-indulgent debts. When Jem was not at home the family meals grew more and more sparing, Helen's dress became a shame-faced renaissance of faded grandmotherly glories, worn-out carpets were not replaced, the little house acquired the look—the very atmosphere—of penury. Yet suddenly, some bill of Jem's, or some glaring and incomprehensible blank among his necessities would demand the out-payment of a sum sufficient to have procured all the little comforts which the others had foregone. And then there would come on Helen's face an expression which made Mrs. North break into tirades against her "unsisterly hardness," her "selfish setting of mercenary interests above poor Jem's welfare and requirements."

"But are we serving Jem's welfare?" Helen would ask, gently. "Have we done him any good yet? Have we not rather done him evil?"

As she grew to womanly estate she never failed in this protest. Alas! it only embittered the mother towards the daughter, without having any influence on the weak woman's course of action. But Helen could not have felt true to her mother, true to Jem himself, without making it. She never sought to hide it from her brother. To him personally she said far plainer words. She said them in fear and trembling, for her mother's ideal of clinging, excusing, smothering love had impressed itself upon her, though she had never made it her own, and so she thought that her loyal adherence to her convictions concerning truth and right must certainly snap the last link of affection binding her and her brother together. In after years she used to say, "I believe if I had loved Jem better I should have been more decided in my tone towards him—what is called 'more severe.' I always feel I was to blame for failing there."

Friends and neighbours saw what was going on. They saw that it was the old story—that a dead weight of mental and moral weakness was dragging down the strong—that in the inmost shrine of the little household there was a hideous idol of self before which a blinded worshipper was ready to offer up everything. Miss Wilde especially saw the significance of the situation, and did not hesitate to urge her counsel on Helen.

"My dear girl," she said, "if you do not strike out for yourself your prospects for life will be ruined. Your mother has no right to sacrifice her daughter to her son—her daughter's good to her son's evil, as it really is. She would not do it if she could understand what she is doing," added the good lady, hastily noting the pained expression of Helen's face. "Indeed, it is your duty to her as well as to yourself to do yourself justice. In fact, she may ruin herself if she will not heed her friends, and then she may need to rely on you, and you must begin betimes if you are to be of any service. Think it over, Helen. I could get you a good situation as a teacher in a school. With your appearance and manner and your quite exceptional knowledge of English and literature there would be no difficulty in the matter. Let me try, Helen."

Helen looked up with sad eyes. "You are very good, Miss Wilde," she said, "but please don't. I must stay at home."

"You don't think your mother would forbid your going?" asked Miss Wilde.

"No; oh, no!" answered Helen, and then, not feeling quite so sure, her truthful nature added, "at least, I don't think so; it was not that I was thinking of."

"You are not dreaming of exerting any good influence over Jem, are you, my poor child?" pleaded the governess. "For if that is to be done, it is more likely to be accomplished from a distance than while you are at home."

"I'm afraid I've left off hoping for that," sighed Helen. "I know it's wicked to do so, but I fear I can't help it. No, it is not that. But I must not go away from home now, Miss Wilde. Still, thank you very much for troubling about me."

Miss Wilde said no more then, but she returned to the charge by-and-by, this time with no mere suggestion, but with the practical offer of a good appointment. Helen only thanked her the more warmly, but adhered to her own determination. She did not give her reasons, and perhaps she was unduly reticent.

The truth was, that Helen North could not help feeling that she was the last earthly sunbeam in the life of her Aunt Lydia. She could not leave Aunt Lydia, her dear dead father's sister, who had thrown in her lot with theirs, and had suffered and broken down in their cause. Helen could not have said this, even to herself, and to have hinted as much to anybody else would have seemed to her the last degree of arrogance and self-glorification. To her own mind the duty came as a blessing which she *could not give up*—a blessing which outweighed all the present and prospective advantages which she must sacrifice for it. She might feel a few longings for change and pleasant excitement now, but she had a foreseeing soul, and could forebode how these would look on the day when the dear eyes which now always brightened at her coming would be closed, and the gentle lips would be fixed for ever in a smile not for her. "I may be a desolate woman some day," thought Helen North, "but I will weigh prosperity or fame now as I shall weigh them then, and so I will not make my own desolation. God will take care of my life better than I can; so while He spares me one whom I can love and serve, I will not leave her."

In her inmost, silent heart Helen knew that her mother was too absorbed in Jem and herself to heed her daughter's coming or going, though she might have fretted to miss the *thoughtful little domestic services* which were the only form of dutifulness possible towards her. Helen would have gone bravely out into the world, if anything she was likely to have found there could have been set to the services to which she was devoting her life. But, poor as the family was growing, she knew that it was not money that they really needed, and that had she earned money of her own, she must for pure conscience-sake have withheld it from Jem's rapacity and her mother's weakness. And no money could have done any good to Aunt Lydia: the poor comforts she absolutely needed she had, and nothing could have made up for the withdrawing of the constant tender ministrations of love which were the sole solace of her suffering solitude. No, Helen North saw distinctly enough that the demands of present duty were not for hers, but for her. The service of her gifts was not asked from her, but her surrender.

Radcaster pitied her for a little, and then forgot her. When one chooses one's own stony path, the world does not often remember to throw into it such bright flowers of sympathy and help as it might. Helen slipped fairly out of sight of Radcaster "society." People excused themselves from calling on the Norths on the score that they thought the ladies of the household must feel nervous lest

their visitors should encounter Jem—"it was kinder to leave them to themselves, poor things." And Helen had no gay dresses or new music to contribute to the charms of their evening parties. How could they be expected to consider that even a library subscription means much in such houses as the Norths, and that many a book which lay half read on their own tables would have been a boon to Helen, or that a country drive, or even a quiet twilight chat in a cosy drawing-room, might have given her a refreshment in whose strength she might have gone many days.

And so Helen's life settled down. The time came when the Norths' little servant sought "to better herself," and no new one was taken in her place. Helen reflected that if she could not leave home to earn money, she might at least save it at home. Perhaps, too, the household skeleton was better hidden so. And Helen toiled upstairs and downstairs, and swept, and cooked, and patched, and soothed her fretful mother, and nursed her suffering aunt, and was true to her unhappy brother, and as tender as might be beside. She had her quiet shady corner in the cathedral aisle, but she was often missing even there for Aunt Lydia's sake, and stayed at home and read the simple sermons and sweet old hymns, which were all the mental food the sick woman required. It was only when the aunt was sleeping, or while Helen kept her vigils for her straying brother, that she read the grave histories and deep philosophical treatises which she found in her father's bookcase. And there was something else which she could not help doing, for which she often wished she had more leisure and scope, and then again would feel that she might be thankful that stern duty withheld her from wasting much time in such vain ambition. But when there was really nothing else to do, there could be no harm in writing a few verses, a brief story, some short sentences of reflection.

It occurred to her at last whether she might not keep up some communication with the outer world, and even open some new field of usefulness for herself when her present one should have closed, by this very gift of which she felt so diffident. And then began the weary sending round of manuscripts to magazines, with those results of cold refusal, blunt criticism, even insulting comment, which only those who have been through them can fully realise. But perhaps they were the more easily borne when the letters containing them could only be hastily glanced at, and then crumpled away, because Aunt Lydia was fainting in agony, or because Jem had just been carried into the house, an unconscious heap of self-indulgence and degradation. Compared with these, what were those? Besides, it was not likely that she would grow disheartened and desist, when she found that whatever else it might not be, her writing at least gave her that self-expression for which she had often agonised—that in it her lonely soul had found a companion in its very self. And so she went on, content to believe that she would never meet with any of what is called "success." Those who have reason to know, might have prophesied differently. For never a soul spoke itself out because it must, and found an echo in its own depths, without finding some other hearer too.

Helen's first sunbeam of success fell on the darkest day which had ever lowered over the North family. Jem was in prison at last, having fallen into strong hands, which would not condone his dishonesty for any compensation or forgive it for any pleas for mercy. "You and I may have different ideas as to what mercy is," said the accuser to the bewailing mother. "I think mercy saves from sin, not in it—from itself, not from its mere consequences." As he spoke he glanced at

the pale sister standing by. He had noted her silence. He saw the pathetic gleam on her face at his words. As he opened the door to let her and her mother pass from his presence he said quietly—

"It is truest kindness."

And she replied, "I know."

When they got home there was a letter awaiting Helen. Nobody even asked her what it was. It was from a London firm of publishers, accepting a manuscript which she had sent them months before and believed they must have forgotten. And they enclosed a cheque, small indeed, but seeming to Helen like a nugget from a gold mine in her secret possession.

But once again, she dared not rejoice in her day of joy.

Jem's trial soon came off, and he was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment in a gaol at the other end of Great Britain. To Helen's utter amazement—almost, for her mother's sake, to her confusion—it was for his sister that he cried out under his bitter punishment. When she saw him, she scarcely knew him, such changes had been wrought by a few days of solitude and abstinence and unavailing remorse. The old "good humour" had vanished as he turned at bay. His sister quailed beneath the fierce words he hurled against those beside whom he had drifted down to ruin. "They ought to have known better than to give him his way!" "Meant kindly, indeed—aye, as people did, who gave their babies sleeping draughts!" "His poor mother was a woman, and did not quite understand the material she was dealing with and the dangers that beset it." "Aye," he answered, bitterly, "I dare say that: women are all fools—no, not all: even Aunt Lyddy would have had sense enough not to hinder wiser people, when they would have taken me up—and you, Helen, you always did stand up against my ways; only you might have been more decided!"

"Let me be decided now then," cried Helen, "and tell you that you must not be taken out of this place without seeing your mother once again—poor mother, Jamie! She is not very young now, and if —"

But her pleas were of no avail then, and she abated them in the fear lest if he yielded against his will, he might only load his mother with reproaches which might be more than she could bear. Helen went home sorrowfully. How would her mother endure this?

She found that Mrs. North endured it by saying that Jem knew how sensitive she was, and only sought to spare her the terrible sight of him in a prison cell. But this was only a weak and false nature's form of accepting the most awful blow it had ever received. She staggered under it all the same. And then there was the daughter's arm and head and heart ready to stay and support. Nay, Helen had far more stay and support to give than her mother needed. There was not much of Mrs. North to be crushed. In her daughter's care she was like a maimed kitten in the keeping of a kindly fairy.

Then there came calmer, clearer days for the North household. People were ashamed not to show sympathy now, and among the mere sympathisers some true friends were found. Probably it was now easier to be friends with them. The worst was over; there was no longer a secret drain on the family funds, or a carking fear as to what would happen next. And Helen had more leisure and went on with her work and prospered, and bore herself bravely and brightly, as they always do who are earning a place for themselves among their fellows.

In due time she and her mother went together to the south to meet Jem at his prison door. She had no fears of their meeting now,

for she had kept up a regular correspondence with her brother, and knew that his feelings had gradually softened. Yet if she had expected any marvellous and complete change to be wrought in the time she would have been grievously disappointed. But both practically and theoretically she had dived deep enough into the secrets of humanity to know that there is cause for thankfulness in every slow step it makes towards right ends. Jem was deeply interested in all the little personal comforts he could take with him for that long voyage to a new land on which he was soon to start, and Mrs. North would occasionally refer to his recent privations and discipline in terms which she might better have used had he not brought them on himself. Still, Jem did renounce some of the luxuries his mother would have pressed upon him, and it touched Helen so deeply to hear him tell her that she must not fret after him while she had Helen, that Helen was obliged to leave them to conceal her emotion, and therefore never knew that her mother answered, wistfully—

"Ah, Jem, I'm afraid I did not do justice

to Helen, and now there's nothing at all I can do for her. She does all for me."

And they saw the last of him, as his ship sailed from Southampton, and the two turned and journeyed home, and as, amid her tears, Mrs. North whispered, "Oh, Helen, it has ended well," Helen felt that a life is not wasted which upholds other lives from sinking to their lowest, and haply furthers them a little on the road to the kingdom of God.

