

## NEVER GIVE IN.

By HELEN MARION BURNSIDE.



NEVER give in, girls,  
 Though oft you are fain,  
 When hope fades before you,  
 And labour seems vain;  
 Strive onward, keep doing—  
 Somewhat they must win  
 Who keep the straight pathway,  
 And never give in.

Ah! sit not down weary  
 And spent by the way;  
 Your meed God will give you  
 Of "strength for the day."  
 Pray always, hope ever,  
 Through turmoil and din—  
 Strive onward, look upward,  
 And never give in!

The clouds o'er the valleys  
 Will gather, and hide  
 The sun that illumines  
 Hope's clear mountain-side.  
 Strive onward in patience—  
 When rest shall begin,  
 To those 'twill be sweetest  
 Who never give in.

Be strong, true, and patient;  
 Hope all things, and pray;  
 Heed not the rough places  
 That cumber the way.  
 The crown of the victor  
 One day they shall win,  
 Who bravely strive forward.  
 And never give in!

## WEDDING GIFTS.



HERE is an impression among some people that the giving of wedding presents is a custom of these modern days; but this is a mistake. We find that it was usual with the Greeks and Romans and some Eastern nations

to show nuptial honour in this way, and the custom has prevailed through all the centuries, though it appears never to have pervaded society to such a widespread degree as in the present day. Indeed, complaints are occasionally made of the tax this custom levies on the pockets of the bridal friends. However, we are not among the complainers; on the contrary, we desire to say a good word in favour of the practice. And this we will perhaps best do by pointing out some customs attending the bestowal of wedding gifts in foreign lands.

Our gifts on these interesting occasions are not always judicious and in the best taste. We ask, "What shall we send as a wedding present—something useful or something ornamental?" But our choice is not always happy. We fear to transgress etiquette if we send some useful article, unless indeed we are on terms of the closest friendship with those on whom our gifts are bestowed. On the other hand, if we send something not practically useful, it will probably be relegated to some out-of-the-way corner of the house where it will seldom meet the eye, or possibly be deposited with solemn pomp and care in the vaults and safes of a bank.

In the matter of wedding gifts our forefathers displayed a degree of taste and judgment that the present generation might well follow.

Among the Greeks it was the custom to send to the newly-married people what were known as the unveiling presents, because they were given on the occasion of the bride's first appearance unveiled. The bride was brought in solemn procession late in the evening to her husband's house, generally on a carriage, with the bridegroom and his best man sitting at either side of her. Both were covered with garlands and perfumed, while the Hymenæus, or nuptial song, was sung by the company to the sound of harps and flutes. The next

morning the married pair separated for a day, and the bridegroom slept at the house of his father-in-law, when the bride sent him a present of a garment. Then only the young couple were to receive their friends, who offered congratulations and wedding presents, which were called *anakalupteria*, because, as I have said, the bride unveiled herself to her friends on that day. She was seated in her apartment with a gilt crown on her head, and there she received the presents of her guests.

Among the Romans, both parties gave presents to those friends who had negotiated or favoured their marriage. The contract of espousals was usually confirmed by gifts on the part of the husband to his betrothed, and sometimes, but not so commonly, the woman made presents to the man. These were called *sponsalia*, espousals, or *sponsalitia donationes*, espousal gifts, and *arrhae et pignora*, earnest and pledges of future marriage. Juvenal says, "*Digito pignus fortasse dedisti.*" Together with these espousal gifts, it was usual for the man to give the woman a ring, as a further token and testimony of the contract—a ceremony afterwards adopted among the Christian rites of espousal, though not used, it would seem, at that time in the solemnisation of matrimony itself.

In Syria, as well as everywhere in the East, presents are absolutely essential in betrothals and at the time of marriage. They are given with much ceremony before witnesses, and the articles presented are described in a written document, so that, if the match be broken off, the bridegroom can obtain them back again, or their value, and something more as a compensation for the injury, or, as the lawyers say in our day, a salve for wounded feelings. The custom prevailed as early as the days of Abraham, as we learn from the book of Genesis.

A curious custom prevails among the Turcomans and Moors of West Barbary, as well as several other Oriental races. The bridegroom is placed within a circle of dancers, and the guests and bystanders, wetting small coins, stick them on his forehead. All the money thus collected is added to the dowry of the couple. As the coins are put on the bridegroom's forehead, the attending servants shake them off into a basket which is placed in his lap, his eyes being meanwhile shut, and the name of the donor and the value of the gift are announced.

