

The Girl's Own Paper, Vol. VIII: No. 356, October 23, 1886. eBook

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PART II.

A queen's dream.

[Illustration: "*Lilacs and laburnum trees bloom abundantly around.*"]

Yet the recollection of that book is helping to soften Hazel. There is a tender bit of writing at the close of the lecture which can hardly fail to reach any woman's heart, unless it be wholly hardened; and Hazel's is not a hard heart. So she muses on it, growing gradually calmer and happier. After all, she might be of some use in the world if she were to try, and if One Divine would be with her.

She stoops down to throw some coal on the fire. She is too much exhausted physically to make it up carefully; but with an effort piles on large blocks and small indiscriminately, then throws in a handful of matches from a box within reach. What strange chaos there seems to be in the grate after a little while! One after another the matches go off with a phiz and short-lived flare, and each seems to light up a more curious scene than the last. From being mere piled-up blocks of coal in a grate, they grow to be a half blocked up entrance to some unknown place. There is a large shining black portal, half ruined, surrounded with *debris*. By degrees Hazel's languid curiosity is excited, and she wonders whither it leads. Why should she not explore?... The next match which takes fire lights up the slight form leaning far back in the big chair, with the soft, golden brown hair half loosened, and the dark, shadowed eyes fast closed. And Hazel has passed through the dark gateway, and is in a wonderful world.

What a strange black gateway to have led into so fair a garden! Hazel pauses at the entrance, her eyes glistening, her breath taken away with delight at the beauty of the scene before her. A paradise of fresh green shade and exquisite light and colouring. Wide-spreading chestnuts, graceful, feathery birches, and a hundred other trees, clothed and robed in their tender young leaves, mingle with a glory of pink and white spring blossom, which seems to fill the air like a snowstorm in the clear, blue sky. The South wind blows and fans Hazel's cheek, and wafts delicious breath of flowers and sweet-brier around her. Beneath the shower of snowy blossom stretches smooth, green grass, and masses of brilliant flowers glow, expanding their petals up towards the sun.

After a while Hazel wanders forward in a dreamy intoxication of delight, every moment discovering fresh beauties. She finds a beautiful grotto, where are large rocks and cascades and running streams and fountains. She enters by a low archway of stone, covered with drooping ferns, and there, right before her, is a large clear pool at the foot of a huge rock. She flushes with the prettiest of shy pleasure and frank admiration at sight of her own reflection.

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How beautiful! A girl in a long, white robe, with a sweet, dark-eyed face, which she knows to be her own. She is leaning slightly forward, and the eyes—so often heavy and weary—are brimming with happiness, the lips parted in a smile. Her hair, with its pretty, sunny ripples, is unbound, and the wind blows it slightly back from her shoulders. And, most wonderful and striking of all, a circlet of pure gold rests upon the shapely head, and a second circlet is clasped round the waist. Then she is a queen? No doubt of it. And then comes, to the joy of admiration of all she has seen, the added joy of certainty that all is her own. This is a queen's garden, and she is the happy queen!

More and more dawns gradually upon her. There are those near at hand dear to her, to whom she is also dear, whose queen she is. Oh the joy of it all! She clasps her hands in ecstasy, and the pretty reflection in the pool is more than ever lovely, only she has forgotten it now.

A serious thought must have come into Hazel's mind, for suddenly a different expression appears in her eyes; a look of perplexity and shade of sorrow. The consciousness in her new life is growing, and, alas! it is not unmixed with pain. This garden is not all the world, then? She puts her hand to her brow, trying to recall something. Slowly it comes back to her in words, noble words, spoken by one whose face is a darkness to her. And she listens—

"It is you queens only who can feel the depths of pain, and conceive the way to its healing."

Ah! that is enough. She has lost her desire to recall more. She would fain turn back to the former delight and forget the existence of pain. But the steady voice persists, and will not be quenched.

"Instead of trying to do this, you turn away from it; you shut yourselves within your park walls and garden gates; and you are content to know that there is beyond them a whole world in wilderness, a world of secrets which you dare not penetrate, and of suffering which you dare not conceive."

Hazel looks round on the garden. How pleasant it is! Why should she leave it? Why should she concern herself with what may lie outside this home-kingdom of hers? She tries again to banish the voice, yet she knows in her heart, if she would only look for its knowledge, that, outside of that little rose-covered wall, the wild grass, to the horizon, is torn up by the agony of men, and beat level by the drift of their life-blood.

Yes, it is useless; there is no escaping the truth the voice tells. So Hazel yields herself to listen as it goes on.

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“I knew you would like that to be true; you would think it a pleasant magic if you could flush your flowers into brighter bloom by a kind look upon them; nay, more, if your look had the power, not only to cheer, but to guard.... This you would think a great thing! And do you not think it a greater thing that all this (and how much more than this) you can do for fairer flowers than these, flowers that could bless you for having blessed them, and will love you for having loved them; flowers that have thoughts like yours, and lives like yours, and which, once saved, you save for ever? Is this only a little power? Far among the moorlands and the rocks, far in the darkness of the terrible streets, these feeble florets are lying, with all their fresh leaves torn and their stems broken; will you never go down to them, nor set them in order in their little fragrant beds, nor fence them, in their trembling, from the fierce wind?”

Engrossed with the voice, Hazel has been walking on, little heeding whither she goes, when, as its tones die away, a groan startles her. How terrible its sound; how incongruous, interrupting the soft harmonious chorus of the soaring, singing birds! So painfully near it seemed, too, it could but have been a very little distance off outside that gate which she sees before her. Her first impulse is to draw back and retire, shuddering, far into the garden. But, behold! the gate swings back of its own accord, and in the face of that fact, and with the remembrance of the words she has heard, she dare not do other than pass through the open way.

What a strange, wide world, and how dreary! A great, mad battle is raging; the grass, sloping up to the horizon, is scorched with the heat of the sun—the sun which only made a pleasant warmth in the shady garden. There is the fierce galloping of horses, and wrestling and fighting of men. Shouts and groans fill the air and drown the song of the birds. There are heaps of dying and wounded. Ah! there is one man not a stone's throw from her; his must have been the voice that reached her within her gates. How remarkable that she should have heard nothing before of all the great din. Another groan, followed by some inaudible words, causes Hazel timidly to approach the wounded man. He is evidently one of the very poorest of the “common” soldiers; and there is a look in his face which speaks the word death with a shudder in the girl's heart. A gleam lightens the agony in the man's eyes as he sees the white form and gentle face above him. He gazes steadily a moment, as though to make sure his vision is not a passing illusion; then Hazel catches the words, “Were you sent to me?”

Very quietly she tells him in whose name she comes. Then, with a long, struggling sigh of satisfaction, without a shadow of further questioning in the dying eyes or voice, he whispers—“Hope even for me in Him, then, since He sent you!”

So the low, flickering flame of life, set free, leaps up to its source; and the forsaken home rests in unbroken peace.

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Saddened, and yet peaceful, too, Hazel turns slowly away from the battle-field, and walks on, not noticing whither she goes. Jarring sounds recall her, and she finds herself in a narrow valley, surrounded by noisy children and brawling women. No one seems conscious of her presence. A lot of men are lounging against the wall of a public-house. The low building is conspicuous by its being in good repair, while its neighbours are all in a shattered condition. The window-frames are painted and varnished, and the open entrance discloses a smart interior. A few doors beyond this the houses reach the climax of desolate disorder. The whole place is tumbling down; the window is broken; the battered door is off its hinges, propped up against the wall. A cripple girl is sitting on a broken box, turned upside down, immediately outside this miserable hovel. Her face is a greater shock to Hazel than any of the other wretchedness around. There is a desperation of bitterness in that set, white face, with its hollow eyes and cheeks, which is absolutely appalling. Hazel had always imagined that suffering must of necessity, by its own inherent nature, bring with it a patience which would be reflected in a sweet face. Slowly, as she scans those immovable features, full of pain, and still more full of dogged rebellion, this idea has to be abandoned. Here obviously is a human being in the midst of a noisy squalor, whose physical disease and torture is unlightened by one softening ray of hope; whose misery is too sullen and dull to rise even to the hope of putting an end to itself.

One moment and the deformed girl starts apprehensively. A sob has sounded in her ear, and some one, unlike any she has ever seen heretofore, stands beside her, taking her hand in mute, unspeakable compassion. She cowers back against the wall and drags away her hand; Hazel's purity and loveliness raises in her only a shrinking dislike and dread of contact.

It is long before the pleading, loving voice gains any hearing; but at last, before the two part, some faint expression of intelligent thought has dawned on the lame girl's brow; and in her mind a question has been raised, "Can it be that there is one who loves me and has need of me?"

The evening sunlight is falling through the birches in the beautiful garden; the air is full of fragrance and harmony; the queen is returning. Wearily she opens the gate to enter. She is filled with pain, for the many sadnesses to which she has drawn near have touched her own soul with the shadow of suffering.

Suddenly, in the chequered shade of the trees at the entrance of the garden, she stops and turns round, for a bright radiance envelops her. And, lo! there stands One, in glorious light—One in whose Divine face love is shining. Hazel bows down, her whole soul overwhelmed with reverent awe. Then her hand is taken and held with a touch which thrills her with exquisite rapture, and a voice in her ears says—

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“Come, see with Me My garden.”

And the air, which is filled with light, grows buoyant, and, while her hand is still clasped by the Divine Guide, she is wafted upwards.

Stretched out below, the hills and vales of the earth are one vast garden. All is indistinct at first; expanses of misty colour and tint; but by degrees the scene resolves itself into more definite form. The whole is intersected and watered with streams, more or less clear and pure, which arise and are replenished from a bright vapour, the Spirit of Life, which shines, issuing forth from an empty tomb in a rock in the East. There are banks of wild violets and primroses, and woods filled with anemones and hyacinths—myriads of beautiful flowers, reaching over all the world.

Hazel has hardly taken in anything of the wonder of the scene, when her attention is attracted by an arch of white mist above the earth, and, as it seems, but a few paces from her. Gradually this path of mist grows clear as crystal, and the colours glancing in it take shape, and form a clear, transparent picture.

A cornfield on a summer evening, filled with blossoms of poppies and corn-flowers. A wild storm sweeps over the field; the corn is broken down; the flowers are crushed beneath its weight, draggled and withered. A poppy, torn up by its roots, is whirled through the air.

A mist sweeps over the crystalline cloud, and where it grows clear again the scene is changed to a wild hill-side. Scarlet and blue flowers intermingle in the distance; in the foreground lies a single poppy, withered and dying. Slowly, beside it a lily grows up; as it grows the fading poppy is stirred, touched by its leaves; and the tiny bells waving over it inspire new life and vigour, till at length, grown whole and fresh, it is loosened from the brown upturned roots, and floats upwards, to bloom more beautiful in Paradise.