Kneeling by Aunt Lydia's couch that night, with her face buried in the pillow, Helen revealed some of the secrets of her heart.

"I could not have borne on if it had not been for your sake, Aunt Lydia. I would not have been quite sure I was right in doing it if you had not been here. Oh, Aunt Lyddy, anybody who lets us love them always binds us to all that is best."

Helen is almost a middle-aged woman now, but she has not long ceased to be Helen North. The good things of life have come to her rather later than to most, perhaps because the harvest

is somewhat richer than with many. Her mother and aunt are still living together, and Jem, abroad, has prospered and done honestly and well, though his station is but humble, and perhaps, therefore, the safer for him. He wanted his mother to go out to the home he had made, and Helen thought she would certainly go, but Mrs. North was afraid of the voyage and of the hardships of colonial life, but at any rate she writes to him regularly, and with her that is an act of great self-sacrifice. Once more with quiet dignity Helen occasionally names "my brother" even in the best Radcaster society, for she says that men need not spurn those whom they profess to believe God has forgiven and received among His own. And from Helen North Myddelton Radcaster society would tolerate greater liberties than that simple piece of Christian charity, for she is an admired author now, and Radcaster is sorry that it cannot boast of her as a native, but can only say, "She was really brought up here, you know, and we all appreciated her from the very first."

ROBINA CRUSOE,

AND HER LONELY ISLAND HOME.

By ELIZABETH WHITTAKER.



"I TOOK AIM."

CHAPTER XI.

A LONG WALK.

WINTER was now approaching, the most agreeable season in hot climates for out-door exercise; I therefore determined to leave the perfecting of my castle, since all was done which was necessary for safety, and to make a tour in the country around, for, as yet, I was perfectly ignorant as to the nature of the land upon which I had been thrown. The time must come when the food brought from the ship would fail, and I

had not the slightest idea as to whether I should be able to replace it.

I resolved to make my way to the mountain which I had observed in the interior, and as the journey might be prolonged to more than one day, I took as much provision with me as I could conveniently carry, and that was not much, merely biscuits and meat in a bag hung by my side; but I trusted to finding something as I went along which would eke out my slender store. With a couple of

pistols in my waistbelt, my bow and arrows slung on my back, and staff in hand, I started at a very early hour one bright morning to ascend the ravine in which my cave was hidden.

It promised to be a long climb, as the stream had its origin in a range of hills at some distance, and of a considerable elevation. The higher I reached the more wooded it became, the bushes which had grown on the sides of the lower ground gave place to trees of a fair growth, till at length I entered a forest of ironwood trees,

which appeared to cover the slopes of the higher hills.

As it became rather difficult to proceed farther along the torrent bed, I thought I would try and attain the high ground. Springing from rock to rock, and aiding myself with branches of trees, or tufts of grass, my attention was caught by the brilliant yellow colour of the soil. On looking around, I remarked that it was only in paths this hue prevailed, and judging that I might have met with some useful product, I arrested my course for a closer examination. My knowledge of chemistry and geology soon enabled me to decide that it was sulphur, and I



"A SUITABLE TREE FOR MY NIGHT'S LODGING."

SUMMER.

By HELEN MARION BURNSIDE.

Oh, the sweet, sweet summer,
With her lavish hand,
Wealth for every comer
Flinging o'er the land!
Day by day uncloses
Into perfect prime
Throngs of fresh, fair roses
All the summer time.

Birds and bees are roaming
In the bosky bowers,
Till the dewy gloaming
Veils the sleeping flowers;
While in fragrant meadows
Little children play
Through the lights and shadows
Of the live-long day.

Oh, the dimpled smiling
Of the sapphire seas—
'Neath the soft beguiling
Of the sun-steeped breeze!

White-sailed boats are swaying
Softly to and fro—
Golden sunbeams playing
Round them as they go.

'Tis the self-same story
Told by birds and bees—
By the rose's glory—
And the sapphire seas—
By the soft wind playing
In the winding wood—
Hearken! All are saying—
"Truly, God is good."

Oh, the sweet, sweet summer,
With her lavish hand,
Wealth for every comer
Flinging o'er the land—
We, with hearts o'erflowing,
Join in Nature's praise,
For the beauty glowing
In the summer days.

STUDIES OF GIRLS.

By ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO.

PART III.

THE GIRL WHO SERVED.



HAVE made up my mind, grand-mamma, that this year I will gain our 'general merit prize,'" said Emma Barbour, one frosty First of January.

"It is a worthy ambition, my dear," said the old lady,

"provided we always remember that the gaining of prizes is not the great thing, but the attainment of wisdom and good habits."

They were great friends—the soft-eyed grandmother and the bright young girl. They lived together in a tiny house in a quiet town among the hills in the south of Scotland. Though it was such a small house, it had a great view. It stood on the very edge of the town, and the back windows overlooked one of the fairest of scenes. Not very far from the house flowed a river, every mile of whose banks is famous in history or song, while on the low hills of its farther shore, among masses of rich woodland, rose the great, grey towers of a castle, while farther still lay the awful, mysterious mountains which the legends of old time had peopled with fairies and ghosts, but which to little Emma's reverent imagination always seemed full of the presence of Him who owns the deep places of the earth and the strength of the mighty hills.

From the front window Emma and her grandmother could see the townsfolk going to and fro, and as they could generally see the hands of the town clock, so they could keep their kitchen clock set by it. But they always took their sewing or their books to the back window, and sat there. They never talked much about the silent beauty stretching far away before them. It only entered into their very souls. If either of them ever had to leave those hills, and go to live on some dull

flat country or in some close noisome city street, then they would talk over the grand outlines, and the silvery mists, and the flying shadows which would remain in their memories. But while they had them, that was enough. They were part of their daily lives.

Mrs. Barbour was quite an old woman, but she was one of those women who are like noble trees: they grow grander and dearer every year they live. For God does not take all the good people away in their youth. He leaves many of the very best people the longest in this life. If He did not do so, what a terrible place this world would grow! And we know God loves this world and claims it as part of His own kingdom, or He would not have sent Jesus to live and die among us, and to teach us to pray that "God's will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Mrs. Barbour had been born and had always lived in that little town. Her husband and all her children, except one son, lay buried in its churchyard. Mrs. Barbour had once been rich, and now she was rather poor, but she always seemed able to help everybody who wanted help. When Emma was quite a little child she remembered hearing an old minister say that her grandmother was "a king's daughter." She wondered then what he meant. She knew now. She knew, too, that she might be a King's daughter also.

Anniversaries were greatly kept in that quiet little house. Only they were not kept in quite the common way. On all the good dates in her own history, Mrs. Barbour tried to make bright days for other people—it might be only by a visit, or a bunch of flowers, or a knitted shawl, or a pair of winter stockings.

"All the happiness of the old memories goes into the gift," she said. "And my pleasure in giving it is the angels' gift to me."

They kept New Years too. All the drawers in the house were tidied anew; any little fresh arrangement which seemed advisable was started.

"For it is the turning of a new leaf," said

Mrs. Barbour. "That is such a beautiful phrase that it is a great pity it has fallen to be seldom used except when the old leaf is supposed to have been wasted. In reality we have to turn new leaves not only when we have spoiled the old ones, but also when we have filled them. Only whether we have spoiled them or filled them the new leaf always seems to awaken hope and energy. For bad, there is possible change to good, and for good there is probable growth to better, and to best."

Mrs. Barbour had a habit of taking a motto for every New Year's day. She chose short texts which stuck in the memory, and rose up with encouragement or warning at all sorts of unexpected moments. It was always Emma's duty to write out this text in careful Old English characters, on a piece of cardboard, and then it stood on her bedroom mantel-shelf for the twelve months to come.

"What is to be this year's motto, grand-mamma?" she asked on that New Year's morning, when she had announced that her own determination was to win that coveted "general merit prize" which proved its owner to be the cleverest, most industrious, and best-mannered girl among the pupils of the excellently organised school of which the little town was justly proud.

"It is not a very long one," said grand-mamma, "and I think there is something in it very suitable to your new ambitions, my child. It is only—

"Covet earnestly the best gifts."

Emma Barbour had a great many thoughts of her own while she sat daintily illuminating these words. Surely she was coveting the best gifts! To gain this prize she would have to be constantly in early attendance at the school, and were not early rising and punctuality good habits or "gifts," whose value grandmamma had never wearied of inculcating? How carefully, too, she would have to learn her lessons—how her memory would be trained and exercised, and grandmamma

always said that a quick and responsive memory was a great blessing! And there could be no indulgence in school whispering or trifling during classes, since one such lapse from the paths of propriety would irretrievably forfeit the coveted prize. Would not this compel her to obey grandmamma's often repeated precept, "Work when you work, and play when you play"?

All Emma's thoughts were the thoughts of a well brought-up and well-meaning girl, and yet somehow Emma did not feel quite satisfied with them; but she was sure all her aspirations and wishes were right so far as they went. What could be wanting?

And then Emma fell to wondering what would happen in the course of the year. Young people are always curious about the future; they want to know how it feels when events come into life. As they grow older they grow more content; they know by experience that events will come, and that change, even for the better, has some pain in it. Little children turn over their new picture-books very quickly, and are never happy till they have seen the last page; when they know them all, they linger long over each.

And that very day the postman was bringing news of an event of such importance as had never before happened in Emma Barbour's life. It came in a letter from India, and grandmamma read the letter twice over, and thought about its proposal for some minutes before she told the news to Emma.

Mrs. Barbour had one son still living. He was an official in the Indian Civil Service, not very high in the ranks, so that his salary did not permit of a *palatial* Calcutta residence, with marble courts and balconies gleaming amid tropical verdure, and troops of oriental servants to tend the weariness of oriental languor. He had to live with his wife and little daughter in a neat dwelling in the rather dismal Calcutta suburbs. They could not afford constant trips to the healthier hill-country, still less visits to Europe. Mrs. Barbour had often been made anxious by the reports of her daughter-in-law's health, clearly fading among the unwholesome swamps, from which there seemed no escape. And there had been cause for this anxiety, for the letter that came in on this New Year's day brought word of young Mrs. Barbour's death.

The old lady had never seen her daughter-in-law, but she had loved her for her wifely devotion to Archibald Barbour, and her heart ached to think of his *sorrow* now in his lonely exile. His own thoughts were evidently less of his own pain than of the loss his little daughter had sustained. With the uncertainty of life staring him in the face from the grave of his young wife, Archibald Barbour had been brought to practical reflection as to what might befall his daughter if she should happen to be left fatherless as well as motherless in the strange country.

Perhaps he mistook the sinking sense of his own loneliness for some foreshadowing of doom, for he had come to the conclusion that his little daughter's best place now was her grandmother's quiet cottage in the town where his own heart often turned so longingly. And having made this decision, he had felt either unable to *brook* further delay, or else that promptitude was rendered desirable by the forlorn condition of his widowed home, and the peremptory necessity of quickly rearranging his own plans; for his letter went on to say that his little girl was already on her way to Britain.

He knew he could trust his mother. Whatever he thought best she would be sure to second and further. Archibald Barbour had had a struggling and now a sorrowful life; but a life that still has one human being, in whose helpfulness and steadfastness it can unflinchingly rely, is a blessed life. For does it not possess

the best type of Him whose power equals His love?

Mrs. Barbour read her son's letter to Emma, but she left out the part where he asked her to have patience with his little Julia. She had been neglected during her mother's long feebleness, had probably been somewhat misguided by the native servants, was inclined to be idle and fretful, and was very ignorant.

Mrs. Barbour made a free rendering of this, which she thought better fitted for Emma's ear.