In the case of the Arabs of the present day, the bridegroom makes the bride presents which are sent a day or two before the nuptials. As soon as the bride reaches the bridegroom's house she makes *him* presents of household furniture, a spear, and a tent. The marriage contract amongst the Persians stipulates for the settlement of numerous presents, in addition to a certain sum of money. If the bridegroom is in moderate circumstances he gives his bride two complete dresses, a ring, and a mirror. He also supplies the furniture, carpets, mats, culinary utensils, and other necessaries for their home. With the Armenians presents are exchanged between the bride and bridegroom on the evening before the wedding.

To go empty-handed to a Greek wedding would be considered a breach of etiquette and long-established usage. And all the gifts bestowed on these occasions are exhibited with much ceremony and *éclat* the day after the marriage. The bride is seated in the centre of the room in her own house, still attired in her bridal costume. Before her is a large open trunk, in which are all the wedding gifts with the donors' names attached. By her side stands an attendant, who takes out each article and holds it up before the gaze of admiring and applauding friends, while occasionally a professional extemporizer sings a laudatory verse in honour of the donor. The usual presents amongst the peasantry and small farmers comprise portions of clothing, caps, slippers, sweetmeats, toys, and jewellery.

While it might be desirable and even advantageous to adopt some Chinese customs, it would, I am afraid, be counted a hardship among us to be obliged to follow them in the bestowal of wedding gifts. Their usage, in this particular, were it introduced here, would create quite a revolution in our present etiquette, and would certainly increase the number of those grumblers to whom I made allusion at the outset of this paper. Among the Celestials the family of the bridegroom make presents of various articles to the family of the bride a short time before the day fixed for marriage. The presents generally consist of food, a cock and hen, the leg and foot of a pig, the leg of a goat, eight small cakes of bread, eight torches, three pairs of large red candles, a quantity of vermicelli, and several bunches of fire crackers. Two or three days before the time fixed for the wedding a red card is sent by the family of the bride to that of the bridegroom, stating



the quantity of furniture that will be supplied as the bride's dowry. In the neighbouring kingdom of Siam it is the rule for all the guests to bring presents.

Swedish brides used to receive from their friends a pig, sheep, or cow, and from the bridegroom a colt, dog, or goose. Among the wealthier classes, the happy couple sat on a kind of raised dais under a canopy of silk on their wedding day, and their presents, consisting of plate, jewels, and money, were arranged on a silk-covered bench before them, just as amongst us the various presents on these auspicious occasions are set forth to the best advantage on a table or sideboard for the inspection of friends, while the bride instead of sitting on a platform presides at the tea-table, from which she genially dispenses "the cup that cheers."

Every guest at a Norwegian wedding brought the bride a present. In many parts a keg of butter was the usual gift; and if the marriage took place in the winter, salted or frozen meat was offered. At the present day, as I witnessed at a Scandinavian wedding, the gifts generally, as amongst ourselves, take the form of jewellery, plate, household furniture, books, and the like.

Among the early Germans money was given to the bride's relatives on the wedding day, but this custom was not followed if the marriage happened to be an unequal one. Men of rank who had lost their wives, but had children, in order to avoid burdening their estates, married low-born women, who, bringing no fortune, were not entitled to dower. In such cases the husband gave his wife as gifts a pair of oxen for ploughing, a harnessed horse, a buckler, a lance, and a sword, to signify that she ought not to lead an idle and luxurious life, but should be a partner with him in his labours and a companion of his dangers. The wife at the same time gave her husband arms, to indicate, I suppose, that he

should be ever ready to protect her person and interests.

The *Morgengabe*, or morning gift, was probably founded in the custom of the husband making presents. At first the *morgengabe* was a present made by the husband to his wife on the morning after his marriage. Sometimes it was a chain of gold or a jewel, and at others a portion of the husband's fortune. Formerly, such a present was given at every wedding, but lately only at the weddings of the nobility. This custom was often carried to great excess, the bride having the privilege of asking for any sum of money, or, in fact, anything that she pleased, and which could not in honour be refused by the husband. The demands sometimes were very exorbitant, if the woman chose to be avaricious, hence the laws limited the amount to be given. Amongst the ancient Germans, as we learn from Tacitus, the husband bestowed gifts upon his wife at his marriage.

There was another custom in Germany at one time which went by the name of "Pay Weddings." It was very general throughout the country. At the entertainment which followed the marriage the guests deposited money—gold or silver—or jewellery in a basin which stood before the bride, who was seated at a table with her female friends. In other instances every visitor paid for the refreshments which he had, as at an inn. Long ago it was common in some parts of Germany, as well as in Holland and France, to distribute at the weddings of the upper classes medals on which were various devices. Presents were made at the entertainment following the nuptial ceremonies in France by all the guests who were invited to be present. The presents were deposited in a basin that stood before the couple while music was being played.