Again the mist passes over the light picture and changes it. A woodland scene is painted there now. Amid the fern and moss and twigs under the trees, wild flowers are blowing. A pathway intersects the little wood, and across it shadows of the trees fall, with sunlight between. In the foremost patch of sunshine, at the edge of the path, is a sprinkling of anemone leaves. And there amongst them a delicate blossom, half crushed by the superincumbent weight of moss, the fallen leaves of last year, and tiny, lichen-covered twigs. The white, transparent petals are soiled and deformed, thrust down to the earth. As Hazel looks, regretting that she has not the power to stretch forth her hand and clear away the destructive weight, the leaves and twigs tremble, and are uplifted, and fall away from the slender plant, for close beside it a hardy little fern frond slowly uncurls itself and arises. The frail blossom stirs slightly, released from the overwhelming pressure; but has no strength to do more. Oh, for water to revive it! And, lo! from the fair green fern drops of

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dew embosomed there are shed and scattered over the downcast head. They are drunk in, and by degrees the drooping cup is raised to the friendly fern. And then, the straight young frond, itself ever growing, waves aside in a natural, graceful sweep, and allows the sunshine in all its strong radiance and reviving force to fall full on the flower. And the half-closed bell joyously expanding, grows white and strong and beautiful.

And so the crystal pictures change and change, till Hazel's every helpful act has been set forth. Then, as the last fades, and the arch of storied light itself dissolves and melts, with one all-absorbing passion of eternal devotion flooding her whole being, Hazel turns to Him who has kept her beside Him throughout, her hand retained in His. For one moment she beholds Him, the Unutterable One; and in His Sacred Face she reads, amid ineffable love and infinite majesty, a look of gratitude. And once more the Divine accents fall on her ear, saying—

“Inasmuch as thou didst it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, thou didst it unto Me.”

“Let not those, the queens of the earth, to whom I have given the priceless gifts of life and leisure, hold either lightly. Life, with its sorrows and its joys, is but the education time fitting them to live for ever with Me. The leisure I have bestowed may be used for Me, in doing work in My garden—work which I have prepared for them to do, and which I long to see done. Let them see to it that they waste not the opportunity in fretful discontent and idleness—’And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, she shall in no wise lose her reward.’”

* * * * *

Hazel awoke. The moon was streaming in through the window. The grate was filled with shining blocks of coal, and a few half-burnt matches. Aching all over, and shivering with cold, she closed her eyes once more, and a period of insensibility followed.

Many days and nights of feverish illness ensued—days and nights in which Hazel had much to suffer, and was only from time to time conscious of the loving, unceasing care which watched over her. In those intervals when her mind was not dazed and confused, she saw a face, old and plain and wrinkled, which was to her as the face of an angel, for Miss Bright tended and watched her with all the self-sacrifice of a noble, true woman.

At length, after a weary, weary time of pain, Hazel fell asleep once more. Her dream came back to her, for she thought she was resting in the warm sunshine on a bed of lilies in the same beautiful garden. And when she opened her eyes she found her room was really bright and warm with a fire and sunshine, and fresh and sweet with the

fragrance of lilies of the valley, a large bunch of them standing beside her, and more lying on the white coverlid of her bed. Her eyes filled and her heart swelled with gratitude. Softly she whispered, as though she spoke to someone close beside her, "Dear Lord, I am so thankful to Thee for making me better. I so longed to live a little while more to do some work for Thee in Thy garden. I bless Thee so!"

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The door opened, and Brightie came in. The brave old woman broke down as she clasped Hazel in her joy at the improvement in her. The two cried together for a little while; there was so very much to be glad about that the gladness was too great for self-control.

A few days later, a girl with a white but radiantly happy face is resting in a cane armchair, her feet supported by a footstool, in the garden of a pretty country house at Fridorf. The sunshine is hot, but she is shaded from it by a trellis work of young-leaved creepers overhead. Lilacs and laburnum trees bloom abundantly around. The lawn before her is smooth and green, and beyond is the sea.

“How wonderful God’s love is!” the girl says, presently, reaching out her hand to an old woman with a peaceful face who shortly joins her, and who clasps and retains the hand with an answering look more eloquent than speech.

THE END

Footnote:

[1] Sesame and Lilies. By John Ruskin LL.D. 1. Of Kings’ Treasuries. 2. Of Queens’ Gardens.

HINTS ON MODELLING IN CLAY.

By Fred Miller.

Modelling in clay is a very agreeable change in one’s artistic occupation, for it is quite unlike other branches of art, and calls into play a different set of faculties for its performance. It needs a greater amount of “hand cunning” than does painting, and is in that sense akin to wood carving, to which delightful craft it is, indeed, almost indispensable, and, I might add, part of the necessary training one has to undergo to become a carver in wood. And as on another occasion I am going to write a few hints on wood carving, the present article may be taken as a prelude to the one on that subject.

The materials necessary to try one’s hand at modelling are very inexpensive. The clay is the most essential thing, and this can be purchased at one or two artists’ colourmen, or, better still, at any pottery. I have had clay sent me from the potteries in Staffordshire, and those of my readers who live near a pottery would have no difficulty in supplying themselves with clay. The clay used for flower-pots does for coarse work, but is not sufficiently carefully prepared for fine work. It burns a rich red colour, and is, of course, terra-cotta. The clay used in making the terra-cotta plaques and vases is what you

require for fine work. There are two or three firms who supply London shops with terracotta vases, *etc.*, and I have no doubt that clay might be purchased of them.

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The clay used in making tiles does for modelling, but perhaps the best is that which burns a cream colour. It is a dull grey colour, rather dark before it is fired, and it should be noticed that it is difficult to tell the colour clay will burn by its appearance when unbaked. Thus a grey clay may burn a rich red or pale cream. The qualities necessary in clay for modelling are plasticity, which enables it to be worked without falling to pieces, and fineness—a perfect freedom from grit, small stones, and other impurities. It should be quite soft to the touch, and when pressed and kneaded should feel smooth and silky. Old clay is more plastic as well as being tougher than new, and in potteries clay is often kept a considerable time before it is used. The clay should not be allowed to dry when it is not in use, and to prevent this it must be wrapped in wet flannel. Should it dry quite hard, there is nothing to do but to put it into a vessel and pour water on it, allowing it to stand until the clay becomes soft. Some of the moisture must then be allowed to evaporate, otherwise it is too soft for use. This is another point to be observed in clay used for modelling. It must not be too damp. If it sticks to the fingers it is too wet, and if it resists the pressure of the fingers, too dry. The state between stickiness and stubbornness is what is wanted.

Now as to the tools. Wooden modelling tools can be purchased at some artists' colourmen, and also at some tool shops. You must choose those tools you think look handiest. A little practice will soon show you which are the best to have.

Each modeller has a predilection for certain tools, and it will take my readers very little time to find out which tools give the best results. I often shape those I buy myself to fit them for particular work. In addition to these wooden tools, it is necessary to have a fine steel one to work the clay when it is dry. Modelling tools are very inexpensive. You really require no other tools but these wooden ones and a steel one, but it is necessary to have a few boards to work your clay upon. They should be strong, with battens at the back to prevent them warping, which they are liable to do owing to the dampness of the clay.

We will start our work with a very simple design, for our aim should be to overcome the difficulties by degrees. The design I have chosen (fig. 1) was modelled as a tile about eight inches square, and the first thing to be done is to roll out a piece of clay about half an inch thick, and fairly flat all over. It is as well to work the clay up in one's hands, damping it occasionally if too dry. If clay be allowed to remain untouched for any length of time it gets set, and does not work easily; therefore, thoroughly work it up with the hands. It may be made into a ball, and can be rolled out flat with a thick ruler or rolling pin. The clay has a tendency to curl up round the rolling pin, and care must be taken to prevent this. If the rolling

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pin be covered with leather, this is to a great extent prevented. The design can be made on tracing paper, and by marking over the tracing paper placed over the clay with a hard point, an impression sufficiently distinct will be left to guide one in doing the actual modelling. The first thing is to build up the oranges, which can be done by sticking little pellets of clay on to the slab, pressing them down with the fingers, and rounding the oranges roughly into shape.

[Illustration: *Fig. 1.—A tile.*

Our First Experiment.]

Don't be too particular about this part of the work; be content to get some approximation to the shape, leaving the finishing to be done with the tools. Build up the stem in like manner, or you might roll out a thin piece of clay and stick this on to the slab. In sticking clay on to clay, it is always advisable to wet both the clay and the slab to ensure thorough adhesion, and in working the design into shape it is even a good plan to dip the fingers into water, as the extra moisture makes it easier to press the clay into the requisite shape.

The leaves can be modelled separately, and stuck on to the clay slab one by one. Do as much of the work as you can with the fingers. In modelling, the fingers are the best tools, after all. They do their work so much more expeditiously and effectively than the so-called "tools" do, and, depend upon it, the more the preliminary work is done with the fingers the better, as the use of the fingers tends towards boldness of design and vigour of execution. People, in starting a new employment, are very apt to be finiking owing to timidity, and this must be overcome from the outset—this tendency to pettiness—and in the case of modelling, the best way to overcome it is to do all the preliminary work with the fingers. Build up the design boldly and freely, studying only the principal masses and most important forms. When this is accomplished, let the clay stand a little time uncovered, as the use of water will have made it very sticky, and the modelling tools cannot be used as efficiently when the clay is in this state as when it is drier.

The modelling tools will enable you to begin to finish up the design, for at present the design exists only in its rough state. Pick the clay out of the interstices of the design, and begin to refine the different forms by putting in the more delicate curves. It very much depends upon the nature of the design as to how far in the direction of finish you carry the work, but as your modelled tile will not be exposed to rough usage, you may under-cut it, as modellers say. Under-cutting is the taking of the clay away from the back of the various forms. In the leaves, for instance, instead of leaving a solid mass of clay at the back, this should be carefully cut away underneath, or under-cut, so as to give lightness and delicacy to the work. Of course, it is necessary to leave some clay here and there to attach the various

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forms to the slab. The under-cutting may be carried to such a pitch as to make the design look weak, and as though it would fall to pieces with a puff of wind. When this is the case, I reckon the finishing has been carried too far. Clay should always look strong enough to hold together, and I may say I never thought much of that fancy china one sees which is covered with flowers and foliage modelled as delicately as though wrought in some precious metal. Sooner or later the edges get chipped off, and the charm of such work is immediately gone. Of course we know that an accident may destroy work that is not wrought in this delicate manner, but modelled clay should be delicate without being weak—it should at least look as though it could hold its own with fair usage.

Get as much of the work done as possible while the clay is plastic, and with a little practice a modelled design can be finished entirely while the clay is damp. In fact, the work is better when wrought from the plastic clay than when finished up with steel tools after the clay is dry. There is a certain crispness about the modelling when wrought from plastic clay, which is often wanting in work tooled up when the clay is hard. To my thinking, the best work is always that which looks as though it had been thrown off in a happy moment, and which has a certain number of the tool marks showing, as though the worker were not ashamed to let his craftsmanship be seen. Work which has been touch and retouched, and rubbed down and smoothed until all life, vigour, and crispness have departed from it, looks what it is, amateurish (in the worse sense) and weak.