"Your little cousin is not strong, and we must expect this change of climate to try her, so we must be very kind to her. Besides, she will be quite strange to all our ways, and will know nothing of many matters which come quite naturally to the knowledge of English folk. How she gets on, and whether she is happy, will greatly depend on you, Emma."

Of course Emma was delighted. The mere prospect of a young companion in the very same house with herself seemed almost too good to be true. She never thought of fearing lest she should lose half of her grandmother's love. Perhaps there was something about Mrs. Barbour which made one feel that she had enough love to satisfy everybody, however many came to partake of it.

It seemed to Emma as if the date when her cousin might be expected would never come. Mrs. Barbour had gone to the seaport to receive her grand-daughter from the hands of the captain who had taken her in charge, and Emma went down to the little railway station to meet them both. There was grandmamma, stepping smilingly from the train, and then followed the stranger! The new life was fairly begun!

What a little, pale creature Julia Barbour was! There was a quaint, perfect harmony between herself and the slight foreign fabric of which her dresses were made, and the small dainty ornaments of ivory and tortoiseshell which she presently produced from her luggage, and set up on the brackets among grandmamma's bonnie sea-shells and bright old china.

They made the house prettier, and she certainly added interest to the household. Grandmamma, narrowly observant beneath her kindness, was glad to feel that her son had honestly set forth his daughter's character without any attempt at softening its defects, nay, had stated them boldly and unblenchingly as only perfect love can dare to do, since what is perfect love but a feeling of oneness, and what honest heart uses any disguise of its own frailties?

Julia went with Emma to school. The two girls could not be in the same classes. Julia was far, far behind. She readily accepted her lower position. Whether this arose from good nature or from want of appreciation of the advantage of knowledge, Mrs. Barbour found it hard at first to determine.

But it did not take the shrewd old lady long to see that Julia was living a life of quiet, easy self-pleasing, aye, that she had no idea that there was any other life to be lived. She had no thought that what was not easy to do might yet be right and necessary, and had best be done willingly, and without compulsion, if it is ever to be conquered and become pleasant. And that is the first lesson in noble living.

Oh how hard it was for Emma to get her to rise in the morning! How long she took to dress—how helpless she was—or as the old Scotch servant graphically called it, how "handless!" Over and over again, Emma had to hurry off to be in time for school, and keep pace for her prize—leaving Julia to follow—and in consequence to arrive so woefully late that she was punished by being kept in after school was over.

"I should have been a great deal sooner, if you had not gone off, Emma," she said; "but

I fell asleep again after you left the bedroom, and I never awoke till grandmamma came up to me, just after you had gone. And then I had such a bother to get dressed. Everything in Britain seems so hard and toilsome. To begin with, there are twice as many clothes to put on."

She spoke quite uncomplainingly. It would never have occurred to her to ask her cousin's help or to expect it. It was quite right that Emma should go on about her own business and her own pursuits. Only it was unfortunate for her!

Emma was sitting on the end of her bed during the conversation in which Julia said this. She looked up at her cousin, reclining on her own little white couch, with her rich, black waving hair making such a beautiful background to her ivory-pale, finely-cut face, which had a sweet brightness of its own, different as it might be from the sturdy earnestness of the Scotch lassie. But Emma's eye travelled on past her cousin, and rested on the illuminated text—

"Covet earnestly the best gifts."

Was it best that Emma should gain prizes and honours, while poor Julia was left to bad habits and punishment? But what about Emma's own habit of punctuality? Surely that ought not to be sacrificed! Emma's face flushed hotly as she instantly saw the solution of that problem. It was possible to maintain her habit of punctuality in all its integrity, and yet to remain and stand by Julia and save her from indolence and disgrace. It was only the prize that need be sacrificed. Which was best, the prize—or Julia's happiness and welfare? She looked back at the illumination.

"Covet earnestly the best gifts."

There was no mistake about it.

"I would always wait for you, Julia," she said, "but I am anxious to gain a prize which I cannot win if I am often late—"

"I don't want you to wait for me," said Julia, tranquilly. "It does not matter how often I am late; I shall never get any prize at all, you see."

Nevertheless, the next morning and the next, Emma waited for Julia, and by dint of strenuous assistance, Julia was got ready and started off to arrive before the school-bell ceased. So the coveted prize was still unforfeited, and Emma held her breath, as it were, with hope and expectancy that the victory was won. But victories are never won at small cost.

Presently Emma had to hear and combat Julia's specious arguments.

"Late rising was not a sin; it could make no difference to God at what hour one got up."

And Emma had her quiet answer, "Not to do whatever is one's duty is a sin; and none of our sins hurt God; He hates sin because it hurts ourselves."

And then there came days, one after another, when Julia was provokingly dull and most forlornly helpless. Emma had to make her choice between giving up her prize or leaving her cousin to herself. It was a struggle. But she chose the "best gift," as undoubtedly the service of others must always be. She was helped in her decision by some expressions of thankfulness which Julia had uttered on the more successful days. Yet the sacrifice cost her some tears, aye, and some bitter, rather grudging feelings. It did seem hard when, because she happened to speak a little fretfully on the afternoon of the day when she had, in all probability, surrendered her ambition, Julia said carelessly—

"Dear me! what makes you so disagreeable?"

So Julia had not thought enough about the matter to notice what she had done! Emma

ran off to her bedroom and threw herself on her bed and cried bitterly. Why had she done it? If she had to do it again, she would do differently! Nay, there might still be a chance of recovering her lost position—it was little likely, for the competition was keen—but if there was, she would avail herself of it, and let Julia lapse into her accustomed habits and get the customary reprimand. It did not seem to hurt Julia. Why should she suffer to spare her cousin from what she did not feel?

But presently wiser and gentler counsels prevailed in the girl's mind. If Julia really did feel the disgrace she suffered, why then she would not need much help from Emma—the delicious or unconscious sufferer is the very patient who appeals most to the nurse's sympathy. Besides, if she was only trying to serve Julia that she might win Julia's appreciation and praise, would not that be still working for a prize only? If it was right to serve Julia in trying to help her to good habits, then it remained right, whether it was successful or not.

And so Emma dried her eyes and washed her face and went downstairs, and Julia had no more occasion to ask her why she was disagreeable. She almost fancied that Julia seemed a little regretful and tender. And how kind grandmamma was! but then grandmamma was always kind.

On and on Emma struggled day after day. She soon had to give up all hope of the "general merit" prize, but there remained several minor special prizes for which she could still compete.

Only Julia found her lessons all so hard, that she could scarcely do them at all without a great deal of help. And that help took much of Emma's evening time and energy. After one had been struggling with Julia's deficient and unreasonable arithmetic, one did not feel in the right cue for writing a very brilliant essay for the English Literature class, nor could one easily master the intricate politics of English history, with Julia committing to memory the names of English counties and capital towns in a low monotonous murmur, and calling on one every few minutes to hear her recite, or to explain to her the subtleties of the English grammar.

But the great pain and bitterness came one morning, when Julia was most perversely obstinate and sleepy, and poor wearied Emma sitting down beside her, actually fell asleep too, and was found sitting up so, completely dressed, by grandmamma, who came upstairs at last to see what was keeping the girls from their breakfast! How grave she looked—how silently she hastened them through the spoiled meal! Of course, they arrived at school late—not only unpunctual, but shamefully late, so that they were both openly rebuked—a thing which had never before happened to Emma in all her school-life.

Her face was crimson, her lips trembling, her eyes full of tears; but she made no excuse, uttered no protest, hinted no accusation. She did not even look at Julia as they both turned from the teacher's desk and went to their own places, or she would have seen Julia turn towards her with a light in the soft dark eyes which had never been there before. Something dimmed it a moment later, and Julia spent the morning busily writing an exercise, and never raised her head. Even when school was dismissed, she still went on writing till all the scholars had left, and then she sprang up suddenly, put her arms round Emma's neck, and cried out—

"It was all my fault! And I know I have cost you your prize—and I was not worth it."

Ah! that was a moment which made up for all the pain and effaced all the bitterness, only poor Julia was so miserable, and must be comforted. And it was hard that she could not be got to believe that to try to help her

was infinitely better than to compete for a prize, and that no happiness could be so great as to succeed in helping her. Emma's heart was filled with a great love for poor struggling Julia, and love wants only to give itself away, and its only agony is that it seems to have so little to give.

From that day the girls were real friends, though that burst of bright warm sunshine between them was often overclouded. There would be grey days—aye, and showers, and sometimes even storms. They had never had storms before then. Hitherto, when Julia had been listless or indifferent, Emma had been calmly and patiently persistent in doing what she had felt was a duty; but now that it had grown a delight, she could dare to be quite indignant when Julia repelled it. Some storms are wholesome; they clear heavy atmospheres as nothing else can. Julia felt in her heart that Emma did well to be angry, that if she had not been angry it must have been because she loved her less. Besides, it was worth making a strenuous effort to discharge duties whose omission really disturbed and distressed somebody. Julia was roused!

There were times when she lay awake in the clear nights, and the silver moonbeams crept over Emma's little illumination, and Julia would repeat it softly to herself, and wonder whether Emma had not really chosen the very best lot in life, bearing suffering and loss for another's sins and deficiencies, if so be she could raise her out of them. Of course, Julia had always heard of the Divine life which entered into man's nature, and was crucified in human flesh that the sons of Adam might become the sons of God. But it had always seemed a far off story—a something lying outside her own personal comprehension and actual experience—just like the law of gravitation, for instance, learned about but not known, in the sense that we know a mother's face or our own fireside.

And lo! here was the same law of sacrificing love working in her own life. Seeing Emma giving up her own interests to help her out of bad habits into good ones, Julia caught a glimpse of that great sacrifice freely poured upon all the world that all may be redeemed from the slavery of self and sin.

Julia said nothing of these matters. She was not a girl who spoke much of her deepest feelings. Only every day it grew clearer that she had set all her own will to work with Emma's, and that, with exercise, her will was growing stronger and stronger. Relapses grew farther between, and less complete. The struggles continued, and there were still failures, but each failure found the power of self-recovery greater.

As for Emma, she was now quite happy, though she had no doubt of having lost all the prizes. She felt sure she had lost nothing else, besides having gained Julia. Her habits of early rising were far more secure than if they had been formed for the purpose of gaining a prize, and so might have relaxed when it was won. If in her lessons she had not made those brilliant advances upon new ground which would have gained distinction, she had got well grounded in the old foundations, for she was in no danger of forgetting the studies she had gone over so diligently with Julia! And somehow, too, she had learned to regard her dear grandmother with a more understanding and appreciative love. She had found out something of the cost with which good habits are inculcated and insisted upon.

The New Year was again drawing near. A few weeks before the holidays the governess suddenly announced that she intended to give a new prize, one open to all the classes, high or low—a prize to her who had made most marked progress during the year, from whatever her starting-point might have been.

Emma rejoiced to think that some other schoolfellow would be thus unexpectedly made happy. She knew too well that this new prize opened no vista of hope for her, for if she had made any movement at all, it was to outward seeming rather a backward one!

The prize day came. The reward for "general merit" was carried off with great honour and applause by one of the elder girls, who could not help feeling that she would not have won it if "that clever Emma Barbour had not been so unaccountably unlike herself this year."

The other prizes were distributed. Emma had thought she had allowed herself in no hope, but it was only as the names were announced and hers never came that she found how much hope will always linger in our hearts, unbidden and unrecognised, till it is fairly dislodged by bitter certainty.

And now there only remained the prize for "the greatest improvement." There was a good deal of excited interest in this matter among those who dared not hope reward for any special excellence, while the clever girls were perhaps rather inclined to rest upon their cleverness, and to measure the height on which they stood rather than the rate at which they advanced, which is the reason why the tortoise does sometimes beat the hare in real life, as well as in the fable!

