

Editors' Table.

THE WIFE OF A STATESMAN.

Not long ago, in recording the death of Lady Palmerston, we had occasion to quote the views expressed respecting her life and character by that distinguished organ of English public opinion, the *London Times*. Lady Palmerston, it is well known, did much, by her tact and social powers, to aid in raising her husband to the eminent position which made him at one time an arbiter in European politics.

Another lady, whose death was lately announced, the wife of Mr. Disraeli, has exerted hardly less influence, though in a different way. As the same journal remarks: "She stands out a striking illustration of the power the most unobtrusive of women may exercise, while keeping herself strictly to a woman's sphere." Mrs. Disraeli was a widow when the youthful and ambitious author and politician sought her in marriage. She had inherited from her uncle a large fortune. She was twelve years older than her second husband, who was supposed by many to have found in her wealth the attractions which allured him; and not small was the ridicule with which the announcement of the marriage was received by his political enemies, who, even at that time, were numerous. The result of the union, however, disappointed the sneers. It proved to be a genuine love match, and the mutual affection never decayed. "Esteem, indeed," says the writer from whom we quote, "is the most genuine form of love, and Mr. Disraeli's esteem for his wife was heightened by a most lively sense of gratitude.

"His gratitude was characteristic of one who was no ordinary man. It gave evidence of the nobler qualities that secured his political success. It flowed in a current at once steady, and calm, and deep, and flowed with a force and constancy of purpose not to be diverted by the accidents of his career. He kept no close debtor and creditor account with his conscience, while he passed from triumph to triumph. How many husbands, far less engrossed abroad, have considered a tithe of the fame he won sufficient acquittal of so old a debt! How many content themselves with leaving their wives to enjoy prosperity in isolation! Mr. Disraeli did no such thing, although for that he would claim but little credit. The fact is, his wife made his home a very happy one, and he turned to its peacefulness with intense relief in the midst of fierce political turmoil. We are apt to forget that most men lead a double life; that those of the strongest natures and sharpest individuality show themselves in the most marked contrast. It was a pretty sight, that of the remorseless Parliamentary gladiator, who neither gave quarter nor asked it, who fought with venomous weapons although he struck fair, and shot barbed darts which clung and rankled in the wounds—it was a pretty sight to see him in the soft sunshine of domestic life, anticipating the wishes of his wife with feminine tenderness of consideration, and receive her ministering with the evident enjoyment which is the most delicate flattery of all. The secret of the spell which she held him by was a simple one. She loved with her whole heart and soul, she believed in him above all men, and he appreciated at its real worth that single-minded, self-sacrificing devotion. It is difficult to overrate the strength and support given by unstinted love like that, and few, we suspect, appreciate it more than those who would seem to need it the least. It is neither counsel nor sparkle, but observant, ready sympathy that a man of energy and self-reliance longs for in moments of exhaustion and depression, and the more impassible the mask he wears in public the greater the relief of being able to drop it in private."

Mrs. Disraeli—or Lady Beaconsfield, as she became through the peerage which her husband had claimed

for her, as a reward for his own public services—was not, it appears, well qualified to shine in the world, and could not assist her husband by any social talents or fascination.

"It was not in her to make his saloon a centre of society, to gather within the range of his influence eminent Englishmen and influential foreigners, or to sway by the reputation of brilliant reunions the easy opinions of liberal-minded politicians. She was no Lady Palmerston to act as her husband's most trusted ally, working for him in season and out of season with tact quickened by love. Her death will leave no gap behind her which bereaved society will find it hard to fill. But, perhaps, her husband will lose the more that society will lose the less. Her love for him was wonderful, 'passing the love of women.' It was shown in traits of unobtrusive heroism worthy the matrons of republican Rome. Few men can boast the courageous self-command which made her conceal, during a long drive to Westminster, the pain of a finger crushed in the carriage door, lest she should agitate her husband on the eve of a great party debate. She knew a word could always bring her the sympathy that was her sweetest consolation, but to the last her one thought was to spare him. Surprised by a sudden flow of blood from an incurable cancer, knowing that her doom was certain, and that their happy wedded life was fast drawing to its end, she had the touching resolution to preserve her secret; while, all the time knowing it as well as she, he never for a moment suffered her to guess his knowledge, or gave her the grief of seeing him suffer. It was the graceful symbol of the chivalrous devotion which had never wavered, it was an appropriate return for the inestimable services she had done him when in November, 1868, he could offer her the peerage bestowed in acknowledgment of a distinguished career."

The picture which this writer draws of Mr. Disraeli's home life is a very pleasing one. It certainly startles us somewhat by its freedom; for in this country the press, while dealing roundly with the public acts of politicians, touches delicately, if at all, upon their domestic relations. The author of this description, however, doubtless knew how much he could say of the two about whom he wrote, without displeasing the survivor. What he has told us will certainly do much to elevate that very remarkable man in the public esteem; and it will also afford a lesson, and a model of wedded life, which may be useful in humbler spheres and widely distant lands. The notion that equality of intellect is a necessary element of wedded happiness might be dispelled by this example alone. Perfect affection on both sides supplies all deficiencies. "Lady Beaconsfield," says that singularly outspoken biographer, "was very far from being a reserved woman. She must have often talked too fast and freely for her husband's liking; occasionally the expressions of her artless admiration of him were caught up and colored, to be circulated as 'good stories' at dinner tables; but the intuitive instinct of her affection set a seal on her lips in the minutest matters where her talk might do him an injury. She was very much in his confidence, and she was never known to betray it. From their wedding day," he continues, "the existence of the one was merged in that of the other. It was their mutual happiness that the wife lived only in the husband; the husband's extraordinary career was the happy achievement of her life, and it was her pride to shine in the reflection of his fame."