I have had many opportunities of seeing amateurs work during the years I have been teaching, and I have noticed that they have a mistaken notion of what finish really is. It certainly does not consist in smoothing the work until it has the texture of a wax doll, and I have often noticed that work is often wholly spoilt in the so-called finishing.

In the subject I am dealing with—modelling in clay—this is particularly the case, and, reader, I pray you avoid it. I would sooner you leave the work rough, with all the marks of the tools showing, so that you get vigour and crispness in your work, than that you should in your endeavour to efface the marks of the tools make your work tame and effeminate.

[Illustration: *Fig. 2.—A plaque.*]

In working up the leaves, don't attempt to put many veins in them. Hardly do more than indicate the centre vein. Nothing looks worse than to see the various forms covered with a network of minute markings. You will find, if you try and put in the veins in your modelled tile, your leaves will not look as though they were veined, but as though some stiff-legged insect had crawled over the damp clay, and had left its trail behind it. In putting in the stamens in flowers, you will have to have recourse to an expedient, for it is evident that you cannot copy every individual stamen in clay any more than you can

make your clay petals as thin and delicate as nature. You must translate the effect of nature into clay, and in the case of the stamens you will find it a good plan to build up the centre of the flower, and then press into it a pointed stick, repeating the operation until the whole of the centre is perforated, as it were, like a grater.

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In order to make a contrast between the design and the background, you can dot or line over the slab upon which the design is lying, so as to make the surface rough in texture. When the clay is quite dry, which will take some week or more to effect, you can put any further work into the design with the steel tool, which must be used to scrape the clay; for if you exert any pressure upon the dry clay it very soon chips, and it is almost impossible to repair such damage, and for this reason: that if you stick on a piece of wet clay to the dry clay, the moisture of the wet clay is soon absorbed by the dry, and the piece stuck on immediately falls off. The only chance is to keep damping the part damaged until the clay all round gets quite moist again, and you must then model another piece on to the broken part. Dry your work very slowly at first, to prevent it cracking or warping, and when it seems quite hard put it into a warmer place, for, though clay may appear hard on the surface, there is sure to be a good deal of moisture inside, especially if the clay be thick, and should it be put into a kiln before the moisture is entirely evaporated, the modelled clay will fly into minute fragments, and cause incalculable damage to other work in the kiln. I recommend my readers to put their work into a hot oven two or three times after it has been drying for two or three weeks, so as to insure the clay being quite hard. I lost several works through firing them before they were dry enough.[2]

The heat that china is put to fix the colours is not sufficient for baking clay, and it must be sent to some place where underglaze pottery is fired. This first firing turns the clay into "biscuit," and if any painting is to be done on it, now is the time to do it. Underglaze or Barbotine colours should be used, and they should be put on in thin washes. The whole work must then be glazed and fired. But I shall not touch further on this part of the subject here, for I must say something about modelled decoration applied to vases and plaques.

The plaque or vase to receive modelled decoration must be of the same degree of dampness, or nearly the same degree of dampness, as the clay used in modelling, for reasons already stated. You cannot put modelled decoration on to clay that is dry, or ware that has been fired. To make a plaque, it is almost necessary to have a plaster mould. You might make this for yourself by buying a china plaque the shape and size you require, and filling this plaque with plaster-of-Paris, being careful to let the plaster come to edge of plaque all round. When the plaster is dry, trim the edge round, and take it out of plaque. You must now roll out a flat sheet of clay sufficiently large to cover this plaster mould, and, by pressing the clay evenly all over the mould, and trimming round the edges with a knife, you will get a clay plaque sufficiently good to answer your purpose. Don't attempt to remove the clay immediately from the plaster, but let it remain on a few hours, to enable the clay to set. The surface of this plaque may be kept moist by keeping a damp flannel over it. When the modelling has been started, the damp cloth must not press upon the modelled portions, but be supported on a wicker frame.

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It is always better to model direct from nature—and for this reason. By taking a leaf and pressing it into a piece of clay, and marking it round with a darning-needle, you get the exact shape of the leaf, and by pulling off the leaf you can bend the clay impression into any form you like, and put it upon your clay plaque or vase, pressing it into the curve you wish it to take. A little very wet clay should be put on back of leaf, to ensure it sticking to plaque. I have taken as my illustration (fig. 2) the garden poppy, and if I were modelling it direct from nature, I should first of all roll out a strip of clay for the stem, and put this on the plaque so that it makes a graceful curve. Strip off the leaves one by one, and take impressions in clay, and then fasten them to plaque, following the natural growth, and yet arranging them so that the leaves fall into their places agreeably. The back leaves, instead of being modelled, might be just marked in outline on the plaque itself. This will give depth to the design. The leaves should not be put on the plaque flatly, but should be bent and twisted as is necessary to suggest the growth of nature. The flower will present the greatest difficulty, as the serrated edges of the petals must be carefully done.

[Illustration: *Fig. 3.—A vase.*]

In the case of flowers like chrysanthemums, it is necessary to build up the most prominent flower solidly in clay, putting on the outer petals separately. The back flower can have the near petals modelled, while the distant ones can be just indicated on plaque with incised lines. Don't attempt to copy every petal in clay, which is an impossibility, but try and get the general effect of the flower in your modelling. Take the prominent petals first, and put them on in their proper positions, and the less important petals can then be filled in in the intervening spaces. This is the plan to adopt in all intricate work. Put down your principal forms first of all, and you will have little difficulty in getting in the less important ones, for the principal forms act as measuring points to the rest of the work, and enable you to preserve that proportion between the various parts of the design which is essential in all good designs. It is necessary in modelling to simplify nature somewhat, for we cannot imitate nature in clay. What we have to do is to seize upon the principal points, the curves of the stems, the position, form, and characteristics of the flowers and leaves, and put them down intelligently and in as telling a manner as possible. Let the work dry carefully before having it fired, and you can either finish it up in colours, and have it glazed, or let it remain as it is. I often used to use my Barbotine colours (see articles on "Barbotine Painting," in Nos. 440 and 584, vol. iv., of the G.O.P.) for colouring modelled work and glazed it with my soft glaze. I have also sent some work to the potteries, and had a coloured glaze put over the whole work. I may here say that much may be learnt by studying good modelled work, and even copying some stone or wood carving in clay. The pottery of Della Robbia and Palissy should be studied whenever the student has the opportunity of so doing.

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I need not say much as to modelled work or vases. You must have some shapes sent up from the potteries in the "green" state, for it is almost impossible for amateurs to "throw" their own vases on a wheel. Space forbids me to describe the potter's wheel, but visitors to the Health Exhibition two years ago had the opportunity of seeing a potter at work, which is much better than reading about one. Those adventurous spirits who wish to try "throwing" vases, should get a small wheel from the potteries (it will cost, including carriage, about L8), and have a few lessons from a practical potter. In the meantime, get some firm to procure for you a few unbaked vases, and when you receive them it will be necessary to wrap them up in damp flannel for a day or two, so that the modelled work will stick on the vase. Let the shape of the vases be very plain and simple, with a good broad surface to receive the modelled decoration. I have chosen as the illustration (fig. 3) the blackberry, as it is a very ornamental plant and one familiar to all readers. Throw on your stalk first of all, letting it wrap round the vase, and so place it that the leaves, flowers, and fruit can spring from it so as to be seen to the best advantage. The stalks might be placed in such a way as to form handles. Get a certain quaintness into the modelling, and don't be too intent upon imitating nature, for, do what you will, you will find it impossible to accomplish this. Therefore, be content to decorate your vase with a graceful spray of bramble, with all essential characteristics of the plant indicated, and the general "swing" of the plant expressed in your work. Model each part separately, either by pressing the leaves into clay and marking them round, or by modelling pure and simple, and then fasten the various parts on to the vase with diluted clay. Don't let any part of the work stand out too prominently; for not only will the shape of the vase be destroyed, but there is always much more liability to damage if the design be very prominent than when it just lies, as it were, closely to the surface of the vase. And yet it is not necessary to put everything perfectly flat on the vase. The stems, for instance, can be raised in places, so that there is a space between the stem and vase; and so with leaves, flowers, and other details.

It will be seen that I make the stems form an ornamental rim round the vase and also round the neck. Dry the vase very slowly, and in sending it to be fired, wrap plenty of cotton wool around it so that no pressure can be exerted upon any portion of the modelling. This applies with equal force to all modelled work. Red terra-cotta vases decorated with modelling, and merely baked, are most effective. Terra-cotta vases should not be too small; the larger they are the more effective is appearance in a room. I have some more than two feet high, and when filled with dried rushes, *etc.*, they fill up a corner charmingly.

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As a general rule let your modelled work be drawn to a natural size, and let it be rather over than under the natural size, for if modelled work is smaller than nature, the effect is apt to be petty and insignificant. Birds and insects can often be introduced with advantage.

I have recently been modelling some large works, using clay employed in making drain tiles, and having them fired in an ordinary brick kiln. In fact, I started some of my work with large size drain tiles, which I obtained when they were quite wet, and by pulling up the top and spreading it out a little, and putting a slab of clay on the bottom, I obtained cylindrical vases, upon which I modelled some decoration; but as the subject is one of peculiar interest, and is somewhat new to my readers, I must just reserve a few remarks upon this subject for another occasion, when I will give sketches of some of the vases I have recently been modelling. This work is within the reach of everyone, especially my country readers, for there are few villages of any size that have not a brick kiln in their vicinity, and for large work, such as ornamental flower-pots, vases for holding bulrushes, and garden vases, this is most admirably adapted.

Footnote:

[2] As will be seen, the tile design, fig. 1, is what is termed a “bas relief,” *i.e.*, the forms in many cases are only just relieved from the ground, and only here and there are any of the forms in entire relief.

[Illustration]

LOVE ON, LOVE EVER.

By Ruth Lamb.

“Love not, love not, ye hapless sons of earth.”

How world-worn must have been the weary heart
When this sad strain belied its noblest part!
What! Bid us cease to love! Why life were pain
If this best attribute were given in vain.

Cease not to love. O, wherefore shouldst thou scorn
The flowers thy path beside, to cull the thorn?
Or heed the man who, all unblest with sight,
Counsels his fellow-man to shun the light?

Gazing around, 'tis ever hard to trace
The Maker's image in the Creature's face.

Seek it not there. That image wouldst thou prove,
Know the Divine gleams through our works of love.

If cruel Death a dear one rend away,
Let thy love follow; do not with the clay
Bury thy heart. Soar higher. Wherefore bow?
Yesterday's mortal is immortal now.

If thy life's labour meet with scant return,
Thou who hast wrought it should'st be last to mourn.
Nay more, rejoice. Each unpaid debt of love
Is so much treasure garnered up above.

Let cold ingratitude bring no dismay,
But rather aid thee on thy heavenward way.
Work on, love on, aye to increase the debt;
Thy God is not unrighteous to forget.

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DRESS: IN SEASON AND IN REASON.