There was a start, half of sudden surprise, half of quickly assenting conviction, as the governess announced the winner to be "Julia Barbour." The lady stated the case in a few direct, kind words. She did not spare the lethargic, indifferent mood in which Julia had arrived in her school. But the progress was certainly unmistakable. The once disgracefully late arrivals were exchanged for seldom varying punctuality. The lessons might still be rather lowly for a girl of Julia's age and capacity, but they were now diligently and intelligently learned. "In a word," said the governess, "Julia Barbour is now thoroughly in earnest, and when anybody is in earnest, it does not matter whether she knows much or little—she will soon know more. It does not matter how far one is from home; if one's face is set towards it, one will reach it. I must congratulate Julia Barbour, and if she goes on advancing as rapidly as she has begun, I shall congratulate myself on having her for a pupil."

There was no word of praise for Emma Barbour—she was only one of the great mass of scholars who had failed to gain distinction. What did that matter? Why! she absolutely forgot all about it. Were not Julia's fingers twined round her hand? Was not Julia's prize lying on her knee? To the loving heart the honour bestowed on a dear one is always sweeter than its own, and oh, how much more so when that honour has been achieved by its efforts!

"Your cousin has not got a prize this time," said one girl to Julia, rather ill-naturedly. "She always had one before, for something."

"No, she has given one instead, for a change," said Julia, shortly.

She thought the facts were so self-evident that her words could not be misunderstood. Some of the girls guessed the truth, but others were puzzled, and thought that Julia meant that Emma's early failure in the competition had bestowed a chance on some whom she could have easily defeated.

"Grandmamma, give me another new year's text, please," said Emma, that evening, when they were sitting together lingering over the fire awhile, after Julia had gone to bed.

Mrs. Barbour looked steadily at Emma with her gentle, aged eyes, and then she passed her hand softly over the bowed brown head.

"You learned your last one very thoroughly," she said, "and it was a hard one. You shall have an easier one this time. It is 'Love is the fulfilling of the law.'"

AN EVENING ON THE RIVER.

By ANNE BEALE

OUR bark glides smoothly o'er the wave
And gently falls the oar;
There's scarce an echo in the cave
Or murmur on the shore.

The bird of night forgets to cry;
No voice is heard afar;
There's not a cloud upon the sky,
Or shadow on a star.

The woods are steeped in mellow light,
And slumber 'neath the moon;
The very wind this quiet night
Seems but a laggard loon.

Thou speakest, too, with voice serene
As wishful, love, to keep
The hallowed stillness of the scene,
Nor wake the earth from sleep.

But thy sweet eyes, so gently kind,
Are like yon silent sphere,
And speak more surely to the mind
Than language to the ear.

Beneath their cloudless light I see
A world of peace and love;
Calm in its tender purity
As the fair heaven above.

STUDIES OF GIRLS.

By ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO.

PART IV.

HOUSEWIVES AND HOUSE-MOTHS.

In the pleasant drawing-room of a great house in Debenham-square, they sat together—the two youthful maidens, Ella Carson and Grace Winstanley—both alike born to position and wealth. They were both pretty,—yet with that subtle difference in their beauty, that, while beauty was the first thing which occurred to anybody in thinking or speaking of Ella Carson, it was always the last to be mentioned in connection with Grace Winstanley. They were both handsomely dressed: certainly the balance of costliness was on the side of Grace's velvet costume, with its real lace at sleeves and throat, and its tiny pearl brooch, as compared with Ella's befrilled satin, tulle ruffles, and multitude of bangles. But then Ella's dress, though she had only had it a few days, was already looking flattened and faded and would be soon discarded.

They had been reading together from Ruskin's "Ethics of the Dust." Grace Winstanley had read it before, and had taken this opportunity of introducing it to her old school-fellow.

"I can't understand his saying that no woman is the better for possessing diamonds," said Ella, with a pout. "I am sure I am very delighted and proud about this diamond ring which uncle George gave me," and she held out her little hand with the jewel flashing upon it.

"Of course you are," said Grace gently. "But then it is not because of the diamonds, except as they are a token of your uncle's love and remembrance, and a sign that he is willing to take great cost for you. If he had done some very hard bit of work for your sake, it would give you the same pleasure." She did not add, "and might have been better in every way," for she knew Ella, and felt that if she was to be led on at all, it must be very gently.

"Oh, I am not so sure of all that," returned Ella. "I have no particular love for uncle George, nor has he for me, only he thought it was the right thing to bring a handsome present to his only niece,—but as for the cost—spending money is the easiest thing he can do, for he has more than he knows what to do with. It would have cost him more to go without his cigar for a single afternoon."

Grace sat silent for a moment. Then she returned to her book and read aloud.

"The money which the English habitually spend in cutting diamonds, would in ten years, if it were applied to cutting rocks instead,

leave no dangerous reef nor difficult harbour round the whole island coast."

"But what do I care about reefs or harbours?" asked Ella, "one can't always be thinking of things which are out of one's sight. And I suppose there always must be shipwrecks, and anyhow, people must die somehow! And, Grace, whatever anybody may say, what sight can be more glorious than a magnificent diamond tiara flashing in a brilliantly lighted saloon?"

"I have heard my mother say that the morning dew on a daisy glistening in the sunshine was a better sight," said Grace softly. Grace's mother was dead.

"God made the diamonds as well as the daisies," retorted Ella.

"Yes," Grace admitted, "and a time may come when men may lawfully have leisure for cutting diamonds. The harm is only when they do so while human lives are sacrificed for the want of their work in another way. One would not plant even daisies instead of corn."

"Well, go on with the book," said Ella. She wanted to get through it. She had refused Grace's offer of a common reading of it from the beginning to the end, and had declared that she would be quite satisfied if she might hear the extracts which Grace had specially marked at her previous perusal.

Grace went on with her reading, "You must either be housewives or house-moths: remember that. In the deep sense, you must either weave men's fortunes and embroider them, or feed upon and bring them to decay."

Ella laughed lightly. "I don't understand him," she said. "I only want to enjoy myself, and have a splendid time while I am young. One is only young once. It is all very well for poor people to be always thinking about work and so on, and for old fogies to make preachments about usefulness. If we are all to do the same, we might as well have been born without a penny and forty years old to begin with."

"Somehow, I am beginning to think that the more money we have the more work we have to do," said Grace. "Somehow, I think it might be far easier for me to do more good—at least, to do less harm, if I had to go out teaching for my daily bread, like our doctor's little daughter has done, since her father died. Think how she maintains herself and her mother, and keeps up a home for the young brothers! Oh, Ella, my sewing for the poor and my subscription lists seem very small and unreal beside that. And I think we've got to find out how to make our lives as really and as truly useful, though we have not to earn

our bread. In fact, I think we have to earn our bread, whether we are paid beforehand, in being rich, or are paid by the day, being poor. I can't believe that God does not care as much for His rich children as for His poor ones, and does not keep as good work for them to do for His sake. Jesus did say that it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven, but He did not say it must be so, or ought to be so."

"A camel never could pass through the eye of a needle," said Ella, "so that shows it was only a metaphorical saying."

"The needle's eye was the name of a gate through which camels could only pass by being first unladen, and their burdens divided and carried through by others," explained Grace. "No, I don't think the saying is metaphorical. Mother said it meant that a rich man can only enter the kingdom of Heaven by knowing that his wealth is not at all his own, but is only given to him, rightly to divide among others. But it is that rightly dividing which is the problem! I'm sure it means something quite different from paying subscriptions and what we call 'giving to the poor.' Mother always said there was no true giving unless the giver gave himself with the gift. She had a little rhyme about—

"We never give except we share;

Without the giver, gifts are bare."

"Well, if we've got money, and other people have none, I think we've done our part if we give them some," decided Ella. "That is the least trouble. Aunt went to some charitable meetings once, and got a lot of notions put into her head, and made a fuss for a while about saving tea-leaves and bones, and gathering up newspapers and odd numbers of magazines. But, of course, the servants would not be bothered about such rubbish, and aunt herself always forgot about the newspapers, so we soon got tired of that. And then there are one's old clothes! But nowadays people wear nothing that is suited to the poor,—one's commonest morning dresses are of a material and shape quite inappropriate, so it is best to let one's maid sell them, and she takes into consideration what she is likely to make out of one in that way, when she accepts one's wages."

Grace was silent: not from want of thoughts but from a surplusage of them. She had been the close companion of her gentle, considerate widowed mother, and from her she had learned not only to look at the things of others, as well as those of herself, but how to look at them,—to wit, from their standpoint as well

as from her own. It might indeed be well if Mrs. Carson, Ella's aunt, gave the overflowings of her extravagant household to the needy, instead of allowing them to waste in the dust-bin. But would it not be better if she so regulated the ways of her household, that there were no overflowings, but a less expenditure, leaving the greater margin to be paid in honestly earned wages, or bestowed in well-chosen gifts, blessing those who give as much as those who take? And why should rich people's clothes be all "inappropriate to the poor?" Some of them, of course, must be too costly, and some of them must be fit for circumstances and occasions in which "the poor" are not required to enter. But Mrs. Winstanley had always said that the morning dress of the greatest lady in the land—the dress in which she should water her flowers and arrange her room, and do her painting or her studies—should be exactly such a dress as she would like to see on her servants or the daughters of her father's labourers, and that therefore if they imitate her, she should be proud and pleased, instead of vexed and humiliated. But Mrs. Winstanley had never encouraged the giving away of old clothes, though she had occasionally permitted it under special circumstances. She had said that the true way is for people to have clothes of such make and material that they can wear them themselves so long as they are fit for anybody to wear—to wear one dress honourably and carefully, and give away or pay away six, instead of wearing seven recklessly and vulgarly, and tossing aside the rags as largesse. It was a method which had secured Grace many useful acquisitions, for under the supervision of her mother's maid, she had learned how to alter and repair her own dresses and how to cut them down into underskirts and pinafores for herself, even at the same time that she was making up fresh material into little garments for her village friends. It had chastened and regulated her taste, too, for often when the whim of a season had dictated some outrageous colour or gaudy pattern, and Grace had been half-tempted, her mother had said to her with a smile, "My child, how would you like to see that at a cottage door or on those who serve you? Fashion can never make ugliness into beauty, my dear."

And Grace had often wondered, with a girl's pathetic, mystified wonder, who were the people who would buy, at second-hand, the gay, flimsy, befrilled dresses which she knew many of her acquaintances gave to their servants to sell. But Grace was now in the early stage of young womanhood and was getting some insight into the terrible gulfs which yawn in our social life. And what an awful commentary it seemed on the tastes and habits of these acquaintances of hers, that the dresses which they chose and admired, should, when thrown aside, be just fit for the common wear of miserable sisters, from whose selves the more fortunate girls would shrink, alas! with less of pity than of loathing!

But Grace said nothing of all this to Ella now. It seemed of little use to do so. She had often said these things before, and they had only roused in Ella a spirit of mocking raillery, or even sometimes of bitter antagonism. So she closed her book—using for a mark a little fading rosebud—and said she thought she must begin a letter to her cousin Tom Winstanley, who had recently gone to New Zealand. She would have time to do a page or two, before they must start for a shopping expedition. "The post goes the day after to-morrow," she said. "So if I begin now, I shall get an opportunity to recollect all I want to say, and to give Tom the latest news into the bargain."

"Well, if you are going to desert me, I may as well write to my brother Bob," observed Ella. (He was a student in Germany.)

"But don't expect I shall leave you in peace long, Grace. My correspondence is always got over as quickly as possible, and I'm just longing to get away to the shops."

