

Literature, &c.

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WORTH AND WEALTH.

BY ELLEN ASHTON.

'AND so you intend to marry Lucy Warden—eh! Harry. What on earth has put you in such a notion of that girl?' said Charles Lowry, to his friend Henry Bowen, as they sat together, cracking almonds after dinner.

'And why not marry Lucy Warden?' quietly said his friend.

'Why? oh! because she's not worth a sou; and besides I've heard she's the daughter of a brick-layer. You know, and how, that her mother kept a little retail dry-goods store until an uncle left Mrs Warden that annuity on which they now just manage to subsist.'

'A formidable array of evils, indeed; but still they do not dishearten me. As for money I do not look for it in a wife, because I should never feel independent if I was indebted to a bride for my bread. Besides an heiress is generally educated in such expensive habits that it requires a fortune to satisfy her luxurious wishes. As a mere matter of business this marrying for money is nine times out of ten a losing speculation. You are forced to live according to your wife's former style, and being thus led into expenses which your income will not afford, you too often end by becoming bankrupt. Then, too late, you discover that your wife is fit only for a parlor; she becomes peevish, or wretched, or sick; and perhaps all together. Domestic felicity is at an end when this occurs—'

'But her birth!'

'A still more nonsensical objection. It is one of the prejudices of the old colonial times, and was imported from England by the servile adorers of rank, who came over the Atlantic to assume airs in the provinces which they dared not assume at home, and to sneer at the honester members of society, who instead of being like themselves drones in the public hive, earned their bread fairly. It is the latter class to which our country is indebted for its subsequent prosperity—a prosperity which all the aristocrats of Europe could not have bestowed upon it. The revolution, while it made us politically equal did not destroy this social aristocracy. The same exclusiveness prevails now as then, but with even more injustice, for it is opposed to the whole republican institutions. Nor is this all; the prejudice itself is ridiculous. How can people, who scarcely know their own ancestors beyond one or two generations, and whose blood has been derived from every nation and occupation on the globe, talk with any propriety of birth? Why, there is scarcely a man or woman of our acquaintance, who is not an example of this pie-bald ancestry. Take, for instance Walter Hastings, who, you know, boasts of his family. I happen to know all about him, for he is a second cousin to myself. His father made a fortune, and married into our family.—But who was he? The son of a German redeptor. Hastings' mother, it is true, is the grand daughter of an English baron, and the sister—a far higher glory—of a signer of our independence. Such is a fair sample of our best families. Why I would undertake to furnish from the ancestry of any of them either a peasant or a peer, either a laborer or a drone.—Birth, forsooth! The only persons who boast of it in this country are generally those who have the least claim even to an honest parentage; and the noisiest pretender to blood I ever met with was the grandson of a fellow who was hung fifty years ago for forgery.'

'Well, you're really getting quite low in your notions, Harry—where, in the world, did you pick up such vulgar opinions? You, a gentleman and a lawyer, to marry such a girl! She's pretty enough I grant—amiable no doubt—can sing and draw passably, and makes, I hear, a batch of bread, or does dirty-house work as well as a common kitchen girl. But perhaps that is what you want her for?'

'Your sneer aside, yes! It is because Lucy Warden is a good house-keeper, that I intend to marry her. Not that I would have a bride *only* because she could, as you say, make a batch of bread. Education, amiability, a refined mind, and lady-like manners are equally necessary. But a knowledge, and a practical one too, is no slight requisite in a good wife. I know such knowledge is scarce among our city ladies, but that is the very reason why I prize it so highly. Believe me, refinement is not incompatible with this knowledge.'

'Pshaw, Harry; but granting your

position, what is the use of such knowledge?'

'It is of daily use. Servants will always impose on a mistress who knows nothing of her duties as the domestic head of the house. You are an importer; but how long, think you, would you prosper if you left everything to the care of clerks, who would naturally take advantage of your carelessness to fleece you? A mistress of a house ought to oversee her establishment in person. This she cannot do unless—to use a mercantile phrase—without she understands her business. If she does not do this, nothing will be well done. The whole evil, believe me, arises from the desire of our women to ape the extravagance of the English female nobility, whose immense wealth allows them to employ substitutes to oversee their domestic establishments. But even had we incomes of hundreds of thousands of dollars we could not carry out the plan, owing to the total absence of good servants of this character in our country; and in this opinion I am borne out by Combe, and Hamilton, two of the most observant and just of English travellers.'

'Well, Harry, you were born for a barrister, or you could not run on so glibly. But it's a shame that a gentleman who might command the choice of the market, and marry the richest heiress in Walnut street, should throw himself away upon a girl without a sixpence. Now there's Charlotte Thornbury and her sister who are co-heiresses, why can't you take the one and I the other?'

