

ence of, and whose solemn promise and undertaking I have—for value received—that you shall be my wife; against your mother, who advocates my cause warmly; against your brother, whose very life, dependent as it is upon comfort and indulgence, hangs upon your consent; and, last of all, against a man who was never yet defeated in anything he undertook, and who, having said that you shall be his wife, will have it so, though ruin and death stood at the church door, and eternal perdition was the sure consequence of marriage."

"A formidable array, were all those on whom you count true to you, but they are not; true faith can never dwell with villany."

"What do you mean? Your stepfather—the only one I have mentioned, whose conduct lays him open to your reproach—dares not play me false. He is bound to my interest with bonds that he cannot break."

"What if he should try?—if he should suspect your motive for this suit, and, desiring the prize himself, amuse you with promises he never means to keep?"

"He dares not, he cannot! what do you mean?—what are you hinting at?"

"It matters not; only when next you make a league with evil men against the helpless and unfriended, remember that they who can break their faith with those whom by every law, human and divine, they are bound to protect, will not, when it suits them, be unlikely to break it with you."

The return of Hester prevented reply; and, for the time, silenced a conversation which was fast depriving me of all self-command and prudence.

(To be continued.)

#### HOREHAM HALL, ESSEX.

A SHORT distance from the high road in the county of Essex, stands a picturesque building of ancient date, and known as Horeham Hall. Leland tells us in his "Itinerary," that "Olde Cutte builded Horeham Hall, a very sumptuous house, by Thoxtede, and there is a goodly pond or lake by it, and faire parks thereabout." However, old Cutte lost his property, which eventually came into the possession of Sir William Smijth, of whose relative, Sir Thomas, secretary to Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth, there is a fine portrait by Titian over the carved mantel-piece in one of the old parlours. The place is memorable as having afforded a refuge to the Princess—afterwards Queen—Elizabeth, during the reign of her sister Mary. A well worn side-saddle of the Queen's is shown in the great hall, and there is a room on the first floor of the square which the queen often occupied even after her troubles were over, and she reigned in England as the "fair vestal throned in the west." The aspect of the old house, the weather-stained walls, the ancestral trees, the piece of water, the broad staircases, the great hall, the curious rooms in out-of-the-way places, all combine to make it a charming visiting place for artist or antiquary; and sitting in one of the oaken parlours, surrounded by everything of a bygone fashion, it is not difficult to imagine oneself in the full enjoyment of the "good old times."

Good old times! when the country squire was apparently a greater man than any country squire now can hope to be—when he held high state in his ancestral hall, and gave hearty welcome to all comers; when you might retire to the orchard and, in an arbour, eat a last year's pippin of the squire's own grafting; when you might ride out with a hawk on your fist down to the warren, where the falconer should beat the bushes till the heron flew up, and away went your hawk after her, to bring her down presently with "one fell swoop." Here, in those good old times, what Christmas games were played, when tables groaned beneath old English fare, and people shouted, danced, and made merry, and hung up such boughs of holly—with mistletoe, of course—that would have

served the English soldiers on their march to Dunstan. Here, in this oaken parlour, for how many hours a day sat my lady and her women at the 'broidery frame! Here, how many times in a century, were ladies who put aside the canvas for the book, the needle for the pen, and emulating the daughters of Sir Thomas More, Lady Jane Grey, Catherine Parr, and Queen Elizabeth herself, cultivated literature and philosophy! It is to be feared



GREAT HALL IN HOREHAM HALL.

that there were not many of these, and that when King James began to reign such tastes died out completely. Perhaps in the days of the Stuarts some lady—for the fashion was set by people of rank—left books and 'broidery, and took to gambling, singing—such songs as would scarcely be tolerated anywhere now—drinking, and even smoking! Under the Tudors, the ladies gave bread to the poor, and prided themselves on the manufacture of condiments

in the fact that the "good old times" departed before we were born, and that we live in a better and a brighter epoch than that which saw the erection of Horeham Hall.

#### "NO USE TRYING."

"THERE'S no use trying," said the wife of a couple of years, shaking her head, while tears of sorrow and disappointment gathered into her eyes. "It's evident enough that Robert and I were never intended for each other, and we made a great mistake when we got married. I've tried again and again to make things move smoothly, to see if he couldn't keep his temper, and I my tongue; but there's no use; matters grow worse and worse, and if we get on one or two days without jarring or trouble, we're sure to bring up against some beam by the end of that time. So, for my part, I give it up from this hour. All my old dreams of a life made beautiful with love, and sacred by constant care and tenderness, and sweet with words and deeds of affection, a life that should never be jarred by discord and harshness, are faded now, and from this time I shall let things take their own course."

And so, her life was a failure, that married life she had entered on with her young husband, full of sweet and fragrant hopes, as June mornings are with blossoms, and each woke up suddenly to the knowledge of unimagined faults and weaknesses in the other, which an intimate acquaintance with any character must always disclose.

And it was very hard to recover from the surprise and the shock of this new knowledge; and though the young wife resolved and re-resolved, she lacked Purpose and Patience, the very foundation of all true life. And so, after a year or two of fitful struggle and failure, she "gave up," and her husband's life and her own—oh! it was the history of ten thousand times ten thousand other lives—became darkened, and mildewed, and rusted by fretful tempers and selfishness, by harsh words and unloving looks, by frequent recriminations, and at last by coldness and indifference.

"NO USE IN IT," mutters the drunkard, as he wakes up in the morning to find the tearful face of his wife bending over him, and learns that, for her sake, he was picked up from the gutter again last night, and brought home, more an animal than the dog they kicked from his door.

"Here I am, fallen again, low as ever, just as I began to hope I had triumphed and got the better of this horrid craving; and I haven't touched a drop for three weeks, and now—well, I give up all hope of ever coming off conqueror, or being a decent man again. There's no sort of sense in saying I will when I won't. I can't save myself any more than a stone can help tumbling down hill when it has once begun rolling. Poor Mary! I've broken her heart; but it's my fate, and I can't help it! I shall never be anything but a poor, drunken dog—anyhow."

And he, too, went down, down, down, laying his broken-hearted wife in the grave first, and following her there, simply because he didn't triumph the first time, or the second time, or the third—as if that three weeks of abstinence from sin wasn't enough to encourage and strengthen him to try again! As if one day, one hour, five minutes of triumph over any evil habit wasn't enough to hold up in the face of any amount of failure, and say, "There! I did that, and God helping me, I'll do it again!"

"Now, THERE'S NO SORT OF USE IN IT," murmurs the youth, as he pauses for a moment to take breath—for it is slow, hard work for a half-grown boy to pile up those heavy stones which build the wall around that young orchard. "I shall never be anybody or anything! I've had hopes and dreams all my life that I should make somebody in the world, and get an education, and be a man that folks would look up to and respect.



HOREHAM HALL, ESSEX.

and preserves. Under the Stuarts, they took to bowling, cards, dice, and relished a bull bait! Perhaps, however, some lady of the Parliamentary party may have spent her leisure in this room, and banished everything in the shape of sport or pastime. Very many are the changes which have taken place in the old house, and varied are the characters that have lived, and loved, and died here, since "Olde Cutte" built the Hall; but there is little to regret