Very characteristic were the two girls' letters, if we may venture to take a peep at them. Grace told her cousin of all the chances and changes which were befalling each of their common friends, acquaintances, and dependents. She told him exactly all that had been done on one or two family anniversaries which had recently occurred, and what were the plans for one which was soon to come off. She told him what books she had been reading, and gave him a graphic account of some pleasant new acquaintances she had made. She reported all the kind inquiries she had answered concerning himself, suggested one or two people to whom she thought he should send a line of special remembrance at some suitable opportunity, and consulted him concerning the prospects of one or two of her rural friends who were thinking of emigration. It was a letter which carried the very essence of home ties and home affection with it: such a letter as, folding the absent safely in a genial and refreshing atmosphere of the old life, helps them to strike root, healthily and sturdily, into a new life.

Far different was Ella's epistle; with her usual inconsideration, she took a wide-pointed pen, and wrote off in her great scrawling hand, by which she incurred double postage. "But what did that matter?" She told her brother he ought to be very thankful to get a letter from her, for he knew how she hated writing, only just now she had nothing else to do. She told him about the diamond ring uncle George from India had given her, and how he took so much wine at dinner that he was quite funny afterwards, and how he always had brandy taken up to his bedroom. She told him how Richard Templeton, an old school friend of his, had been "plucked again"—the third time in his college examinations; but was "just the jolliest fellow going; all the girls in love with him, fighting who should be his partner at tennis and at dancing-parties—quite too awfully nice to be bothered with musty-fusty books and professors, — and then what does it matter?—he will have plenty of money by-and-by." She told him how she had been out at dancing-parties every evening for a fortnight—never once in bed before two o'clock in the morning. She described one or two of her dresses, and repeated some frivolous compliments she had received, winding up by a sneer at Grace Winstanley (for whom she knew her brother had a dumb appreciation) and the information that "Grace is just now writing screeds to her poor cousin Tom at the antipodes." "That will make Bob ever so jealous and wild," she laughed. "And the sooner he puts Grace out of his head the better. She would soon bring him round to her queer ways—quiet little puss as she seems, and I don't want any sister-in-law looking askance at me and setting herself up for an angel. I wish Bob would fall in love with Nellie White—only it's quite true she hasn't as much money as Grace has."

The two girls' shopping was equally characteristic. Grace had some books to select for a school-library—sundry commissions of varied sorts to execute for old ladies and gentlemen in the country—some little remembrances to choose—work-boxes, albums, books, and such like, intended for divers carefully remembered birthdays, and some bright ribbons and dainty laces to buy, to be divided between herself and her chosen friend, the little governess, the dead doctor's daughter. Then finally she bought a pair of fine white mittens for evening wear, mittens of the antique gossamer sort, made to pack in a walnut shell, and "to wash and wear for ever" as the shopman said.

Ella stood tossing over heaps of gloves of the palest hues, which would lose their delicate beauty in one night, while the kid of which they were made was of softest elasticity. "Why don't you go in for some of these, Grace?" she asked. "They fit you like a second skin."

"I have been told," said Grace, "that kids are flayed alive, that these best kinds of kid gloves may be produced. I have tried to find out that the report is false, but I cannot; on the contrary, I know a gentleman who has in his park two little animals who were awaiting this horrid execution when he visited a glove factory, and which he bought and brought away. I have never worn that kind of glove since," she added. "I don't think people would, if they knew."

"It's very horrid!" said Ella carelessly. "I wish you hadn't told me, for, of course, I shall wear them all the same, and one doesn't want uncomfortable knowledge." And then she ordered a box of tulle ruching, and several strings of elaborate beads, which would break at a touch, while Grace sat and wondered how it must feel to be those who had to spend their lives in earning bread by making what did nobody any good and was crushed and destroyed in an hour. Finally, Ella "treated herself" to a costly bonnet which took her fancy, and then inquired if they had in stock any trifles suited for charity Christmas-trees and similar objects. Whereupon, the obsequious shopman produced a few coarse socks, in dismal colours, and a basket filled with little scent bottles, dolls dressed in coloured gauze and tinsel, and a few painted wooden toys of nondescript attractions. Ella tossed them over—extracted a cork from one of the bottles, made a wry face, and said the "scent" had an evil smell—found that most of the dolls' limbs were loose, inquired the use of some of the miscellaneous toys, and laughed heartily at the idea of human beings extracting amusement from such things, but decided that the assortment "would do," and considered that she had lawfully bought the gratitude of some fifty rascals at less than half the price she had given for her own tulle frilling.

And that one morning's history may serve as an abbreviation of the girls' lives, as they went on, month by month, and year by year. The one striving to be good, the other seeking "to be happy"—the one wishing to please and serve others, the other to please and serve herself.

Ella Carson had her full day of restlessness and racket, poor thing. She had her long succession of tennis afternoons, dancing evenings, of weary, listless mornings when she made a feint of pursuing some of the studies in which she had excelled in her earlier and simpler girlhood. If any thought of the stern realities outside her own sphere ever entered it, it was only when patronesses were needed for a ball or an operatic concert "for the benefit" of the wounded in the Paraguayan war, or the sufferers by a prairie conflagration. Even the annual holiday months, with their mountains and oceans and rivers, brought no rest or respite for her. They only meant a rush from one's own house to the greater pomp and pride of "grand hotels" elsewhere, and whether one was in London, or Paris, or Vienna, or Monaco, or Saratoga, life was just the same round of dressing, dancing, and dining, and of wondering why every year one's money went faster than before and brought one less, and of wondering again why the poor should grow so discontented and so utterly unable to live on the same wages which had satisfied their forefathers. Ella Carson grew very strong on the "improvidence" of the poor. It seemed to her the greatest thriftlessness that a large family of "peasant people" could not live on the same sum that she paid weekly for the get-

ting-up of her muslins. She thought herself quite public-spirited on the score of her perpetual declarations that the poor would all prosper, if they were only thrifty!

If Ella Carson's heart was ever touched on its softer side, it was by Richard Templeton, that scapegrace friend of her brother's. She laughed at his follies, and aided and abetted his frivolities, and enjoyed his attentions, until a little cloud rose upon the scene—as a little cloud always does rise upon such scenes. The bachelor relative, from whom his expectations had been derived, got married, and had an heir. Richard was not quite so bright as he used to be, and there were unexplained absences, and rumours of debt and entanglement. And then Richard Templeton was gone, and those who had helped him to waste his time, and had admired him for wasting his money, got an exciting sensation out of him by whispering that he was acting on the boards of a provincial theatre, or serving in a chemist's shop, or being an omnibus conductor. And Ella Carson's face got rather faded and sharp in those days, and her dancing partners waned few, and her aim at tennis was not so true. There was a wild little note of Richard Templeton's kept at the bottom of her jewel box, which might have explained this—a note of eternal farewell, containing a little passionate regret and a great deal of restrained reproach. Nobody ever knew what became of Richard Templeton. There are such men about in the world, between whose beginnings and whose endings yawn gulfs which seem impassable.

But Ella Carson married long before it was at all unlikely that Richard might come to light again. Such lives, such aspirations as hers are not likely to breed romantic faithfulness. She knew that her good looks had "gone off"—that her vivacity was no longer what it had been, and she knew that younger women, of the same stamp as herself, were rising up to remark this. It is possible that the offer which she accepted would have been refused had it been tendered a few years earlier. Yet it was what is called "a good match," and provoked the envy of many who, Ella knew, had been sneering at her diminished braids, and watchful of the crows' feet round her eyes. Mr. Martin was much older than herself. He had a dark and stormy history, was fond of money, and strange and capricious in his ways of spending it. Ella was a fascination to him, while he was only a bargain to her. "She might make him what she pleased," he said, and she smiled dimly, thinking not what she might make him be—but what she would make him do—the place in the Highlands he should rent, the yacht he should buy, and the dinner-parties and balls he should give. She had her way, and for a while he was pleased that she should have it, but suddenly he caught a glimpse of the selfishness at the basis of her character, and then the spell was broken and her fascination was gone, and nothing remained but an hourly struggle between the self-seeking woman and the self-willed man—a struggle which made her occasional conquests only a shade less humiliating than her frequent defeats. It was the humiliation that he could always inflict on her, which she cared for, not the discord, not the lovelessness.

And so she lived out her life, surrounded by servants, all menials, ever shifting—the business of her day to cater for a crowd of acquaintances who rushed in, criticised her, scoffed at her husband, and went away and forgot her. There were constant "strikes" at Mr. Martin's great works in the midlands; there were perpetual lawsuits and evictions among his Highland neighbours and tenantry. There was often dread of bankruptcy in the great, gay London house; there were worse terrors of crime and insanity in the lonely

moorland shooting-lodge. But in this world Mrs. Martin never got near enough to the light to see that her life was a failure, but went on airily pitying everybody whose dresses were not so costly, and whose receptions were not so crowded as her own.

Of course, she and Grace Winstanley had long since drifted apart without any quarrel or definite disagreement. It was just the one everlasting answer to the old question, "How can two walk together unless they be agreed?" They had different friends, different pursuits. Instead of constantly meeting in common ways of life, each had to make a break in her daily routine to get any opportunity for seeing the other. That always involves final separation. Grace Winstanley was sorry, and struggled against it. Ella had soon grown secretly glad, and readily yielded to it.

Grace had gone on as she had begun. She had no immediate domestic life. She had many loving relatives, but none who truly needed her—none who had not others who could more than supply her place. And yet she felt that there could be no true life except in being a fellow-worker with God. She heard the great cry of sin and sorrow going up from the world lying about her. She did not escape the blunders into which earnest and thoughtful girls are apt to fall when they try to walk Godwards in this puzzled and puzzling existence, since they generally, as Ruskin quaintly describes it, "get put out of the way into convents, or made mere sick nurses of, or take to mending the irremediable." Grace took a year's training as a hospital nurse, and fought hand-to-hand with disease and death, and with the results of sin and misery. She liked the work; she always declared that it had taught her priceless lessons in morals and theology, but that its best lesson was this, "That prevention is better than cure"—and that he who brings up a little child in the way it should go, does even better work than he who reforms a criminal—that she who keeps a household in health and harmony is working still nearer God's plan than she is, whose devoted assiduity can but add a few more lingering days to lives of torture. "It seemed to me," said Grace Winstanley in after days, "that we were all trying to stem a flood where its waters were strongest and roughest, and never asking where it rose, and whether we might not check it there."

She found unhappy girls pining on hospital beds, lured from country places to great cities in search of "work." "There was nothing for us to do at home, miss," they would say, piteously, "and then there was nobody to look to here, miss, and the ways were strange and we were lonesome, and so, miss, we got into trouble." She found the bread-winners of families also driven away from their native places in this terrible search of work, and then smitten down, leaving widows and orphans to swell the seething mass of city starvation and pauperism and sin. "We must come where the rich folks spend their money, miss," they said to her. "They won't get anything in the country, they get all from town. And they don't pay us much more here, and living is three times as dear, and there's some things, like fresh air and good milk, that the rich people can't buy for themselves here at any price, only they can go away for them, but we have to stay here all the year round and do without 'em, and it tells on us in time, particularly on the children, miss, and that's how we go down and down—for health is the poor man's wealth, miss."

In the end, Grace Winstanley gave up her sick nursing, and even her committee meetings and her associations, recognising them all as useful means of work—but, above all, as useful agencies for the education of workers for something beyond—

for a deeper and more real work lying in the full current of human life, and not apart from it. She was still a young woman, beautiful, intellectual, and attractive, when she resolved to set up a household for herself, and there to do with all her might whatsoever her hand found to be done. She sought the companionship and counsel of a friend of her mother's. They two, without a word about it, with just such materials as lie round such lives as theirs, would strive to set up an ideal home—a resting-place in the journey of life, a stronghold in its warfare, a refuge for its wounded.