'Merely because I love another. You smile; but despise the sneer I am a believer in love.—Of Charlotte I have nothing to say, except that she is beautiful. You know how often we have discussed the matter. I only hope she will make you a good wife.'

'Alons! the ladies are awaiting us. You and I will never, on this question, agree.'

The foregoing conversation has given our readers a pretty accurate idea of the two young men to whose acquaintance we have introduced them. Henry Bowen was a young lawyer, with a small annual income, but of what he is called—an unimpeachable family. This with his acknowledged talents, would have procured for him the hand of many a mere heiress, but he has wisely turned away from them all, and sought a companion for life in one, without name or fortune, but who, in every requisite for a good wife, was immeasurably their superior.

Charles Lowry on the contrary, was a dashing young merchant, who by dint of attention in the counting house, could afford to be luxurious in his style of living. He had imbibed many of the false notions of fashionable society, and among that a rich wife was indispensable. His sole object was to secure an heiress, as much for the eclat of the thing as for her fortune, although this latter was no slight temptation to the merchant. Amidst a host of rivals, he had won the prize. Need we say that Charlotte Thornbury, the beautiful, the gay, but the careless heiress, was the guerdon?

The two friends were married the same week. The one took his wife to a small, but neat and convenient house in one of our less fashionable streets,—while the other entered into a splendid mansion in Walnut street, whose furniture and decorations were the theme of general envy and admiration. The one bride kept but a single servant, the other had several. Yet the mansion of Mrs Lowry, though always magnificent, was never tidy, while the quiet home of Mrs Bowen was a pattern of neatness and simple elegance. The young merchant never went home without finding that his wife had been out all day either shopping, or making calls, and was in consequence tired and silent, or perhaps out of humor; while the young lawyer always found a neat dinner and a cheerful wife to welcome him. As for Charles, he had always sneered at love, and having married from motives of vanity and interest, a woman whose mind he despised, he had nothing of sympathy with her, nor was it long consequently before he found her society irksome. When the toils of the counting house were over, he went home because it was custom, but not because he expected to derive any pleasure from the conversation of his vain and flippant wife. He was glad when the season commenced with its round of dissipation, because then he found some relief in attending the fashionable entertainments of his own and his wife's acquaintance. Since his marriage he had never enjoyed a single hour of real domestic felicity.

How different was the wedded life of Henry and his bride. All through the tedious duties of the day, the recollection

of his sweet wife's greeting at night, cheered the young lawyer on in his labours. And when evening came, and he had closed his office for the day, how smilingly, and in what neat attire, would Lucy preside at the tea-table, or, after their meal had been disposed of, bring out her work-stand, and sew at something, if only at a trifle for a fair, while Henry read to her in his rich, mellow voice.—And then, sometimes, they would sit on the sofa, and talk of a thousand plans for the future, when their income should be extended, or, if it was in summer, they would stroll out for a walk or call upon some one of their few intimate friends.

'Dear Henry,' said Lucy, one evening to her husband, as they sat talking together after tea, 'how wearied Mr. Lowry looks of late. I think he must be in bad health. How glad I am you are always well. I know not what I should do if you were to be taken sick.'

'May that day be long averted, my own Lucy,' said the husband, as he kissed her pure brow, 'but I have noticed something of the same look in Lowry; and have attributed it to the cares of business. His wife is a woman, you know, who could do little to alleviate a husband's weariness.'

'Oh! how can she be a wife, and not wish to soften her husband's cares. Indeed, indeed, if you only look the least worried I share your trouble until your brow clears up.'

'And it is that which makes me love you so dearly,' said the husband, and he pressed her to his bosom. 'Ah!' he continued to himself, 'if Charles saw me to night I wonder whether he would not envy me?'

That evening there was a brilliant party at the house of Mrs. Lowry who was smiling upon her guests in all the elation of gratified pride. Never had she appeared more happy. But even the envious mistress of the revel was not without her care. One or two favorite guests whom she invited did not come, and she could not help overhearing some of the ill-natured remarks of her neighbors. Her only gratification was in listening to the flatteries of others of her visitors, who were either more fawning, or more deceitful. At length, however, the entertainment was over, and wearied and dispirited she paused a moment in the deserted parlors before retiring. Her husband was there.

'Well, Mrs. Lowry,' said he, with a yawn, 'so this grand affair is over at length, and a pretty penny is has cost I do not doubt.'—Charles had latterly found that his income was frightfully beneath his expenses, and had begun to wish his bride less extravagant.—'But why did you purchase those new ottomans—and these candelabra—and that,' and here he used an oath, 'expensive set of mirrors? I told you the old ones were good enough, and here, when I come home I find you have purchased them in defiance of my orders. Why, madam, an earl's fortune would not sustain you in your extravagances.'