In Wales, presents were generally made to the couple several days after the ceremony. They were usually household furniture, domestic

utensils, pewter plates, knives, forks, candlesticks, grain, and money. A servant-maid who had continued in the same service for seven years was entitled upon her marriage to a copper kettle of a capacity of from four to six gallons. The weddings in the Principality were characterised by several curious customs, among which the "Biddings" was one of the most interesting. The richer people sent circular letters to the guests by a paid bidder or inviter, in which it was stated, as in our present-day applications for help to a benevolent public, that "any donations would be thankfully received." In later years the custom of sending bidding letters was so common throughout Wales, that the printers kept bidding forms in type. The following specimen of a bidding letter, such as was distributed half a century ago, is given in the belief that it will prove interesting to the present generation:—"We beg leave respectfully to acquaint you that it is our intention to enter the matrimonial state on Tuesday, May 23rd next; and from the encouragement we have received by the kind promises of our friends, we purpose making a bidding on the occasion, which will be held the same day at the White Lion, in Queen Street, where we hope to have the pleasure of your company and influence; and whatever favours you may then think proper to confer on us will be gratefully acknowledged and repaid with thanks whenever required on a similar occasion by your humble servants." In some parts the gifts were presented at a feast before or on the wedding day itself.

In the Celtic districts of Ireland the presents to a bride, especially if she is popular in the neighbourhood, take the substantial form of a cow or calf, or couple of sheep, or it may be a litter of young pigs. In other parts of the country the custom has not obtained, except amongst the better classes, whose wedding gifts are of the kind that usually prevails in England.

WILLIAM COWAN.

## A BATTLE WITH DESTINY.

By JOHN SAUNDERS, Author of "The Lion in the Path," "Abel Drake's Wife," etc.

### CHAPTER VI. MARRIAGE FESTIVITIES.

NOT long had the crowd dispersed which had assembled to do honour to Paul's return before other groups collected, and loitered around the church,

waiting the new excitement of the arrival of the wedding guests.

Presently they found diversion in watching and commenting upon some of the visitors from the castle, who were carrying flowers and ferns to decorate the church; and when the colonel joined the little band of workers, their pleasure was at its height.

They watched his progress to and from the church and the castle with unabated interest, while now and again the church bells clanged forth joyous peals on the warm summer air.

"That makes the sixth time the

young master's been a-bringing flowers here, 'cording to my reck'ning," said an old man, addressing a young mother, who was helping her baby to walk along the top of the low churchyard wall, against which the old man leaned.

"An' it strikes me," said the mother, "them ladies along with him wouldn't care if yer reck'ning gets up to sixty 'stead of six. Take care, 'Melia!"—addressing the child, whose hands she was holding—"slowly! steady! There you are! My! what a clever baby it is!"—and she caught her child up to her with a rapturous embrace.

"To think how time passes!" continued the old man. "I minds when Mr. Paul was no bigger nor your Amelia. Why, I've watched him through the gate when I bin a-sitting on the seat round the big tree yonder many a evening as I smoked my pipe. He was always a-laughing, and running away from his nurse, all over the beds among the flowers."

"Flowers!" said a youth, keeping his pipe in his mouth as he spoke. "Where did he get the flowers from?"

"They growed, o' course, in the gardins!" answered the first speaker. "Them were times afore Mr. Benjamin

begun his long illness! Ay, the grounds were worth seeing then! Folks came fro' a long way off just for the pleasure of walking over 'em, when the old master, Mr. Benjamin Stanard, wer' away."

"Times must 'av been a sight better than they are now," grumbled a consumptive-looking man, who had long tried vainly for work around the neighbourhood.

"'Ow the childer do love the bells!" broke in the young mother, as her little one clapped its hands and laughed with pleasure when another merry peal was heard from the old tower, with its flag fluttering in the breeze from the lofty top.

"Yes," meditatively answered the old man. "Times was better under the old gentleman. Mr. Benjamin kept the place in style. He wasn't particuler generous, but he let none o' us want for work. He allays spoke o' thrift, he did, an' practised it, too, upon us, as he said himself; an' he made us do the same, I can tell yer."

"Ah, 'ere comes Sally Harlow!" said the mother, as a woman in a red shawl approached them. "I suppose she's