Oh, what slow, quiet work it seemed down in the beautiful and still unspoiled English village, where Grace had passed many of her happiest, girlish days, and which from ancient ties and old associations was the natural scene of her experiment. After the attempted suicides and attempted murders, the wrecks from drunken brawls or life-long privation which had flowed in a sad daily panorama through the city hospital wards, what a little easy thing it was to find a wholesome neighbourly situation for a country lass, or to rouse a slow country workman to take heart and perform some job of masonry or joinery "that they generally send into town about, ma'am," or to patiently train some honest country sempstress into the delicacies of her craft. But then Grace remembered that all the good things of nature grow slowly and quietly, and that God's own way of healing is not by great things but by humble washings in cool Jordans.

Grace married by-and-by; she married a gentleman whose acquaintance she had made during her trial efforts in London. He was a poor man, for which his wealthy wife could honour him the more, since she knew he had gifts which could easily have brought him riches had he set them to their lower uses, instead of to their highest. He and she could never have grown to know and love each other, had she been living the ordinary life of ease and fashion; and certainly if she had been surrounded by pomp and luxury and frivolity, he would never have asked to share those as he could ask to share in the burdens and labours of her sacred stewardship. Grace felt that her money had never done herself such a good turn as when it enabled her to give leisure and peace and kindly human interests to a great and powerful mind, which must otherwise have fretted itself in much drudgery that it might occasionally win freedom for wandering in the clear, but rather bleak regions of scientific research. On the wedding day, only those with rare foresight pronounced Grace Winstanley's marriage with Harold Radcliffe to be "a good match." But not many years after, the wisdom of her choice had so justified itself, that poor Mrs. Martin was heard to whisper that she believed Grace had always had "an ambitious mind," and it was just like one of her fancies to wish to go down to posterity as the wife of a genius!

And the quiet life flows on year after year, but each year finds it richer and fairer, as each spring finds a wisely planted garden. And there are not only life's natural growth and abundant blossom, but changed by them into softness and beauty and use, social ruins find rest, and sad wrecks are transformed into beacons.

The other day Harold Radcliffe accidentally opened an old book. The pages parted where a little withered rosebud lay between them, and he read aloud—

"You must be either housewives or house-moths: remember that. In the deep sense, you must either weave men's fortunes, and embroider them, or feed upon and bring them to decay."

And since then he has a new pet name for his Grace—

"My housewife!"

STUDIES OF GIRLS.

By ISABELLA FYVIE MAYO.

PART V.

THE MONIER GIRLS.



MR. MONIER and her three daughters were certainly among the well-off and well-placed of this world. Mrs. Monier had inherited a private fortune of her own, and her late husband had been a medical specialist in a large practice, so that though he had died in middle life, he had been able to make a handsome provision for his daughters. They had all been born in his well-appointed professional house in one of the old-fashioned aristocratic streets on the eastern side of Hyde Park, and here they had been brought up during his lifetime. Life, even in that stylish neighbourhood, does not present the dead level of remote genteel suburbs, nay, perhaps there is no place where it presents sharper contrasts to stimulate the fancy and the feelings.

Among the park parterres, the little Misses Monier, in their white frills and blue sashes, had, under their nurse's eye, indulged in baby flirtations with incipient dukes and earls, also in nursery guardianship, and then perhaps they had toddled with wondering pathetic childish gravity to pat a blind beggar's dog and drop a penny into his tin cup. From their nursery windows they had watched the glories of ducal entertainments, the great doors thrown open, the radiantly lit staircase, with jewelled ladies and decorated gentlemen passing up and down amid luxuriant exotics and lines of bowing flunkies, while outside, bare-footed, half-starved children paddled in the mud, and braved the policeman's chastisement to gain a glimpse of the bewildering magnificence. They had gazed wonderingly at the pretty, faded, elegant woman who lived in the little house at the corner of their street, and who drove away every evening in her carriage "to act queens and empresses" as the housemaid said, but whom nurse called "a naughty lady," and forbade them talking about her. In their peaceful nursery they were sometimes awakened by the bacchanalian shouts of drunken revellers, sometimes by the frenzied shrieks of some outcast hurried to the police cell. Starving dogs would spy out the gentle little girls and follow them—especially Miss Bertha, who generally carried coppers in her pocket to expend on food for such, and would drop it before them, and run off to elude their pursuit, and then slyly looking round and seeing their bewilderment could seldom resist going back to pat them, especially if they were ugly curs, "whom most people would not like." All the three, Bertha, Jane, and Hilda, had been always accustomed to be much with their parents, sharing their every meal except the late dinner, and as their parents' conversation had gone on much as if the children were not there, except that their questions were always readily answered, the three little maidens had gained insight into a far wider range of subjects and a very different mode of thought than are common in children relegated to uneducated nurses or preoccupied governesses. So, though they were only girls of twelve, fourteen, and sixteen when their father died, and looked lanky and spindle-legged enough in their short dresses and black stockings, they had some rather unusual books on their shelves—grave essayists and smart political

economists standing side by side with the works of Miss Yonge and Miss Austen.

Their father's death made a great change to their lives, though it did not cost them a single comfort or luxury. The great stately house in Honduras-place had to be left for the incoming of the doctor's successor. Mrs. Monier took for herself an old rambling mansion near Hampstead Heath, which twenty years ago was a more remote and rural suburb than it is to-day. The old familiar furniture looked strangely different when it was removed from the lofty apartments of Mayfair to the wide low rooms of Hampstead, and the flower-pots and ferneries which they had loved so well and tended so carefully in the town house were quite absorbed and lost in the mossy old garden. They went to Hampstead in the winter, so that the first sharpness of grief was softened by the time the buds came out and the birds began to sing, and during the next summer the beautiful, secluded garden seemed a pleasure without an end.

But in two or three years the Monier girls began to discover that man, and woman too, is made for something more than for lying on the sunny grass, and prying like bees or butterflies into rose-hearts and lily-bosoms, or even for reading books, and talking them over and airing quaint fancies and daring theories.

Perhaps they would not have found this out so soon if they had gone on living in Honduras-place. There, their lively interest in the vivid life going on around them might have blinded them to the truth, that, after all, a mere spectator has no part in the game or the battle, and no chance of its prizes or its victory.

But in the quiet retreat at Hampstead, the Monier girls were soon aware of energies and aspirations which far outran the petty claims and prospects before them. Perhaps in their mother they found a more ready sympathy and comprehension of their yearnings than they might have done had such yearnings arisen and life been going on in the old way. In Honduras-place, Mrs. Monier had easily found an outlet for every part of her own being—though many such outlets must have remained closed to her daughters for long years, until they, too, were grown women and house-mothers. But Mrs. Monier might have failed to recognise this: it is so hard to believe in the hunger of others when we are almost satiated ourselves. Now, as time passed by, and her own health and vigour of mind and body reasserted themselves over her great loss, she, too, found that life had grown a little flat and empty, as sorrow alone never makes it. Nay, sorrow enlarges the heart, and leaves the emptied hands grasping after even more than they had held before. There was no longer a clever, earnest master of the household, bringing into it humanity's freshest questionings and strivings, delighting to be refreshed by her suggestions and counsels, and going out into the world again to interpret them to it. The very setting of life was utterly changed. Old friends were not likely to forget such women as the Moniers. Keen scientific men, eager philanthropists, dreaming poets, still came about them. But now these had to come out of their way to them. The Moniers were no longer in their current of life, but in a harbour; the breezes which bore them onwards no longer filled the sails of the Moniers' existence. Mrs. Monier felt bored and irritated by the harmlessly trivial interests of most of the new set in which they found themselves. It was a set which welcomed

them very warmly, pronouncing the Moniers to be so charming, so interesting, so original! Mrs. Monier was not misled by these encomiums. She only saw the more distinctly that these were earned by qualities now in danger of fading and dwindling away, and that the time had come when, if the family were not to lose all her husband had conferred on it, and to cease to be what he had loved, her daughters must put their own hands to the plough, and set duties and objects before them and make careers of their own.

Mr. Monier had often smiled complacently to hear his Bertha declare that, "if she had been a man, she would have been a doctor." And his wife remembered this, and would not allow herself to feel shocked when Bertha presently began to wonder whether, woman as she was, she might not still be such. Few had asked that question in those days, though this was not many years ago, and none of the safe and quiet paths to its affirmative answer were then open. Mrs. Monier could judge of the strength of social prejudice by what she could feel lingering in her own breast, for few of us are quite free from prejudice, only some of us know it for what it is, and do not yield to it. She counselled patience and reflection—nothing more—and when, in the end, Bertha girded her young spirit for what was then literally a battle with an opposing world, her mother stood by her, and by her unflinching sympathy, and her quick and deep insight, saved her from all danger of hardening or coarsening in the struggle.

The Moniers' new set of acquaintances stood perfectly aghast. That a woman who did not require "to earn her bread" could feel a need in life for anything beside amusement, utterly passed the comprehension of most of them. A few of the better sort rather reluctantly admitted it, but thought that it might have been filled by "the poor," and by "domestic duties." Mrs. Monier only said quietly that Bertha still gave to her family circle those hours which most girls give to frivolity and dissipation, and Bertha laughingly asked whether a doctor was not one of the best friends to the poor, and whether many people did not already believe that the ordinary irregular aimless feminine "visiting" and "almsgiving" were not productive of more harm than good?

A few whispered to Mrs. Monier that they feared so eccentric a course of action might damage her daughter's "prospects," and some dared to ask Bertha how she meant to settle the difficulty of the "night-bell" if she should ever become a wife and a mother. Mrs. Monier only replied by a dignified silence, and Bertha by another question: "Suppose I never marry, am I to do nothing else?" To which they would reply, "Oh, you are so charming, that you would be quite certain to marry if you would be only like other people."

Jane Monier was perhaps the most popular of the family, and Hilda the least so. Jane was the handsome daughter. Bertha's critics used to whisper, "Jane will not be 'strong-minded'; she will have no 'vocation,' she is far too pretty and captivating. What a clever tongue she has! And she likes to please people and to make herself agreeable; the others really are rather too straight-up-and-down and independent in manner."

Hilda was musical. She was a little, quiet, white-faced thing, who seemed afraid to speak, but in her playing there was a revelation of a passionate intensity of nature quite startling. After a while, she went to Germany to prose-

cute her studies, but she nearly died of homesickness, and had to come back to her mother, in whose house she worked almost night and day, that she might thus attain that proficiency whose more ordinary method of acquirement her clinging affections had frustrated.

And now another circle of acquaintance formed about the Moniers—certainly a varied and entertaining circle, whose fault was not conventionality. Many were gifted—each had a hobby or a history.

Jane Monier, who always wanted to please, began to feel herself a little out of the fashion in this set. What her older acquaintances had said was quite true: Jane had never showed any strong individual taste. She was bright and clever, could do most things well, but nothing very well. Of the three girls, it was she who had openly chafed under the comparative monotony and common-place of their suburban life; since from the beginning Bertha had had absorbing resources in her scientific books and Hilda in her music. Jane threw herself warmly among the new acquaintances whom her sister's pursuits gathered round the family, but those who attracted her sisters least, attracted her most. She did not so much make friends with the actual workers, as with the workers' kinsfolk, admirers and hangers-on, who whispered among each other, not always inaudibly, that they believed there was more in Jane Monier than in either of her sisters, if it would only come out. Jane felt quite able to believe this, and began to watch for the "it," which should appear.

She thought she would apply herself to art. She had had good drawing lessons in her school-days, but now she found that the teaching she had received had been a little out of date, and she decided that it was this alone which had prevented the development of talent in herself. Mrs. Monier was by no means incredulous. Her other daughters had manifestly not been mistaken in themselves, and those who have not hitherto been misled are slow to fear misleading, just as those who are accustomed to truth are not ready to suspect a lie. So she made it quite easy for Jane to gratify her wish for a thorough art-training.