By A lady dressmaker.

The extreme warmth of September has naturally postponed ideas of winter, and our preparations are generally very backward. In fact, at the end of September many people would have said that they knew nothing whatever about new things, and that they did not want them either, and the secret of this indifference would have been attributable to the weather. It is to be hoped that we shall have a seasonable winter, less cold and disagreeable than the last.

During my visit to Paris I found but little to chronicle in the way of winter novelties. The chief changes seemed to be in materials and their designs. Checks are in high favour, and it is said they will supersede stripes; and last year, when I was there at this season, they said much the same thing, but this year they seemed more determined to vote stripes old-fashioned. To tell the truth, I think the Parisians, and the women in France generally, are great admirers of plaids, and do not find stripes becoming, simply because they are usually very short and stout. Englishwomen, who are tall and stout, like them because they decrease their apparent size, and give an effect of length while decreasing breadth. On tall people plaids have a bad effect.

[Illustration: *Autumn cloaks, ulsters, and gowns.*]

Rough-faced materials constitute the majority of those prepared, and plain stuffs are still united with plaided and striped ones in the same dress; but this is not an absolute rule this year, for some dresses are entirely of either plaids or stripes, or else are of plain material only. Many of the materials are plain, with a bordering at one edge of plaid. For instance, a grey of rough-faced stuff had a bordering of a large check in lines of a paler grey, a little relief being given by pale lines of a clear Naples-yellow. The effect was quiet and subdued by the roughness of the surface of the cloth. With this gown the underskirt was made of the plaid material, quite plain, and the overskirt of the bordered part was draped above it in simple straight long folds, the plaid part being at the lower edge of the overskirt. The bodice was of the plain, and it had a plastron, or waistcoat front, of the plaid. The buttons (as are many in use this year) are of smoked pearl, and are very small for the fronts of gowns and larger for the jacket-bodices. Bretelles of velvet are used as trimmings to the bodices of these rough woollens, and the collars and cuffs are almost invariably of the same material, which seems likely to retain its popularity through the winter. The velvet collars are both useful and becoming, and, in addition, they save white trimmings at the neck. We rather rejoice in our emancipation from that bondage, and I hear many people say they will never resume it again, now they have once found that they can look well without the once inevitable white collar or frill. The tendency in every woman's mind who is possessed of ordinary good sense is to simplify everything connected with clothes, and I feel sure we shall all be healthier

and happier when we have banished many things from our wardrobes which we now think absolutely needful.

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“Dr. Jaeger’s sanitary woollen clothing,” about which I have so often written in praise, has raised up some rival manufactures amongst our English makers, who have long been famous for their merino or lambswool stuffs. Pure woollen under-garments in England have always been thought to wear and to wash badly, and much of this has probably been owing to the fact that the washing was very bad and that no one before Dr. Jaeger ever tried washing woollens scientifically, so as to take out the grease and perspiration, and not to harden the material at the same time. By Jaeger’s method this is done with lump ammonia and soap. The soap is cut into small pieces and boiled into a lather with water, and the lump ammonia is then added. This lather is used at about 100 deg. Fahrenheit, and the clothes must not be rubbed, but allowed to soak for about an hour in the water, and must then be drawn backwards and forwards repeatedly in the bath till clean. Three waters are to be used, the two after the first lather being of the same heat, and of pure clean water. This leaves the clothes delightfully soft and supple, and their wearing qualities suggest nothing further as an improvement.

Some of the new English underclothing is very light and good, and claims to be of pure merino-wool. It is of varying thickness, and many ladies, both young and old, are adopting it for combinations; these and one petticoat forming the whole of the clothing. Of course, the thickness of these garments is to be suited to the season, and the gossamer clothing manufactured for the warm season leaves nothing to be desired in its lightness and apparent coolness.

[Illustration: *By the lake side with the boats.*]

One does not associate thick materials with great heat, and the mere look of thick wool would make one begin to feel hot, however foolish it may sound to say so. When the skin becomes used to wearing wool it will be found more comfortable than either cotton or linen, and we, moreover, avoid the chance of chills after being over-heated. I know several people who date their almost perfect immunity from colds to the use of woollen underclothing, who previously had been martyrs to colds and coughs, and had been constantly imprisoned in the house during quite mild seasons. In England the climate (need I say so?) is fickle and changeable, and, singular to say, we may be, and many people are, apparently wrapped up carefully and seasonably, and yet we may all err on every hygienic point, in regard to the weight and porosity of materials.

So far as I can see in the newest styles, the loose-fronted bodices have it all their own way. Many of them only fasten at the throat and waist, either large buttons or handsome clasps being used. These jackets stretch open over the front to show a full waistcoat, this latter being a scarf long enough to continue below the waist and round it at either side, so as to form a sort of sash, showing under the edge of the bodice and ending under the long coat-tails at the back in ends or a bow.

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The newest bonnets are still high in the front, or, if not high themselves, the trimmings are high. The horseshoe crowns which were introduced in the summer bid fair to become extremely popular, and the stringless bonnet will be in vogue as long as possible, and I have no doubt many people will wear it through the winter, too. Beaver bonnets are announced to take the place of kid or felt, and I have seen some black beaver crowns with open-work jet fronts, which appeared incongruous.

Leaves of all bright hues, the bramble and its berries, the blackberry, and the virginian-creeper, are likely to be in great favour for trimmings this autumn. These will be used even upon velvet and beaver bonnets.

There is a very strong feeling in many quarters in favour of restoring the “princess” cut of dress to favour. In a letter from a lady, it is very wisely said, in writing to a contemporary, “For active exercise, a dress ought to be cut all in one—‘princess,’ as the milliners call it—and so arranged in the skirt that there is no drapery which will catch in things, come unstitched, and look untidy; everything wants to be taut and trim, like tailor’s work. But even the ladies’ tailors will insist upon making a skirt and little jacket-bodice, instead of a dress in one piece. It is almost impossible to use the arms freely—to go out in a sailing-boat, for instance, and help in its management—or, in fact, to raise the arms high, without causing a hiatus between the two parts of the garment at the sides of the waist. I have noticed this happen so often, even with smart tailor-made gowns, the wearer being generally blissfully unconscious of the accident, that I feel bound to draw attention to it.

“It was curious to note the awful revelations made recently by a storm of wind on an elevated promenade by the sea. Every steel stood out in bold relief even under the most *bouffante* drapery. Upper-skirts broke away from the under, and displayed the sorry fact that the latter were only shams, formed of lining-calico, with patches of good material put in here and there, where the over-garment was cut open. One neat tailor-gown revealed the cotton back to the pretty waistcoat, a pretence which is carried out in every suit of clothes made for men, but which seemed an aggravated offence to art in a well-dressed woman. It was comforting to turn from such sartorial mistakes to a group of young girls sensibly clad in simple gowns, guiltless of pretence, of steels, or *tournures*. Gathered bodices and full plain skirts, confined by broad sashes, combined the elements of grace and utility, and exhibited no foolish attempt to distort and pervert nature.”

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I have given the full extract, as it contains much matter for thought for my readers, both young and middle-aged. I suppose everyone read with interest the celebration of the centenary of M. Chevreul, the great French chemist, who has been for years a great student of colour, and to whom we owe many alterations, inventions, and suggestions in dyes and colours. Trade has been assisted and developed by his researches, and the subject of colour harmonies has been placed by him in the position and basis of a science. When we admire the loveliness of our coloured materials, and notice the wonderful improvements of late years, we women may thank the industry and talent of M. Chevreul. I put in a long quotation from him some months ago, and it may interest some of my readers to hear that M. Chevreul has attained his hundredth year as a total abstainer, but drank his own health in a glass of champagne, tasted for the first time!

[Illustration: *A lady's pyjama.*]

From a recently-published book I gather the following ideas, and as they coincide with what I am always impressing on my readers with reference to tight dresses and stays, I quote them gladly, as showing that there are other sensible women in the world, a class which I hope will every day increase:—"If you lace tightly, nothing can save you from acquiring high shoulders, abnormally large hips, varicose veins in your legs, and a red nose. Surely such penalties, to say nothing of heart disease, spinal curvature, and worse, are sufficiently dreadful to deter either maids or matrons from unduly compressing their waists? No adult woman's waist ought to measure less in circumference than twenty-four inches at the smallest, and even this is permissible to slender figures only. The rule of beauty is that the waist should be twice the size of the throat. Therefore, if the throat measure twelve and a half inches, round the waist should measure twenty-five. The celebrated statue known as the 'Venus de Medici,' the acknowledged type of beauty and grace, has a waist of twenty-seven inches, the height of the figure being only five feet two inches."

And, while on this subject, I must mention that some new stays, made of elastic material, have recently been advertised, which I should imagine were comfortable. Dr. Jaeger also has an elastic knitted bodice on his list, which is in reality a description of stays, and would afford sufficient support to a slight figure.

The illustrations to our dress instructions of this month show the prevailing characteristics of the gowns of the month, and also demonstrate how little change there is in them. As the majority of the community is still moving about at this season, most of the dress thought about and worn is suitable for travelling, as well as autumn. Now that we no longer think it needful to put on all our old clothes and to make our appearance grotesque, as was formerly the case, we very frequently follow the French and American

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plan, and have a special dress made for the tour we are about to undertake, which will do for day wear, as well as for journeying while we are away; then, furnished with a second nice black silk or satin for very best occasions, we are sufficiently well clad for every purpose. A dust cloak, travelling cloak, and short jacket are added, and some wise people take their fur capes; in fact, for short expeditions of a month or six weeks we do not like large trunks nor encumbrances, so we curtail all our wants, and are so much the happier, having less anxiety and worry. In addition to all this, we save our shillings in fees, and charges for over-weight, very considerably, and, when we are rid of the heavy trunks, last, not least, we break no backs.

While I am on this topic, I must mention that the late Exhibition (the Healtheries) was of great assistance to travellers in showing how much can be done to decrease weight and bulk in every way, and setting wits to work to improve in all directions. Thus we have wonderfully improved waterproofed cloaks, hygienic boots and shoes; and the improvement in trunks and bags is immense, in addition to their moderation in price.

The greatest unanimity prevails with regard to the small jackets, which seem patronised by young girls, as well as married women of every age. They are generally loose-fronted, but tight-fitting at the back, the fronts being lined with coloured silk. Many of them are braided, some gold braid being used, and many have a flat braided plastron in the front to button over and give a double-breasted effect. Serge in all hues seems very much liked, but the most popular are dark navy-blue and cream-white. Short cloaks, with sling-sleeves and hoods, are very much worn, also short mantelettes, like our paper-pattern for last month. These may be made in the material of the dress.

This autumn I must again mention the numbers of slightly full bodices of the “Garibaldi” and “Norfolk jacket” class that this season has brought out, to be worn with skirts of different materials. The different ladies’ tailors of renown have taken up this idea, and it is probable that we shall see them greatly worn during the winter season. Some of these have a yoke, and some have a straight band on the shoulders, into which they are full. They are made in flannel, linen, and twilled silk, in all colours, striped, spotted, and plain, and with them the becoming fashion of the full basque has come in. Yoked bodices will be a decided winter style.