'And whose fortune, I wonder, buys these things?' said the passionate beauty, 'you wouldn't let me have the common comforts of life if you had your way.'

'Pshaw! madam, none of your airs. But I tell you this extravagance I neither can nor will submit to.'

'You're a brute,' said the wife, 'so you are.—Do you—do you think' she continued, bursting into tears, 'I'd ever have married you, when I might have had so many better husbands, if I'd thought you'd have used me this way?'

'Well, madam, so you've got up a scene, coolly said the husband, 'all I wish is, that you had married some one of your other suitors.'

'You do—you do insult me—I won't live with you a day. Oh! that I should be abused in this way,' and the now really wretched woman burst into a fresh flood of tears.

'As you please madam!'

But we omit the rest of this scene which ended with a fit of hysterics on the part of the wife, and a volley of curses on that of the husband. The difficulty was the next day made up between the newly married couple; but from that hour their altercations were frequent and bitter. Charles began to think as his old friend had told him, that there was a great difference betwixt marrying for love or for money.

Three years past. At the end of that period, how altered were the circumstances of Charles and his friend!

The expenses of his establishment had increased upon the former until his fortune not only staggered but gave way under the pressure, and after several ineffectual attempts to retrieve it by speculations, which, ending abortively,

only increased his embarrassments, Charles found himself upon the brink of ruin. In these circumstances he found no consolation in the sympathy of his wife. She rather upbraided him with the loss of her fortune, forgetting how much of it she had squandered in her fashionable entertainments. Their altercations, moreover, had increased in frequency, and violence ever since the scene we have recorded above, until Charles, unable to find even quiet at his own fireside, sought for relief in the club. Hither he was led, moreover, by the desire of retrieving his fortune, for his embarrassments were still unknown to the world, and he trusted that by a lucky chance he might place himself once more in security. Vain hope! How many deluded victims have indulged in the same delusion before. His course was from that hour downwards. He became a gambler; he neglected all business; he lost; his engagements failed to be met; and in a few weeks he was bankrupt.

Meantime the husband of Lucy had been steadily gaining in reputation, and increasing his business, so that at the end of the third year the young couple were enabled to move into a larger and more elegant house, situated in a more desirable quarter. This change of location materially strengthened the business of the young attorney; he became as one of the rising young men; and he looked forward with certainty to the speedy accumulation of a competency.

'Have you heard any thing further?' said Lucy, one evening to her husband, 'concerning poor Mrs Lowry or her husband.'

'Yes! my love,' said he, 'and it is all over.'

'What! has any thing alarming happened?'—said Lucy, anxiously.

'Sit down, dearest, and don't tremble so,' said her husband, tenderly, putting his arms around her waist, and drawing her to the sofa, 'and I will tell you the whole of the melancholy story.'

After his bankruptcy last week, some days elapsed before anything was known of the place to which my unfortunate friend had gone; it was supposed at first that he had fled with what funds he could lay his hands on. This was the more credible from the ignorance of his wife as to whether he had gone. She, cold-hearted thing, seemed to care little for his loss, but appeared to be chiefly affected by her deprivation of fortune: She even upbraided her husband publicly, and it is said, when some forgeries which he had perpetrated were discovered, and a strict search set on foot after the criminal, she went so far as to hope he might be taken and brought to condign punishment. But you know they never lived happy together.

Well, every attempt to trace the fugitive having failed, the search was about being given up in despair, when intelligence was brought to the city this morning, that a dead body, answering to the description of Mr Lowry, had been washed on shore, a few miles down the river. You may well look alarmed, for the intelligence was too true. It was the body of my poor friend. It is supposed that grief, shame at his bankruptcy, and perhaps remorse for his crime, led him to commit suicide. Poor fellow his sad fate may be traced to his ill-assorted marriage. He chose a woman whose extravagance always out-stripped her fortune, and who from having brought him wealth, considered him beneath her. He did not know the difference in a wife between WORTH and WEALTH.

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WATCHING FOR A TIGER.

'THE spot I selected,' says the writer, 'was the edge of a tank where a tiger used to drink. There was a large tamarind tree on its banks, and here I took my post. A village shikaree accompanied me, and soon after sunset we took up our position on a branch, about twelve feet from the ground. I should first mention that we had fastened an unfortunate bullock under the tree for a bait. Well, we remained quietly on our perch for a couple of hours without anything stirring. It might be eight o'clock the moon had risen, and so clear was the light that we could see the jackals at a distance of half a mile, snaking along towards the village, when a party of Brinparries passing by, stopped to water their bullocks at the tank. They loitered for some time, and becoming impatient, I got off the tree with a single rifle in my hand, and walked towards them telling them what I was watching a tiger, upon which they started off immediately. I was sauntering back to my post, never dreaming of danger, when the shikaree gave a low whistle, and at the same moment a growl rose from some bushes be-