Jane's art-studies presently assumed an importance which threw everything else into the shade. She had no time for anything beside: they intruded everywhere. She had no patience with her neighbours' wall-papers or hangings; her talk was coloured with "tones" and "harmonies." She could not tolerate her old dresses, but must have new ones, neutral in tint and quaint in form, and cut off her long braids and wore her hair short and in "admirable disorder." One would have thought that beauty had come upon the earth quite lately, and was not able to make itself at home. She wanted to rearrange the house from attic to basement. She would do it with her own hands—it should be a labour of pure love and true art. Mrs. Monier was not unsympathetic. She could agree with much of Jane's talk, though there was a little of it which she did not quite understand: she could not tell whether it was Jane's thoughts, or only her expression of them which seemed so misty. But she gently suggested that as every great undertaking must begin somewhere, Jane's artistic household reform had better begin in her own painting room, especially since a connoisseur on the subject had declared that the wide, low chamber was exactly the kind to lend itself to decorative purposes.

So the blue drugget was taken up and the old chintz-like wall-paper was taken down, and the floor and the walls remain bare to this day, for while Jane was deciding what should cover them, she began to weary in her pursuit of decorative art, or, as she expressed it, "to sicken with a sense of the unattainable." She discovered that though she was quite sure she

had "genius," yet that she had not the concentrative power which enables one to master "mere detail." So the demolition of the painting-room mattered little, since Jane left off using it.

This gave Mrs. Monier's ready faith a slight shock. She had never approved of the queer dresses and the short hair, having always noticed that the more bravely her eldest daughter fought her hard and hot battle for an independent and beloved field of usefulness, the more carefully she kept within the bounds of old womanly custom in non-essentials, and that when she did make any variation, it was only to draw nearer to the stronghold of simplicity and use. But Mrs. Monier would not let herself feel disheartened about Jane; the girl had always been a little inclined to ride her hobbies to death, but anybody may make one mistake.

Jane dropped her classes and her studio. She would simply study nature; the skill which comes from the study of nature was the only skill worth having, after one has got the mere A, B, C of technical training. She would catch Nature as she flew, and fix her flying, and then, a fig for mere finish! So she got up at dawn to go into the city to make sketches of historical buildings before the streets were filled with busy throngs, she went into the highways and byways in search of models of "Age," and "Misery," and "Crime." The worst of it was, her historical sketches were not accurate, a window or a chimney more or less seemed to her a very unworthy scruple. Also, even "Age," "Misery," and "Crime," were occasionally so scandalised by her caricatures of them, that despite her liberal bribes, they would follow her to her home and be abusive at her gate! Matters came to a climax when Mrs. Monier detected Jane in the act of disguising herself to go in masquerade "to study nature" at the early cattle market! It was in vain that the young lady pleaded the precedent of Rosa Bonheur. Mrs. Monier sensibly pointed to Jane's sketches of wooden-legged sheep and grotesque horses, and told her that genius must justify itself before it can claim its privileges and its freedom, and that she was certainly beginning quite at the wrong end. Jane pleaded and wept and stormed, but here her mother was inexorable, and Jane threw down her pencils and sketch-block. If she was not to be allowed to do her best, she would do nothing!

(To be concluded.)

PUNCTUATION.

VIEWED IN A NEW LIGHT.

PART II.



THE first part of this article I promised to give a few general directions on the art of punctuation to such of our girls as have not hitherto given it their consideration. But, before I commence, I must premise that I am not going to supply instruction respecting all the points or stops employed, nor even an exhaustive list of rules and their exceptions in reference to those points of which I do treat, and which are the most essential. For ordinary purposes of writing, the comma, semi-colon, full-stop, notes of interrogation and admiration, the dash, hyphen, quotation

marks, parenthesis, and apostrophe are sufficient. To speak of paragraphs, brackets, acute and grave accents, diæresis, ellipses, index, asterisk, cedilla, and section-marks, would be to swell the proportions of an ordinary article too considerably, considering the small use which the majority of our readers would make of them. Those who need them must be referred to the many educational works that bear on the arts of speaking, reading, and writing, and must study these important subjects in a more thorough and exhaustive way for themselves.

Sentences are divided into the simple, the compound, and the complex and subordinate contained in the compound. Refer to the rules of syntax, and you will find that "a simple sentence contains one subject or nominative, and one finite verb or predicate; that a complex sentence contains one principal subject and one principal predicate, with one finite verb or more dependent on the principal sentence; and that a compound sentence contains two or more simple or complex sentences."

I quote from Dr. Joseph Angus. Simple sentences need no point to break them, and are concluded by a note of admiration, interrogation, or a full-stop, otherwise called a period. A compound sentence contains clauses, or subordinate and parenthetical sentences, such as are introduced, so to say, "by the way"—extra statements not necessary to the completion of the full sense of the original compound sentence. They are not introduced of necessity, because the latter would be perfect in itself, but are added only the more fully to explain the idea or the statement it expresses. In such subordinate or parenthetical clauses, forming sentences within a sentence, adjectives are sometimes employed, and so distinct clauses are formed.

Now, the nature and length of these several kinds of sentences need to be indicated by certain signs; and these signs denote, in some cases, the length of pause and tone of voice which a due consideration of the sense to be conveyed renders suitable. The comma, semi-colon, and full-stop are the most important of all the points in general use; and beginning with the comma, I must tell you that it indicates the cutting off of a portion of a sentence, which portion is not complete in itself, yet if omitted would destroy the sense of the compound sentence in which that portion or clause is introduced. Where the comma is placed the reader is warned to make a brief pause before proceeding to finish the entire sentence.

For example—

"Dost thou love life, then do not squander time;

For that is the stuff that life is made of."

B. Franklin.

This quotation illustrates the fact that the first section of a compound sentence is cut off by a comma; the second part, completing the first idea, is here stopped by a semi-colon, and an additional explanatory clause, not absolutely essential to complete the sense of the preceding clauses, but still further working out the thought, brings the whole of the compound sentence to a conclusion with a full-stop.

The comma is also used as a substitute for a finite verb, so as to obviate the necessity of its repetition. For example—

"From law arises security; from security, (arises) curiosity; from curiosity, (arises) knowledge."

It is also employed to stop off every repetition of the same word, or at least, the first of two, as in the well-known song by Tennyson—

"Break, break, break, on thy cold grey stones, O sea!"

Margaret felt obliged to remonstrate, though it was not altogether a pleasant task.

"It is hard that you should make the entire household suffer for your disappointment, Lulu," she said, quietly.

"I don't want anybody to take any notice of me," replied Lulu, gruffly.

"But they can't help it. You have not a civil word for anybody; and Winnie says you eat nothing, so you will soon be ill, and then, you see, unfortunately somebody will be obliged to take notice of you."

No answer from Lulu, who was gazing moodily out of the window, with her back turned to her aunt.

"Does it occur to you, Lulu, that you are angry with God for disappointing your plans. If you were only thinking of Mr. Cronetyki, you would see what suffering he has been spared by not living to undertake that long, wearisome journey. And meantime there is Audine; do you wish to ignore the poor child altogether, now that she is more than ever in need of a friend?"

"Do you know where she is, aunt?" asked Lulu, without turning her head.

"Yes, at my house."

"No!" cried Lulu, coming abruptly to the sofa, and standing before Margaret.

"But I cannot keep her much longer; she will have to go to the workhouse unless something else can be arranged for her."

"Aunt, she could not go there."

"What can I do?" said Margaret, assuming a cold-hearted tone and manner. "I have no time to spare, nor indeed inclination to take up your cast-off *protégée*."

"Has she any relatives, her mother's relatives, in England, I wonder?" asked Lulu.

"I believe the father left a letter of directions, and I believe a letter for you also, but really we have hardly dared to speak to you, Lulu, since he died; and Audine asks constantly if the young lady who used to be kind to her is angry with her, or if she has done anything wrong that you are no longer her friend."

Lulu began to feel thoroughly ashamed of herself. "Aunt, what must you think of me! it is all my horrible temper. Oh! what a wretch I am, and if it hadn't been for you, that poor child would have been sent straight to the workhouse. May I come home with you now, and see Audine, aunt?" she added, humbly.

"Yes, certainly; get your hat and come right away," said Margaret, delighted with her success.

Lulu quickly recovered her interest in the child. She found a request from the father that Audine should be sent to the charge of an old uncle and aunt of his wife's, worthy farmers who were delighted to take the lonely little orphan, and cherished her with the tenderest care. He begged that Lulu herself would keep his violin, as a memorial of having cheered the sorrows of a dying man, adding an entreaty that when its sweet strains touched her heart, she might be moved to offer up a prayer for his little lonely Audine.

Thinking it would be a comfort to Lulu, Wilfred instituted inquiries about Cronetyki's friends in Warsaw, and found that they were all dead, or scattered; so that if he had lived to undertake the journey, it would only have resulted in a mournful disappointment. The money Lulu had collected, being no longer needed for its original purpose, was, at Wilfred's suggestion, put into the bank to accumulate for Audine, till she should be old enough for it to be expended towards giving her a good musical education.

Lulu emerged from her cloud of disappointment as bright as ever, but gentler and more considerate than before. Her strong energies could not long lie fallow, and were soon directed into new channels. She had noticed

a poor, underpaid curate, whose wife and end- less children, in their shabby gentility, moved her warm heart to pity; so she contrived to make their acquaintance, and gradually winning the confidence of the poor mother, so timed her frequent visits as always to find her hard at work mending clothes, or darning a basketful of socks, when she invariably happened to find a thimble in her pocket, and to have nothing to do at home, and insisted upon setting to work with her; and many an hour did she spend in the little shabby sewing room, helping the weary, anxious mother to darn and mend the little garments of which there seemed such an endless heap always waiting for attention, while she rattled on with a ceaseless flow of merry gossip, till the poor lady could not help laughing in spite of her cares. Nor did Lulu's kindly deeds end with sewing, for finding that the limited means of the family prevented the daughters from learning sundry accomplishments which would be useful to them in the future, she persuaded their mother to allow her to give them lessons in her only accomplishments, music and painting.

And here we must leave the girls, happy and useful, though with many weaknesses and imperfections. They will have their share of troubles, no doubt, but they are gaining experience every day; and the same guiding hand which has brought them safely through this first and most trying year of household cares, will lead them on to the end in peace.

(THE END.)

STUDIES OF GIRLS.

By ISABELLA FVYIE MAYO.



THE MONIER FAMILY.

HEN followed a year or two of moping about. Bertha, after great struggles and much patience, had arrived at a point when she might begin to practise her beloved art of healing. Hilda, too, had made such wonderful advances with her music, that for her further advantage Mrs. Monier had resolved herself to accompany her to the Continent. Jane had her choice between remaining with Bertha or going with them. She was really wanted here: she was really welcomed there. But Jane would go neither here nor there. She had lately fallen under ecclesiastical influences, which made a life of voluntary asceticism and hardship the desirable life in her eyes. She desired to become a probationer at a great London hospital.

This time Mrs. Monier seemed dubious, and advised little; but as was natural under the circumstances, Jane found a sympathiser in her sister Bertha. Jane represented to Bertha how delightful it would be if they should come to work together, doctor and nurse, or physician and superintendent, of some infirmary or institution. "Bertha," said she, "had always been the clever one, but she could be devoted. Bertha should command, and she would obey." "Dr. Bertha," touched into enthusiasm, was ready to declare that Jane

had chosen the better, even, the loftier part, and to magnify the office which is generally thought the humbler one.

Jane Monier looked forward into the future, and, as it were, saw her own portrait surrounded by an aureole. She dreamed of the recovered patients, who would keep her name for ever in their prayers; of the grateful parents, who would call their children after her. She conjured up the vision of a great war (for the imagination is a faculty which can be very cruel when it is selfish). She saw herself the ministering angel in hospital tents, the honoured guest at royal courts, the theme of poets and historians. It might be! It might be! None could gainsay that! Certainly not; only Jane looked at the mountain-top where the journey might end, and quite overlooked the hard, rough, tedious steps of its way.