With these bodices there is generally a turned-down collar and long cuffs of velvet, and the belt should be also of velvet. In other cases the belt matches the full bodice, and is of moire or Petersham ribbon.

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The fancy for stripes as well as plaids is shown by the dresses in the illustration of the autumn fashions. The figure standing in the centre of our boating picture at the English lakes, shows a blue flannel or serge, made up with a striped material. The vest and revers show the stripe as well as the underskirt. The back of this dress is shown by one of the distant figures. The other wears one of the new blouse bodices, which will be the style of the winter. In the larger of our illustrations is shown the general tendency of the day. The cloaks and ulsters are of plaid, and there is but little change in the shapes. The girl in the sailor's hat shows one of the full white under-vests, the jacket being almost of a Breton style. The edge is braided, and so is one panel at the side of the skirt. The two bonnets, one in each picture, show one with strings and one without. They are not quite so high, and both have the horseshoe crown, which, as the last summer novelty, bids fair to be adopted for the autumn and winter.

The pattern for this month will, I hope, be a surprise, as well as a great comfort, to those of my readers who select it, and who wish to attain to the greatest amount of comfort and hygienic advantages in their underclothing. The pattern in question is a combination nightgown, or lady's "pyjama," and is a novelty which will be found of much value and comfort. It consists of five pieces—front, back, lower back, and two sleeve pieces. The method of putting together is carefully indicated by marks in the pattern, and no difficulty will be experienced in the making-up. The amount of material required will be from $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 yards, and calico, flannel, or swansdown, or the new cotton flannel, may, any of them, be used to make it. For the winter season it will be found to supply a great increase in warmth, and, to the invalid, a great comfort, as it fits closely, will not form creases, nor "ruck up," as the ordinary nightgown always does, to the discomfort of the wearer.

Each of the patterns may be had of "The Lady Dressmaker," care of Mr. H. G. Davis, 73, Ludgate-hill, E.C., price 1s. each. It is requested that the addresses be clearly given, and that postal notes, crossed so as to be eligible only to go through a bank, may be sent, as so many losses have occurred through the sending of postage stamps. The patterns already issued can always be obtained, as "The Lady Dressmaker" shows constantly in her articles how they can be made use of.

The following is a list of those already issued:—April, braided loose-fronted jacket; May, velvet bodice; June, Swiss belt and full bodice, with plain sleeves; July, mantle; August, Norfolk or pleated jacket; September, housemaid's or plain skirt; October, combination garment (underlinen); November, double-breasted out-of-door jacket; December, zouave jacket and bodice; January, princess under-dress (under-linen, under-bodice, and skirt combined); February, polonaise with waterfall

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back; March, new spring bodice; April, divided skirt and Bernhardt mantle with sling sleeves; May, Early English bodice and yoke bodice for summer dress; June, dressing jacket, princess frock, and Normandy peasant's cap, for a child of four years; July, Princess of Wales' jacket-bodice and waistcoat for tailor-made gown; August, bodice with guimpe; September, mantle with stole ends and hood. October, "pyjama" or nightdress combination with full back.

THE SHEPHERD'S FAIRY.

A pastorate.

By Darley Dale, Author of "Fair Katherine," etc.

CHAPTER IV.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Shelley had washed and dressed her own three boys, and had introduced the little stranger to the two elder, Charlie, the baby, being already on intimate terms with his foster sister, for whose sake he had to submit to much less attention than had hitherto fallen to his share, for which reason he was unusually cross this morning. Willie, the second boy, the living image of his father, was barely three years old, and too young to pay much attention to the baby, or to understand that it had arrived in an unusual way; but Jack, the eldest boy, quite took it in, and stood lost in admiration of the wonderful baby with its beautiful clothes, so unlike Charlie's, and the lovely coral and bells, as his mother showed them all to him. Jack was five years old, a tall, strong child for his age, and very like his mother in face; he had her quick temper, too, though Mrs. Shelley had hers pretty well under control, while little Jack often got into trouble by giving way to his. Nothing ever escaped Jack's notice; he was always all ears and eyes, and he took in every detail of the strange baby's belongings as intelligently as his mother could have done, and, to her joy, for she was by no means sure what kind of a welcome Jack, who resented the arrival of little Charlie, saying, "Mother didn't want anyone else to love her when she had him," would give to the strange baby, he was enchanted with it, and was as anxious as Mrs. Shelley herself to keep it.

"It is the fairies' baby; they brought it, didn't they, mother? We will always, always keep it, won't we?"

"I don't quite know yet, Jack; father says perhaps we shall have to send it away," said Mrs. Shelley.

“It shan’t go away. How dare father say so? He is a wicked man to want to send it away,” cried the boy, with flashing eyes and crimson cheeks.

“Jack, I am ashamed of you; you must not speak of your father in that way; if he says it is to go away it must go, whether we like it or no.”

Jack hung his head and hid his face on his mother’s shoulder, while she, remembering how indignant she had been with the shepherd for hinting at sending it away the night before, stooped and kissed her boy’s curly head, and Jack raised his head again and renewed his attentions to the baby.

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"What a pretty little thing it is; see how it holds my finger. I think it will love me, mother, though it is not my real sister. Oh! do make father keep it, will you?"

For the first time since Mrs. Shelley had had the baby, she now hesitated about keeping it; the boy had unconsciously struck a wrong chord, and his mother, with a prophetic instinct, coupled with a quick imagination, for a moment saw that it was possible this little stranger who, as Jack had already grasped, was not his real sister, might, in future years, destroy the harmony and peace of the home circle. But it was only a momentary hesitation; the thought flashed across her mind and vanished again, almost as quickly as it had come. Could she have known how true that prophetic instinct was, would she not have gone counter to all her own inclinations, and disregarded all Jack's wishes and prayers, rather than have run the risk of introducing strife into her peaceful household? As it was, the motherly pity she felt for the baby was stronger at the moment than the foreboding light which had flashed across the distant future, and she answered hurriedly —

"I must go and see Mr. Leslie first, dear, and hear what he says; do you think you could take care of Charlie while I am gone with the baby? I shall take Willie with me, or he will be getting into mischief."

Jack, proud to be of use to his mother, professed his ability to look after Charlie, privately regretting it was not the beautiful strange fairies' baby which was to be left under his charge.

"Jack, I can't be back before the clock has struck twelve; it is now half-past ten, so it will strike twice before I come back, do you understand; and both the hands will have to be on the twelve at the top, do you see? So now, if it seems a long time, do not be frightened, I shall be back soon after twelve. If baby cries, rock the cradle, but don't try to take him out; if he sleeps you may wash the potatoes for dinner. Now, good-bye," and Mrs. Shelley, with the infant in her arms and Willie running by her side, set off to the Rectory, while Jack stood at the door watching her out of sight.

The first half-hour passed quickly enough. The baby slept, and Jack washed the potatoes, and was delighted when the clock struck eleven. But the next hour was interminably long, and little Jack got very tired of rocking Charlie, who was awake now, and would scream every time his brother stopped rocking. Every few minutes Jack ran to the door to see if his mother was coming, and then ran back and rocked violently at the cradle. At last he thought he heard footsteps, and, running to look, saw, not his mother, but Dame Hursey, making her way towards the house.

Now, Jack did not care about Dame Hursey's visits even when his mother was at home. He was half afraid of the witch-like old woman, and to have a visit from her while he was alone was the last thing he desired, so he came in quickly and banged the door, hoping she would think they were all out and go away, if only he could keep Charlie

quiet. But Dame Hursey had seen and heard the door shut, and so, after knocking two or three times without any result, she quietly lifted the latch and walked in, while Jack, who was kneeling by the cradle, looked up, half defiantly, half frightened.

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"Mother is out; there is no one at home but me," said Jack, sharply.

"Oh, is she? Well, I'll sit and rest a bit till she comes in. Who have you got there in that cradle?"

"Charlie, my new brother," said Jack.

"And where is the fairies' baby? Ah! you see, I know all about it. I know everything; there is no keeping secrets from me. That is the shawl it was brought in, isn't it, now?" said Dame Hursey, rising and examining minutely the Indian shawl in which the baron had wrapped his daughter, and which was lying on a chair.

Jack, more convinced than ever that Dame Hursey was a witch, thought perhaps she might be able to tell him where the fairies had brought the baby from if he were civil to her, so he answered all her questions and described minutely all the baby's belongings.

"Ah! well, it is the Pharisees you have to thank for bringing her here. Mind you all take care of her, and one of these fine days she'll turn into a beautiful princess and make you all very rich; but if you talk much about her the fairies will be angry and take her away. You tell your mother I said so; I can't wait any longer."

And Dame Hursey, who had been prying about the kitchen to see if she could find any other belongings of this mysterious baby, took her departure, much to Jack's joy.

Shortly after she left Mrs. Shelley came home, and Jack was so full of Dame Hursey's visit and her account of the fairies' child that he forgot to ask the result of his mother's interview with the rector, while Mrs. Shelley, on the other hand, was not at all pleased to find Dame Hursey had been prying about her cottage in her absence, and congratulated herself on not having left any of the baby's little garments about, for she might never have found them again if she had.

The next day the rector called and had a long talk with the shepherd and his wife about the baby, though he could throw but little light upon it, except, of course, to utterly discredit the ridiculous notion that the fairies had brought it. That it belonged to rich people was clear from its clothes; and to foreigners, from the coronet, which was certainly not English. More the rector could not say, except that its parents evidently wanted to get rid of it, and had connived at placing it on the shepherd's doorstep.

As to keeping it, that was a point entirely for the shepherd and his wife to decide. If they chose to send it to the workhouse, no one could blame them for doing so. He doubted exceedingly anyone ever claiming it, but he advised Mrs. Shelley to lock up all its clothes and things in case of their being needed for identification at any future period. He also counselled them, if they thought of keeping the child, to weigh the matter well

before they decided, as it would be cruel kindness to take it in for a time and then tire of it and send it to the union.

But John Shelley was not a man to do this, as his wife well knew. If he decided to keep the child he would do his duty by it, and go to the workhouse himself before he suffered that to do so. All that day John was very thoughtful, but when he came in to supper that night he told Mrs. Shelley he had made up his mind, and they would keep the baby and bring it up as their own daughter. Here, however, Mrs. Shelley raised an objection.

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"We will keep it, by all means, John, but we can't bring a delicate little thing like this up as we shall our own strong boys, who must work for their living. This child may be claimed any day by its parents, so we must try and have it educated like a lady when it gets old enough."

John was inclined to dispute the wisdom of this; but as its education was a thing of the far future, he very wisely thought it was useless to discuss it, and resolved to let matters shape themselves, feeling sure the baby would take its own place as it grew older. One matter puzzled the good shepherd sorely. He was most particular in having his own children baptised when they were a month old, and they could not tell whether this baby had been baptised or no, though the rector thought its parents were most likely Roman Catholics, in which case it would be sure to have been christened, as it was two or three months old.