The writer in the *Times* has omitted to add that the statesman who, in his later life, has been a devoted husband, was in his youth a no less devoted

son. This fact we learn from the best possible authority. His father, Isaac Disraeli, the well-known author of the "Curiosities of Literature," and many other works, has told the world, in the preface to his latest volume, the "Amenities of Literature," how, in the midst of his studies for that work, he was "arrested by the loss of his sight." The book was nevertheless completed, though in an abridged form; and a touching paragraph in the preface informs us how it was done. "The author of the present work," he says, "is denied the satisfaction of reading a single line of it, yet he flatters himself that he shall not trespass on the indulgences he claims for any slight inadvertences. It has been confided to one whose eyes unceasingly pursue the volume for him who can no more read, and whose eager hand traces the thought ere it vanish in the thinking; but it is only a father who can conceive the affectionate patience of filial devotion." Thus the virtues are linked together; and in this case the grateful affection of the son foreshadowed the tenderness which made what seemed an ill-assorted union a lifelong happiness.

"LOVE IS ENOUGH."

BY WILLIAM MORRIS.

It is now some considerable time since the publication of the last volume of the "Earthly Paradise" completed a task as laborious and as fruitful as any that in our time has been chronicled in poetry. Mr. Morris thenceforth became an acknowledged master of narrative verse, and a new volume from his pen is sure of many readers. In this, his latest poem, the freshness, the grace, and the easy antique charm that held us captive to his earlier muse, reappear for our delight.

The poem is in form a "morality," one of those mediæval exhibitions from which sprang the modern drama. It is exhibited before an Emperor and Empress newly married, and the peasants flock to see it. Their comments on the play and on each other make a fitting introduction and conclusion to the main body of the work—the morality itself. The plot is simple, as in all Mr. Morris's works. King Pharamond, victorious and powerful after five years' struggle with his enemies, is seized with a melancholy, ceaseless and remediless. His life is in danger from it, and his faithful foster-father, Oliver, knows not what to do, when the king confides to him his secret. In his dreams nightly he sees, and for five years has seen, a woman fair as the day, to whom his heart is given. She has nerved his arm in battle; she has cheered his courage in adversity; and now that his dangers are over, and his kingdom won, he must find her or die. They set out together. After many adventures, they find the longed-for maiden; and though King Pharamond never regains his kingdom, he is satisfied, knowing that "Love is Enough."

The beauty of the poem is exquisite. It is written in the earliest of English metres—the alliterative unrhymed verse of Piers Ploughman, which in Mr. Morris's hands falls into such exquisite cadences that an Athenæum critic proposes it for the next translator of the *Iliad*. Interspersed with this are the songs in rhyme, where Love himself enters and the music swells to greet him. We have left ourselves but little space for extracts, but we must give this brief stanza:—

"Love is Enough; tho' the world be a-waning,
And the woods have no voice but the voice of complaining,
Tho' the sky be too dark for dim eyes to discover
The gold cups and daisies fair blooming thereunder;
Tho' the hills be held shadows, and the sea a dark wonder,

And this day draw a veil over all deeds passed over;
Yet their hands shall not tremble, their feet shall not falter,
The void shall not weary, the fear shall not alter
These lips and these eyes of the loved and the lover."

And with this song, as sweet and Elizabethan as one of Shakspeare's, we must close this short notice, which we hope will send many to the book:—

"Dawn talks to-day
Over dew gleaming flowers.
Night flies away
Till the resting of hours.
Fresh are thy feet,
And with dreams thine eyes glistening,
Thy still lips are sweet,
Tho' the world is a-listening.

O love, set a word in my mouth for our meeting!
Cast thine arms round about me to stay my heart's beating,
O fresh day, O fair day, O long day made ours!

Late day shall greet eve,
And the full blossoms shake,
For the wind will not leave
The tall trees while they wake
Eyes soft with bliss,
Come nigher and nigher;
Sweet mouth I kiss,
Tell me all thy desire.

Let us speak, love, together some words of our story,
That our lips as they part may remember the glory,
O soft day, O calm day, made clear for our sake."

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK.

THE principle that women and men should receive the same payment for the same amount and quality of work is already accepted at Washington, as well as by one or two of the State governments, and will probably soon be admitted by all. It is plainly a just principle, but it will lead to some important results, which ought to be carefully considered. The great and most natural sphere of public employment for women is in the teaching of the young. In some of the States, the women engaged in this occupation outnumber the men by more than three to one. It is not, however, merely their natural aptitude for the office which has caused them to be employed, but the less remuneration they require; and they receive this inferior remuneration not because they are women, but because they are inferior to the men in certain respects, and more especially in preparation and in that attention to their duties which comes from regarding their office as a lifelong profession. A young woman usually begins to teach as soon as she ceases to go to school. She takes no especial pains to fit herself for the duty, and she regards it merely as a temporary employment until she shall be married, or settled in life in some other way. No doubt many men take up the occupation in the same way, but a large number adopt it as the vocation of their lives, prepare themselves for it with care, as for a profession in which they hope to rise to eminence, and are constantly engaged in study and self-improvement with the same view.

If it is decided that women engaged in teaching, as in any other public employment, shall receive the same pay as men, it will follow that they must make themselves equal to men in qualification for the office, or otherwise men will assuredly and very properly be preferred. If it becomes the general rule that teachers of both sexes must be paid alike, the result will be either that a much less number of women will be employed in that way than at present, or that women who intend to devote themselves to that occupation will have to prepare themselves for it much more thoroughly than many of them have heretofore done. There is little doubt that they will soon see this necessity, and that the result of the