She was thinking of herself—not of the work. And in such a spirit, how could she endure to find herself but one among many others, all bound in the same strict discipline, all owing allegiance to the same superior? How hard, and yet how trivial, it seemed to answer the stern morning bell ringing in the murky winter dawn, and to go through the routine of daily duty, the poultice-preparing, the bandaging, the ward-work, to bear the grumbling of the patients, and the curt commands of the medical staff, to be quickly censured for error, but never commended for success.

The nurses' meals, too, might be wholesome and plentiful enough, but they were very different from what Jane had been accustomed to, and yet not different enough to be glorified into martyrdom. She fancied it would have been easier to exchange her hare-soup and roast chicken for a nun's dry bread and pure water, than for this barley-broth and boiled mutton! And the poor sick people were so coarse and common, so dissatisfied, so little impressed by her ladyhood and her self-devotion. And the very dress was not becoming: it was so terribly sensible and simple—the dark grey gown plainly made, the black cloak, and the plain brown bonnet, with the little mob cap for ward wear. It would have suited upper servants; Jane believed that in the streets the nurses were often mistaken for such, and she rebelled very bitterly against this innocent humiliation! She would have liked flapping white caps and great ivory crosses—or, at least, long black veils. In less than three months she discovered that she had "no vocation" as a nurse.

She herself took her discovery easily enough, but it was rather a blow to Bertha and Mrs. Monier. They began to be afraid for Jane. It was clear that she was not prepared to contend with obstacles—to overcome difficulties, least of all those presented by her own nature and character. And Mrs. Monier and Bertha both knew perfectly that nothing worthy the doing can be done without this. They also foresaw clearly that she would bring their ways of thought and action into disrepute—that when other girls among their acquaintances began to aspire, unsympathetic parents would be able to point to her and say, "Look at Jane Monier, and at what became of her efforts and aspirations. Better stick to your tennis and your morning-calls, and wait patiently for husbands."

Bertha Monier herself once said, "If I were a man, I should not like to marry a woman who had tried every calling under the sun, and had failed in each. It would be an insult to wifehood to imagine that such an one was fitted to succeed in that!"

Mrs. Monier remained with Hilda on the Continent. Bertha started in practice with another lady doctor, and Jane persisted in leading a nomadic life, only making visits to either of the houses which might have been her home. She had quite given up all

thoughts of professional work. From time to time she threw herself for a while into some new scheme of philanthropy, such, alas! being too often the favourite hunting grounds of busy idlers, who delight to hear their own voices and their own praises, and often end in silencing others' wisdom by their folly, and in hindering or marring the good which others would do. Like the Athenians of old, she spent her time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing, and felt as if working as a slave at the regeneration of the world by indulging in a dissipation of committee meetings, drawing-room meetings, Parliamentary petitions, and other social machineries, often sadly apt to grind little but themselves! Sometimes her zeal was directed to reformatory work, sometimes to emigration, then to female suffrage, next to temperance. Her mother and sisters were aghast to read her articles, and to hear of her lectures on subjects of which they felt she knew practically nothing. People who trusted to her statements found themselves cruelly in the wrong. Those who leaned towards her theories found them easily disproved by a little practice. And all the while, Dr. Bertha, at least, fully realised (and with some bitterness) that her sister was furnishing arguments for those who would cramp women's minds and lives as the Chinese cramp their feet. She knew how an unthinking world delights to point out every woman who leaves the beaten path, not to find or to make another, but merely to go astray. She knew that the women who talk about work and do nothing, serve as glass windows through which the scorners can throw stones at the workers. Twenty people heard of Jane Monier and her views, and her blunders and her rashness, for one who knew of Dr. Bertha quietly sedulous at her healing work, or of Hilda devoted to her music, and now doing her utmost to promote its study among the young, and to raise the tone of thought and feeling among her sister artists. Dr. Bertha knew well enough that there was no damage to womanliness in the careers which she and Hilda had made for themselves; nothing that could hinder them from rendering due wifely love and reverence to any man who might ask and deserve such, nothing that could scare little children from clinging round their necks, and learning how to pray by lisping, "God bless mamma!" Yet Dr. Bertha was quite ready to admit that if she had not known all this, by her own experience, but had been left to hear of woman's work and of woman's aspirations from such reporters as her sister Jane, she would very likely have arrived at another conclusion. And when Dr. Bertha could be drawn into conversation on these subjects, she always dwelt very forcibly on her belief that no woman should be listened to on what are called "woman's questions," unless she can point to something she has done or been. "She may have painted a picture, or made a gown—been an editor, or a general servant—a sick nurse, or the mother of a family," Dr. Bertha would declare; "but she must somehow have brought her thoughts into collision with the hard facts of life, if her thoughts are to be worth hearing. Only the worst of it is, that as new views and ways, however good, grow in favour, they are sure to attract those who only like to follow the fashion—whether it be of creeds or bonnets; and then others, good, solid people, who don't care about fashion, but only about what wears well, whether in dress or philosophy, are apt to think that the new things are only a fashion, and to be afraid of them for a while. But it must all come right at last."

In the end, both Dr. Bertha and Jane married, and only Hilda remained Miss Monier. Dr. Bertha married a gentleman in a

distinguished position in the Indian Civil Service. She went out with him to his far-outlying post, and found her medical knowledge and skill invaluable in her own household, among her husband's subordinates, and in the zenanas of the native gentlemen whom his justice and courtesy made his warm friends. It was a full and a happy life which Dr. Bertha had, and widely remote as it was from anything she could have contemplated when she set out on her career, she found no jot of her learning or her experience came amiss or was wasted. And very proud was Dr. Bertha, and yet keenly touched even to tears, when, long years afterwards, one of her Hindoo friends, hearing that it was an English custom to send kind messages to friends on St. Valentine's day, offered her a beautiful transcription of Solomon's sweetest touch in the portrait of his "virtuous woman": "Her children arise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her."

Jane married soon after Bertha. Her husband was a gentleman of good family and some means, an enthusiast concerning whatever was the hobby which Jane happened to be riding when he met her. He had been an idle man all his days, and had wearied out most of the people who had known him long. Their courtship was short, almost as if both feared that if it were prolonged they might change their minds before their wedding-day. For a few weeks, Jane over-acted the part of an adored and adoring wife, who sat at her husband's feet, and led him only by embracing them. But he was as changeable in nature as she was, and after they had ridden a few hobbies, sitting pillion upon them, they first took to running races on separate ones, and at last to scampering off on hobbies that ran in opposite directions. It was not long before perpetual domestic discomfort and animated bickerings led to a separation by mutual desire, and then each resumed the nomadic, restless living of their later bachelorhood and spinsterhood, to the sorrow of their respective families, and to the scandal of all the good works which they chose to patronise and promote. When she vehemently forwards efforts for promoting juster laws towards her sex, men are apt to forget the justice of her cause in feeling that she only espouses it because she is an unhappy wife. When he advocates the simplest and narrowest domestic life as the best and the happiest for women, women are inclined utterly to revolt from it, as only held up in a fit of passionate reaction against his own mistake in the choice of a wife.

In Mrs. Monier's last letter to Dr. Bertha, the mother wrote, "The longer I live, the more clearly I see that a readiness to submit to discipline, a steady constancy of purpose, a power of patience to live through the day of small things, and to go on doing what we can, when we cannot do what we would, is the source of all nobility of character, the root of all fruitful living. We have long gone on quoting the line 'They also serve who only stand and wait,' without, I think, seeing its full significance. True service is perfect obedience to the Master's command, and those who rush to do something when He does not call, not only do nothing, and confuse those who are already called, but they do not hear His call when it does come, as I believe it surely does to every life. You can imagine that our poor Jane is in my thoughts as I write thus."



ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

EDUCATIONAL.

MOSS ST. BLAZEY.—The explanation of your query was given on page 3, vol. ii.

OLD SUBSCRIBER.—We recommend the Bee Reading Club. Write to the hon. secretary, Miss Rogers, 44, Henry-street, Limerick. She will supply you with the rules. If not permitted (and very properly too) to undertake district visiting in London at your age, you might assist in making children's and infants' clothing for some charitable parochial society, and thereby assist quite as much in your own parish, under your clergyman's directions, as if you visited from house to house personally.

JULIE MAY.—For all information respecting the fees demanded at the various scholastic and training institutions, both in London and in the Provinces, we refer you to the "English Woman's Year Book," where you will find every particular respecting the fees required, and at what ages, at upwards of fifty different training institutions. We thank you for your kind letter. Your writing is very good.

VILLAGE MAIDEN.—We recommend you to read our articles, "How to Improve One's Education," at pages 637 and 794, vol. ii. In case you have not got the volume, we will tell you that the numbers are those for July 2nd and September 10th, 1881. In reference to the hair, our notices are so numerous that we must refer you to the index of vol. i., under the letter "H."

WORK.

E. A. PINCOTT.—The first authority on the subject of every description of needlework, and giving the most minute instructions as to how they are to be executed, all being beautifully illustrated, is the "Dictionary of Needlework," published at 170, Strand, W. C. It is the joint work of two of our own writers; and is on the list of the Reference Library of the British Museum.

AN ESSEX GIRL.—There are houses of business which take improvers, but you had better apprentice yourself to a private dressmaker.

TERRA-COTTA. No. 1.—The black chip hat would look very well with the terra-cotta feather if you added some black velvet and lace. "It fits to a T." This phrase is an allusion to the "T rule" that mechanics square with, to make angles true, etc.

TERRA-COTTA. No. 2.—Wear crape for the first six months, and black only for the next six months for a parent; making one year in all. Silver or gold may be worn at the end of nine months. Send your stories to a publisher, and take your chance of what he will say.

ALLOUS.—Lambwool underclothing is much thicker than merino, and requires great care in washing. Rub the yolk of the egg well into the roots of the hair, and wash it well out with warm water.

ONE WISHING TO LEARN.—You had better procure one of the needlework instruction books, published for the use of the Board schools.

E. FAIRCLOUGH.—A sixpenny bottle of one of the many glosses, revivers, or polishes, for boots and shoes, would answer for your black chip or straw hat or bonnet.

LAUREL AND IVY.—Crewel-work borders would look very well for bedrooms; in drawing-rooms, silk embroidery is more fashionable.

MUSIC.

MINNIE WOOD.—Giovanni Pier-Luigi da Palestrina was chapel-master to Pope Julius III. in 1551; dismissed and restored again in 1571. He composed the "Mass of Pope Marcellus," one of his most famous works, in consequence of the discussions at the Council of Trent on Church Music. He died at Rome in 1594, and was buried in St. Peter's. His works are profoundly scientific; most of them are sacred, and he also composed many madrigals.

FEMALE CETEWAYO.—Write to Charles Morley, Esq., Secretary of the Royal College of Music, and ask for the prospectus, in which you will find a statement of terms and conditions. Address Mr. Morley, at the college, Kensington-gore, S.W. Your writing is too angular. Use a softer pen with a broader nib; you appear to write with a pin rather than a pen.

GAVOTTE.—There is a "Musical Practising Society," of which the secretary is Miss Jennings. Direct to Dan-y-Bryn House, Newport, Monmouthshire. From this lady you may obtain all the information you require.

ELLEN.—I. Corelli, the head of the old school of musical performers, died in 1713, at the age of sixty. His compositions may be played without touching the fourth string of the tenor or violoncello. 2. "Counter-point," which consists of melody with harmony, as treble and bass, dates back (so far as we have any historical record) to about the year 1022, and was invented by Guido; and the time-table in 1080, by Franco. What used to be called "thorough bass," and is usually known in the present day as "harmony," is defined by Gardiner as the art of expressing, by musical characters, the harmonic combination of notes to be struck with the right hand on the pianoforte, in accordance with any given note in the bass struck by the left. Melody