The next question was, what was it to be called? For, if baptised, they had no means of discovering its name. But here Jack came to the rescue.

"Let's call her Fairy, mother. Dame Hursey says she is a fairy, and it is a pretty name."

"So it is, my son; and though she is no fairy, but a real child like you, we will call her Fairy. It is a very good name for her, and when she is old enough we will tell her why," said the shepherd.

And so Fairy was the little stranger called as long as she lived in the shepherd's family.

(To be continued.)

A PRINCESS WHO LIVED TWO LIVES.

A Romance of history.

There was no lovelier woman in all the Russias than Carolina, the wife of Alexis, eldest son and presumptive heir to Peter the Great. Her beauty was not only that of the body, for her sweet temper and gentle disposition made her beloved by all who were brought in contact with her. The only being who did not yield to the charms of her surpassing beauty and amiability was the one who ought to have prized her above all others—her husband. His nature was far too coarse and brutal to appreciate the treasure that he possessed, and the more he saw how universally beloved his wife was, the more did she become an object of aversion to him. For some time he treated her with cold neglect, but by degrees he became more brutal in his behaviour, until one day, when she offended him in some trifling respect, he dealt her an inhuman blow which stretched her, apparently lifeless, at his feet. Well pleased at being delivered so easily from what he only regarded as a hateful burden, he gave orders that she should be buried with all due pomp, and hastened away to another part of the kingdom.

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But when her ladies of honour came to raise the unhappy princess, they found that she still breathed. Under the devoted attention of the Countess of Konigsmark, who had always been her confidential attendant, she slowly won her way back to life, and this while her funeral obsequies were being celebrated with the greatest pomp throughout the length and breadth of Russia, while the principal courts of Europe were mourning her premature decease, and while her unnatural husband was drowning the remembrance of his horrible crime in revelries and excesses of all kinds. None knew that she was still alive but the Countess of Konigsmark and one or two other of her most devoted adherents. They kept her concealed from everyone; for well they knew that Alexis, should he hear of her recovery, would take measures to rid himself of her effectually. Acting under their advice, the princess collected all the valuables she was able to lay her hands on, and, in company with an old domestic, who assumed the character of her father, set out for Paris. Here, however, she felt still within reach of Alexis, and so, with her supposed father, she set sail for Louisiana, where the French had lately formed extensive colonies. They settled down in New Orleans, and Carolina began to rapidly recover her health and beauty.

A young man, by name Moldask, who held a Government appointment in New Orleans and who had spent many years in Russia thought that he recognised in the beautiful stranger the princess who had been the brightest star of the Muscovite Court. However, he could not believe that the highborn lady of whose death he had heard and the daughter of the feeble old man who had lately arrived from France were the same person, wonderful though the resemblance between them might be. He kept his ideas secret, but made himself so useful and agreeable to the strangers, that finally they settled to cast in their lot with his, and live under the same roof. Before the lapse of many months the news of Alexis' death reached New Orleans. Moldask noticed the agitation with which his friends received it, and told them that their secret was his. They did not attempt a denial; so he offered to sacrifice his private fortune, throw up his position in New Orleans, and take Carolina back to Moscow. This offer she would hear nothing of. She thanked Moldask again and again for his noble generosity, but expressed her fixed determination not to revisit the scene of all that had been most unpleasant in her life. She begged him not to betray her secret, and he readily promised to keep it inviolate. The truth was that he had lost his heart to the widow of Czar Peter's son. Respect, however, controlled his feelings. He knew how exalted was her real station compared to his, and resolved to conceal his love.

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Time passed on, and one autumn evening a paralytic stroke carried off Carolina's pseudo-father. After this it was, of course, impossible that she and Moldask should continue to inhabit the same house. He came to her on the morning after her faithful old friend's funeral, and explained that he must seek a new abode unless she would so far cast away all thoughts of her former station as to consent to call him husband. The princess, who had long regarded him with feelings warmer than those of mere friendship, agreed to link her fate with his, and from now began the happiest period of her so far troubled life. Their union was blessed by the advent of a little girl; nothing seemed wanting to render her happiness complete.

Years rolled by, and Moldask was attacked by a disease which baffled the skill of the New Orleans doctors. His wife was determined that he should have the best medical advice, and so persuaded him to sell all his possessions and embark for Paris. Their journey was not in vain; the skill of the Parisian physicians restored Moldask to good health, and he obtained employment in a department of the French Government.

One day, as Carolina was walking in the public gardens with her little girl, she met the son of her faithful friend, the Countess of Konigsmark. She recognised him instantly, and, fearing that he might know her, tried to brush past him with averted head. The Marshal, however, was struck with her appearance, and, turning round, followed her until she sat down beneath some trees. The instant that he caught a fair sight of her he recognised his former mistress, and quickly approaching, bent his knee and carried her hand to his lips. She implored him not to divulge her secret, but to come with her to her home, and hear how she had fared since Alexis had, as he thought, killed her. The Marshal consented to accompany her; he listened with interest to her tale, and when he had heard it to the end announced his intention of informing the King of France, that her highness might be restored to her proper position and honours. Carolina, however, was quite determined that this should not be. She begged the Marshal to keep her secret for one week, as her husband had certain negotiations, which would be ruined if her identity were disclosed. This he consented to do, and Carolina dismissed him, with the assurance that on that day week he should be definitely informed of her wishes in the matter.

On the appointed day the Marshal found that the princess and her husband had left their home. However, he succeeded in tracing them, and told the king of the noble lady who was then in his dominions. His Majesty entered into negotiations with the Empress Maria Theresa, with a view to deciding upon the manner in which her august aunt should be treated. The upshot of these negotiations was a most tender letter from the Empress to Carolina, asking her to make the Austrian court her home, and promising to load her husband and herself with honours and distinctions. But the happy wife and mother felt that the life she had been leading for the last few years was preferable in every way to the artificial existence of a court, and refused her niece's generous offer. It was renewed again and again; but nothing could shake her determination.

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For many years she led a life of the utmost happiness, and then death deprived her of both husband and daughter. Maria Theresa renewed her offers; but Carolina preferred to pass the rest of her days in solitude. She accepted a small pension from the Empress, and retired to a small cottage at Vitry, near Paris. After a quiet existence here for some few years more she passed away, without ever having regretted her refusal to rejoin the brilliant circle of a court.

VARIETIES.

CURIOUS FRESCO.

In the Carthusian Monastery of Garignano, a few miles from Milan, are some frescoes by Daniel Crespi, of Busto, which are said to be marvels of art and imagination. One of them is grim enough, at any rate, and awful. It represents a dead person rising from his bier, to announce to all whom it might concern that, although they were burying him in the abode of holiness, and were now adoring him as a saint, he was, as a fact, condemned to hell.

Perhaps one of our own famous modern divines was thinking of this fresco when he declared that one great source of surprise, to those who went to heaven, would be to find so many there they had not expected to see, and to *miss* so many they had thought to meet.

"No' the day, honest woman!"

Dr. John Erskine, a well-known Scottish divine, was remarkable for his simplicity of manner and gentle temper. He returned so often from the pulpit minus his pocket-handkerchief that Mrs. Erskine at last began to suspect that the handkerchiefs were stolen by some of the old women who lined the pulpit stairs. So both to baulk and detect the culprit she sewed a corner of the handkerchief to one of the pockets of his coat tails. Half way up the pulpit stairs the good doctor felt a tug, whereupon he turned round to the old woman whose was the guilty hand, to say, with great gentleness and simplicity:—

"No' the day, honest woman, no' the day. Mrs. Erskine has sewed it in!"

A BRAVE WIFE.

In 1872 a storm overtook a Boston ship on the banks of Newfoundland. The captain—Captain Wilson—had his shoulder-blade broken by the fall of a mast, and the first mate and part of the crew were at the same time disabled.

No sooner, however, had the captain been carried to his cabin than his wife, a woman of one-and-twenty, hurried on deck, told the men to work with a will, and she would take them into port. The wreckage was cleared, the pumps manned, and the gale was weathered. Then a jury-mast was rigged, the ship put before the wind, and in twenty-one days she reached St. Thomas. After repairing damages there, finding her husband still helpless, the indomitable woman navigated the ship to Liverpool.

Captain Wilson was never able to resume work, and for seven years his brave wife supported him and their only child by working as clerk in a dry goods store. Then he died, and Mrs. Wilson was deservedly appointed to a custom-house inspectorship by the American Government.

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Old friends.—The world has few greater pleasures than that which two friends enjoy in tracing back, at some distant time, those transactions and events through which they have passed together.—*Dr. Johnson.*

A rare companion.—She whom you can treat with unreserved familiarity, at the same time preserving your dignity and her respect, is a rare companion, and her acquaintance should be cultivated.

THINGS OF VALUE.

What shines and glitters has its birth
But for the present hour alone;
The real—the thing of truth and worth—
To all posterity goes down.

—Goethe.—

Beethoven in Germany.—When the German talks of symphonies he means Beethoven; the two names are to him one and indivisible; his joy, his pride. As Italy has its Naples, France its Revolution, England its Navigation, so Germany has its Beethoven symphonies. The German forgets in his Beethoven that he has no school of painting; with Beethoven he imagines that he has again won the battles that he lost under Napoleon; he even dares to place him on a level with Shakespeare.—*Robert Schumann.*

A new use for A dog.—A farmer's daughter in the West of England received a hairy poodle dog from a friend in town. The unsophisticated damsel wrote back thanking her friend for the present, and saying that she found it very handy, when tied to a stick, to clean windows with.

The Worst of success.—She that has never known adversity is but half acquainted with others or with herself. Constant success shows us but one side of the world, for, as it surrounds us with friends who will tell us only our merits, so it silences those enemies from whom alone we can learn our defects.

Rights and duties.—There is no right without its duties, and no duty without its rights.

MERLE'S CRUSADE.

By Rosa NOUCHETTE Carey, Author of "Aunt Diana," "For Lillas," etc.

CHAPTER IV.

MERLE'S *last evening at home.*

"So it is all settled, Merle."

"Yes, Aunt Agatha," I returned, briskly, for she spoke in a lugubrious voice, and as one sad face is enough beside the family hearth, I assumed a tolerably cheerful aspect. If only Aunt Agatha's eyes would not look at me so tenderly!

"Poor child!" she sighed; and then, as I remained silent, she continued in a few minutes, "I wish I could reconcile myself more to the idea, but I cannot help feeling a presentiment that you will live to repent this strange step you are taking."

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I found this speech a little damping, but I bore it without flinching. One can never set out down some new road without a few friendly missiles flying about one's ears.

"Remember, I told you such and such a thing would happen if you did not take my advice. I am only warning you for your good." Alas! that one's dearest friend should be transformed into a teasing gad-fly! What can one do but go straight across the enemy's country when the boats are destroyed behind one? I always did think that a grand action on Xenophon's part.

"You have not given me your opinion of my new mistress," was my wicked rejoinder.

Aunt Agatha drew herself up at this and put on her grandest manner. "You need not go out of your way to vex me, Merle. I am sufficiently humiliated without that."

"Aunt Agatha," I remonstrated; for this was too much for my forbearance, "do you think I would do anything to vex you when we are to part in a few days? Oh, you dear, silly woman!" for she was actually crying, "I am only longing to know what you think of Mrs. Morton."

"She is perfectly lovely, Merle," she returned, drying her eyes, as I kissed and coaxed her. "I very nearly fell in love with her myself. I liked the simple way in which she sat down and talked to me about my old pupils, making herself quite at home in our little drawing-room, and I was much pleased with her manner when she spoke about you; it was almost a pity you came into the room just then."

"I left you alone for nearly half an hour; please to remember that."

"Indeed! it did not seem nearly so long. Half an hour! and it passed so quickly, too. Well, I must say Mrs. Morton is a most interesting woman; she is full of intelligence, and yet so gentle. She has lost her baby—did she tell you that? only four months ago, and her husband does not like her to wear mourning. She is a devoted wife, I can see that, but I have a notion that you will have some difficulty in satisfying Mr. Morton; he is very particular and hard to please."

"I have found out that for myself; he is a man of strong prejudices."

"Well, you must do your best to conciliate him; tact goes a long way in these cases. Mrs. Morton has evidently taken a fancy to you, Merle. She told me over again how her baby boy had made friends with you at once; she said your manner was very frank and winning, and though you looked young you seemed very staid and self-reliant."

"I wish Uncle Keith had heard that. Did she say any more about me, Aunt Agatha?"

"No, you interrupted us at that point, and the conversation became more general; but, my dear, I must scold you about one thing: how absurd you were to insist on wearing



caps. Mrs. Morton was quite embarrassed; she said she would never have mentioned such a thing."

"But I have set my heart on wearing them, Aunt Agatha," I returned, very quickly; "you have no idea how nice I shall look in a neat bib apron over my dark print gown, and a regular cap such as hospital nurses wear. I should be quite disappointed if I did not carry out that part of my programme; the only thing that troubles me is the smallness of my salary—I mean wages. Thirty pounds a year will never make my fortune."

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"You cannot ask more with a good conscience, Merle; you have never been out before, and have no experience. Mrs. Morton said herself that her husband had promised to raise it at the end of six months if you proved yourself competent; it is quite as much as a nursery governess's salary."

"Oh, I am not mercenary," I replied, hastily, "and I shall save out of thirty pounds a year. I must keep a nice dress for my home visits and for Sundays, though it is dreadful to think that I shall not always go to church every Sunday until little Joyce is older; that will be a sad deprivation."

"Yes, my poor child, but you must not speak as though this were the only serious drawback; you will find plenty of difficulties in your position; even Mrs. Morton confessed that."

"The world is full of difficulties," I returned, loftily; "there have been thorns and briars ever since Adam's time. Do you remember your favourite fable of the old man and the bundle of sticks, Aunt Agatha? I mean to treat my difficulties in the same way he managed his. I shall break each stick singly."

She smiled approvingly at this, and then, as Uncle Keith's knock reached her ear, she rose quickly and went out of the room.

The moment I was left alone my assumed briskness of manner dropped into the mental dishabille that we wear for our own private use and comfort. Those two had always so much to say to each other that I was sure of at least half an hour's solitude, and in some moods self is the finest company. Yes, I had destroyed my boats, and now my motto must be "Forward!" This afternoon I had pledged myself to a new service—a service of self-renunciation and patient labour, undertaken—yes, I dare to say it—for the welfare of the large sisterhood of waiting and working women. A servant? No, a soldier; for I should be one among the vanguard, who strive to make a breach in the great fortress of conventionality. Not that I feared the word service, considering what Divine lips had said on that subject—"I am among you as one who serveth—" but I knew how the world shrank from such terms.

I have always maintained that half the so-called difficulties of life consist mainly in our dread of other people's opinions; women are especially trammelled by this bondage. They breathe the atmosphere of their own special world, and the chill wind of popular opinion blows coldly over them; like the sensitive plant, they shiver and wither up at a touch. I believe the master minds that achieve great things have created their own atmosphere, else how can they appear so impervious to criticism? How can they carry themselves so calmly, when their contemporaries are sneering round them? We must live above ourselves and each other; there is no other way of getting rid of the shams and disguises of life; and yet how is one who has been born in slavery to be absolutely

true? How is an English gentlewoman to shake off the prejudices of caste and declare herself free?

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Ah, well! this was the enigma I had set myself to solve. And now the old life—the protected girl's life—was receding from me; the old guards, the old landmarks were to be removed by my own hands. Should I live to repent my rash act, as Aunt Agatha predicted, or should I at some future time, when I looked back upon this wintry day, thank God, humbly and with tears of gratitude, that I had courage given me to see the right and do it, “ad finem fidelis,” faithful to the last?

* * * * *

I found those last few days of home-life singularly trying. Indeed, I am not sure that I was not distinctly grateful when the final evening arrived. When one has to perform a painful duty there is no use in lingering over it; and when one is secretly troubled, a spoken and too discursive sympathy only irritates our mental membrane. How could Job, for example, tolerate the sackcloth and ashes, and, worse still, the combative eloquence of his friends?

Aunt Agatha's pathetic looks and pitying words fretted me to the very verge of endurance. I wished she would have been less mindful of my comforts, that she would not have insisted on helping me with my sewing, and loading me with little surprises in the shape of gifts. But for the bitter cold that kept me an unwilling prisoner by the fireside, I would have escaped into my own room to avoid the looks that seemed to follow me everywhere.

But I would not yield to my inward irritability; I hummed a tune; I even sang to myself, as I hemmed my new bib aprons, or quilled the neat border for my cap. Nay, I became recklessly gay the last night, and dressed myself in what I termed my nurse's uniform, a dark-navy blue cambric, and then went down to show myself to Uncle Keith, who was reading aloud the paper to Aunt Agatha. I could see him start as I entered; but Aunt Agatha's first words made me blush, and in a moment I repented my misplaced spirit of fun.

“Why, Merle, how pretty you look! Does not the child look almost pretty, Ezra, though that cap does hide her nice smooth hair? I had no idea that dress would be so becoming.” But the rest of Aunt Agatha's speech was lost upon me, for I ran out of the room. Why, they seemed actually to believe that I was play-acting, that my part was a becoming one! Pretty, indeed! And here such a strange revulsion of feeling took possession of me that I absolutely shed a few tears, though none but myself was witness to this humiliating fact.

I did not go downstairs for a long time after that, and then, to my relief, I found Uncle Keith alone; for men are less sharp in some matters than women, and he would never find out that I had been crying, as Aunt Agatha would; but I was a little taken aback when he put down his paper, and asked, in a kind voice, why I had stayed so long in the cold, and if I had not finished my packing.

“Oh, yes,” I returned, promptly, “everything was done, and my trunk was only waiting to be strapped down.”

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"That is right," he said, quite heartily, "always be beforehand with your duties, Merle; your aunt tells me you have made up your mind to leave us in the morning. I should have thought the afternoon or early evening would have been better."

"Oh, no, Uncle Keith," I exclaimed, and then, oddly enough, I began to laugh, and yet the provoking tears would come to my eyes, for a vision of sundry school domestics arriving towards night with their goods and chattels, and the remembrance of their shy faces in the morning light seemed to evoke a sort of dreary mirth; but to my infinite surprise and embarrassment, Uncle Keith patted me on the shoulder as though I were a child.

"There, there; never mind showing a bit of natural feeling that does you credit; your aunt is fretting herself to death over losing you—Hir-rumph; and I do not mind owning that the house will be a trifle dull without you; and, of course, a young creature like you must feel it, too." And with that he took my hands, awkwardly enough, and began warming them in his own, for they were blue with cold. If Aunt Agatha had only seen him doing it, and me, with the babyish tears running down my face.

"Why, look here," continued Uncle Keith, cheerily, with a sort of cricket-like chirp, "we are all as down as possible, just because you are leaving us, and yet you will only be two or three miles away, and any day if you want us we can be with you. Why, there is no difficulty, really; you are trying your little experiment, and I will say you are a brave girl for venturing on such a brave scheme. Well, if it does not answer, here is your home, and your own corner by the fireside, and an old uncle ready to work for you. I can't say more than that, Merle."

"Oh, Uncle Keith," I returned, sobbing remorsefully, "why are you so good to me, when I have always been so ungrateful for your kindness?"

"Nay, nay, we will leave bygones alone," he answered, a little huskily. "I never minded your tandrums, knowing there was a good heart at the bottom. I only wished I was not such a dry old fellow, and that you could have been fonder of me. Perhaps you will understand me better some day, and——" Here he stopped and cleared his throat, and said "hir-rumph" once or twice, and then I felt a thin crackling bit of paper underneath my palm. "It will buy you something useful, my dear," he finished, getting up in a hurry. A five-pound note, and he had lost so much money and had to do without so many comforts! Who can wonder that I jumped up and gave him a penitent hug.

It was long before I slept that night, and my first waking thoughts the next morning were hardly as pleasant as usual. A premonitory symptom of homesickness seized me as I glanced round my little room in the dim, winter light. Aunt Agatha had made it so pretty; but here a certain suspicious moisture stole under my eyelids, and I gave myself a resolute shake, and commenced my toilet in a business-like way that chased away gloomy thoughts.

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Never had the little dining-room looked more inviting than when I entered it that morning. One of Uncle Keith's carefully hoarded logs blazed and crackled in the roomy fireplace, a delicious aroma of coffee and smoking ham pervaded the room. Aunt Agatha, in her pretty morning cap, was placing a vase of hothouse flowers some old pupil had sent her in the centre of the table, and the bullfinch was whistling as merrily as ever, while old Tom watched him, sleepily, from the rug. I was rather long warming my hands and stroking his sleek fur, for somehow I could not bring myself to look or speak in quite my ordinary manner; and though Uncle Keith did his best to enliven us by reading out scraps from his newspaper, I am afraid we gave him only a partial attention. When Uncle Keith had bade me a husky good-bye, and had gone to his office, Aunt Agatha and I made a grand feint of being busy. There was very little to do, really, but I considered it incumbent to be in a great state of activity. I am afraid to say how many times I ran up and down stairs for articles that were safely deposited at the bottom of my box. Aunt Agatha put a stop to it at last by taking my hand and putting me forcibly in Uncle Keith's big chair.

"Sit there and keep warm, Merle; the cab will not be here for another half hour; what is the use of our pretending that we are not exceedingly unhappy? My dear, you are leaving us with a sore heart, I can see that, and it only makes me love you all the better. Yes, indeed, Merle," for I was clinging to her now and sobbing softly under my breath; "and however things may turn out, whether this step be a failure or not, I will always say that you are a brave girl, who tried to do her duty."

"Are you sure you think that, Aunt Agatha?"

Then she smiled to herself a little sadly.

"You remind me of the baby Merle who was so anxious to help everyone. I remember you such a little creature, trying to lift the nursery chair, because your mother was tired; and how you dragged it across the room until you were red in the face, and came to me rubbing your little fat hands, and looking so important. 'The chair hurted baby drefful, but it might hurted poor mammy worser:' that was what you said. I think you would still hurt yourself 'drefful' if you could help someone else."

It was nice to hear this. What can be sweeter or less harmful than praise from one we love? It was nice to sit there with Aunt Agatha's soft hand in mine, and be petted. It would be long before I should have a cosy time with her again. It put fresh heart in me somehow; like Jonathan's taste of honey, "it lightened my eyes," so that when the final good-bye came, I could smile as I said it, and carry away an impression of Aunt Agatha's smile too, as she stood on the steps, with Patience behind her, watching until I was out of sight. I am afraid I am different to most young women of my age—more imaginative, and perhaps a little morbid. Many things in everyday

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life came to me in the guise of symbols or signs—a good-bye, for example. A parting even for a short time always appears to me a faint type of that last solemn parting when we bid good-bye to temporal things. I suppose kind eyes will watch us then, kind hands clasp ours; as we start on that long journey they will bid God help us, as with failing breath and, perhaps, some natural longings for the friends we love, we go out into the great unknown, waiting until a Diviner Guide take us by the hand. “God help you, poor soul,” we seem to hear them say, and perhaps we hear the drip of their tears as they say it; but in that other room, who can tell how gently those human drops will be wiped away, in that place where pain and trouble are unknown?

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Imperium et LIBERTAS.—There is no question of etiquette in the matter of the Highland friends of the bridegroom appearing at the wedding in their national costume. It is only a matter for their own decision and their friends’ permission.

V. D. V.—You were exceedingly wrong in taking walks with any man without your parents’ permission, and you degraded yourself by enlisting the aid of a servant to get letters from him unknown to them, and so led her to do wrong and to act in an untrustworthy way to her master and mistress. You ought to tell her that you regret having so done, and will do so no more.

A Devonshire dumpling says: “I would rather not drink vinegar or raw lemon-juice, if you do not mind, please.” Dear little reader, pray do not feel uneasy on that score; nothing is further from our wishes! If your health be so good, leave yourself and your wholesome fat alone. If out of health, the case is otherwise. Dropsical puffing should be prescribed for by a doctor.

Ross-Shire lassie.—The 5th October, 1869, was a Tuesday; the 25th March, 1865, was a Saturday.

Lily.—The passage you quote may mean that the blessed ones who have attained to perfect purity in the kingdom of their Father above were greater than the greatest still on earth.

A Lively girl is not likely to “get too stout.” She inquires, “What is the best kind of a *fiance* to have?” Judging of her suitability for assuming the responsibility of selecting

one, and of leaving her mother's sheltering wing, we should reply—a gilt gingerbread man.

A METEOR.—The Rosicrucians were a mystic brotherhood, made known to the outer world in certain books published in 1614-15-16. The last book, published in 1616, was acknowledged by Johann Valentine Andreae, and entitled “The Chymische Hochzeit Christiani Rosenkreuz.” The former works are likewise described by him. From these we learn that one Christian Rosenkreuz, a German noble of the

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fourteenth century, founded a brotherhood of seven adepts on his return from the East, and that among their laws was one that they should each heal the sick gratis (or, at least, endeavour to do so), should meet annually at a certain secret place, and adopt the symbol of the *Rose Crux*, or rose springing from a cross, the device on Luther's seal. In 1622 societies of alchymists at The Hague and elsewhere assumed this title, and the tenets of the community were held by Cabalists, Freemasons, and Illuminati, and professed also by Cagliostro. It is said that a Lodge of Rosicrucians now exists in London.

TUMPY.—Our answers depend on the questions and style of the letters addressed to us. You were right in your surmise. Your writing is legible, but not sufficiently regular. If you write us a ridiculous letter we promise you a suitable answer. We are so sorry for your poor father. Could he not subscribe for *Punch*, or procure a few copies of the famous "Mrs. Brown" series?

HIGHLAND MARY inquires, "Who was the author of the first settler, and where is it?" How can we tell "where it is"? There have been "first settlers" in every part of the globe. The first part of your letter is better written than the concluding portion, and gives good promise for a good running hand by-and-by.

C. HORSELL.—The lines you send us are very faulty; in fact, are only badly-rhymed prose; but if it amuses you to write such, do not desist, as outlets are useful to very young people, and it seems desirable for them to give vent to their feelings a little.

NOLENS VOLENS.—Many people do not begin "My dear So-and-So," nor end with "Yours sincerely," *etc.*, on a postcard, but merely write their address in full at the top, and the message signed beneath it, with initials only. But you can do as you like in the matter; there is no rule. We wonder that, having such suspicions of our honesty, you continued to read our paper.

ROUSSEAU and FLOSSY.—We know of no cure for mere nervousness, unless, as sometimes happens, it passes into a disease, when a doctor should be consulted. Try to forget yourself in the pleasure of adding to the enjoyment of others.

HOPE ATHELING.—*A.E.I.* means "for ever." "I don't think" is a common colloquialism used by everyone, and is not more incorrect than such expressions generally are.

J. S. F.—

"Not even the tenderest heart, and next our own,
Knows half the reasons why we smile and sigh,"

is from Keble's "Christian Year," 24th Sunday after Trinity, verse 1.

MARIE.—The quotation—

“A primrose by a river’s brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more,”

is from Wordsworth’s poem, “Peter Bell,” part i.; stanza 12.

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ERA.—The signification of the bee appearing on the monument of the Prince Imperial, is that the French royal mantle and standard were thickly sown with golden bees instead of “Louis flowers” or *Fleurs de lys*. The origin dates back to the time of the early Egyptians, who symbolised their kings under this emblem, the honey indicating the reward they gave to the well-doers, and the sting the punishment they inflicted on the evil. More than 300 golden bees were found in the tomb of Childeric, A.D. 1653. Offer your song to some composer. Sometimes they are in request; more frequently there are more offered than are required. All depends on the fancy of the composer. Only two questions are allowed, and the answers given at the discretion of the Editor. We regret that you have been disappointed.

[Illustration]

CISSIE.—You cannot interfere with the laudable work of the rector in building a school-house for the use of his parishioners; it is his duty. But the parents of the children will have the right of choice between this school and your private one. Mourning for a parent lasts a year; but you are free to wear it longer if you like.

WINNIE E. L.—You should consult a doctor. We cannot usurp his place, though we are always willing to give sensible advice on hygienic and sanitary matters.

POLLY and OTHERS.—The measurements of a classic figure, as given on authority, are: height, 5 feet 41/2 inches; bust, 32 inches; waist, 24 inches; 9 inches from under the arm to the waist, with long arms and neck. The proportions of a larger and more stately woman or girl would be: height, 5 feet 5 or 6 inches; bust, 36 inches; waist 26 1/2 inches; hips 35 inches; thick part of arm, 11 1/2 inches; wrist, 6 1/2 inches. The hands and feet should not be too small. “Polly” will see that no arrangements are made by judges of true beauty and its lines for waists of 15 or 16 inches. They are simply deformities.

BUDDIE.—The book was published anonymously.

C. B. GLOUCESTER.—Easter Day fell on the 25th March, in 1546, 1641, 1736, 1886, and will fall next time in 1943. Tram, used as a prefix to way and road, is the last syllable of the name of their inventor, Mr. Benjamin Outram, who in 1800 made improvements in the system of railways for common roads, then in use in the North of England. The first iron tramroad from Croydon to Wandsworth was completed July 24th, 1801. Mr. Outram was the father of the celebrated Indian general, Sir James Outram.

WILD HYACINTH.—We know of nothing save to benefit your general health. The intense perspiration is evidently an effort of nature. Do you take a tepid bath every morning, and as much exercise as possible? You have doubtless received your book.



R. H. P.—We do not think cold and haughty people are at all nice, nor do we think they could be happy themselves, or make others happy. The Christian ideal is neither coldness nor haughtiness, but sympathy and love. You must take care of those long tails at the end of your words in writing. Better tie them up as the Dutch farmers do the tails of their cows. They are in writing ugly and useless appendages.

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NANNIE B. and FIDDLESTICKS have our best thanks for their letters.

ISIS.—We are much obliged for the account of your visit to the Temple, and we regret we can make no use of it. You will acquire more ease in writing by constant practice.

GERTRUDE.—We think the first year you must take what is offered to you in the way of salary.

A FIELD OFFICER'S DAUGHTER.—We have perused the two poems, and consider that they hold some promise of better things, though both are faulty in construction and rhyme.

INCONSISTENCY'S paper is too much like a schoolgirl's composition for our pages; but she evidently tries to think, which is more than many people do.

ELSIE.—We never heard any more of the saying about Brighton, than "a country without trees and a sea without ships," and we have looked for the original authorship in vain.

SWEET VIOLETS.—We know of nothing but constant rubbing and the practice of gymnastics to do your shoulders good. You probably have some trick of standing crookedly that has helped to make it grow out, such as standing on one leg, or giving down on one side.

FOREVER AND EVER writes English very well, though her writing is rather too pointed to suit English tastes. But at 16 she has plenty of time to alter it if she likes.

B. H. M. W.—The lines show much good feeling and affection, but no poetic talent.

A WELL WISHER.—Rydal and Loughrigg, a township of England, Co. Westmoreland, on the Leven, two miles N.W. of Ambleside, celebrated for its beautiful lake, on the banks of which stands Rydal Mount, long the residence of the poet Wordsworth.

MADGE.—We think "Madge" must not worry herself, as she certainly cannot help people who will not allow themselves to be helped, in her way at least of assisting them; good advice is generally unpalatable. She must look on the best side of the matter, and hope that her friend may be happy and comfortable in her own way. We doubt that you could have prevented the marriage, as your friend is very likely tired of the trouble of earning her living, and thinks of marriage as a way of escape. You must commend both her and her affairs to God, and cease worrying yourself.

NELL.—Your mother's brother is your uncle, no matter whether by the father or the mother. To put the case in another way, your grandfather's son is your uncle by whatever wife he had, first or fourth. Of course you could not marry him. See the "table of degrees of affinity" in the Book of Common Prayer.



ONE OF OUR GIRLS.—We think that men not much exposed to cold and damp, and night work, such as sailors and soldiers, do not need the warmth nor stimulant obtained by smoking any more than women do. Nevertheless, a single cigar or pipe daily would not be injurious to a grown man, though much so to a young lad in his teens. Men are so careless about cleansing their pipes from that poisonous nicotine, that multitudes have found their habit of excessive smoking a highly provoking cause of cancer in the mouth.

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HEBRIDEAN.—We think some foolish person has been worrying you with nonsensical fault-finding. We can not see that you were wrong in any way. You were with other girls and with your brothers, and that should be sufficient protection, whoever you were walking with. Do not allow yourself to be teased.