

Literature, &c.

The American Magazines.

From Graham's Magazine.

SAVE THE ERRING.

BY FANNY FORESTER.

There was bustle in the little dressing-room of young Ella Lane, a dodging about of lights, a constant tramping of a fat, good-natured serving-maid, a flitting of curious, smiling little girls, and a disarranging of drapery and furniture, not very often occurring in this quiet, tasteful corner. An arch-looking miss of twelve was standing before a basket of flowers, selecting the choicest, and studying carefully their arrangement, with parted lips and eyes demurely downcast, as though thinking of the time when the little fairy watching so intently by her side would perform the same service for her. On the bed lay a light, fleecy dress of white, with silver cords and clusters of silver leaves, and sashes of pale blue, and others of a still paler pink, and here and there a little wreath of flowers, or a small bunch of marabouts—in short, ornaments enough to crush one person, had their weight been at all proportioned to their bulk. Immediately opposite a small pier-glass, sat a girl of seventeen, in half undress, her full round arms shaded only by a fold of linen at the shoulder and her eye resting very complacently on the little foot placed somewhat ostentatiously upon an ottoman before her; and indeed that foot was a very dainty-looking thing, in its close fitting slipper altogether unequalled by anything but the finely curved and tapered ankle so fully revealed above it. Immediately behind the chair of the young lady, stood a fair, mild looking matron, her slender fingers carefully thridding the masses of the hair mantling the ivory neck and shoulders of her eldest daughter, preparatory to plaiting it into those long braids so well calculated to display the contour of a fine head. There was a smile upon the mother's lip, not like that dimpling at the corners of the mouth of the little bouquet-maker, but a pleased, gratified smile, and yet half-shadowed over by a strange anxiety, that she seemed striving to conceal from her happy children. Sometimes her fingers paused in their graceful employment, and her eye rested vacantly wherever it fell; and then, with an effort, the listlessness passed, and the smile came back, though manifestly tempered by some heaviness clinging to the heart.

At last the young girl was arrayed; each braid in its place, and a wreath of purple buds falling behind the ear; her simple dress floating about her slight figure like an airy cloud, every fold arranged by a mother's careful fingers; her white kid gloves drawn upon her hands, and fan bouquet, and kerchief, all in readiness. The large, warm shawl had been carefully laid upon her shoulders, the mother's kiss was on her bright cheek, and a "don't stay late dear," in her ear; she had shaken her fan at the Saucy Nelly, and pinched the cheek of Rosa, and was now toying with little Susy's fingers, when the head of the serving maid was again thrust in at the door, to hasten the arrangements. Ella tripped gaily down stairs, but when she reached the bottom, she paused.

"I am sorry to go without you mamma."
"I am sorry that you must, dear; but I hope you will find it very pleasant."
"It will be pleasant, I have no doubt; but mamma, I am afraid that you are not quite well, or perhaps," she whispered, "you have something to trouble you; if so, I should like very much to stay with you."

"No dear; I am well, quite well, and—"
Mrs Lane did not say *happy*, for the falsehood died on her lip; but she smiled so cheerily, and her eye looked as clear and bright as it met her daughter's, that Ella took it for a negative.

"Ah! I see how it is mamma, you are afraid my new frock is prettier than any of yours; and you don't mean to be outshone by little people. Do you know I shall tell Mrs Winton all about it?"

"I will let you tell anything that you choose, so that you do not show too much vanity, but don't stay late. Good night darling."

"Good-night till sleeping time, mamma."
And with a light laugh, Ella Lane left her mother's side and sprang into the carriage.

When Mrs Lane turned from the door, the smile had entirely disappeared, and an expression of anxious solicitude occupied its place. While the joyous children went bounding on before her, she paused beneath the hall-lamp, and pulling a scrap of paper from her bosom, read—Do not go out to-night dear mother; I must see you. He will not come in before eleven—I will be with you at ten. It was written in a hurried, irregular hand, and was without signature; but it needed none.

"My poor boy," murmured the now almost weeping mother, as she crushed the paper in her hand and laid it back upon her heart. "It may be wrong to deceive him so; but how can a mother refuse to see the son she has carried in her arms and nursed upon her bosom? Poor Robert!"

Ay, poor Robert indeed! the only son of one of the proudest and wealthiest citizens of New York, and yet without a shelter for his head!

Mr Lane had lived a bachelor until the age of forty-two, when he married a beautiful girl of eighteen—the mother whom we have already introduced to our readers. She was gentle

and complying; hence, the rigid sternness of his character, which so many years of loneliness had by no means tended to soften, seldom had an opportunity to exhibit itself. But the iron was all there, though buried for a time in the flowers which love had nursed them into bloom above it. The eldest of their children was a boy; a frank, heartsome merry fellow—a lamb to those who would condescend to lead him by love, but exhibiting, even in infancy, an indomitable will that occasioned the young mother many an anxious foreboding. But as the boy grew toward manhood, a new and deeper anxiety began to appear. To Robert's gaiety were added other qualities that made him a fascinating companion; his society was constantly sought, first by the families in which his parents were on terms of intimacy, and then by others, and still others, till Mrs Lane began to tremble less among her son's associates might be found some of exceptional character. By degrees he spent fewer evenings at home, went out with her less frequently, and accounted for his absence less satisfactorily. Then she spoke to him on the subject, and received his assurance that all was well, and not troubled about his falling into bad company. But she was troubled.

There was at ever a wild sparkle in the boy's eye, and an unnatural glow upon his cheek, that told of unhealthy excitement, but in the morning it was all gone, and his gaiety sometimes his cheerfulness, fled with it. Oh! what sickness of heart can compare with that indefinable fear, that foreshadowing of evil, which will sometimes creep in between our trust and our love, while we dare not show to the object of it, much less to others, anything but a smiling lip and a serene brow. Mrs Lane was anxious but she confined her anxiety to her own bosom, not even whispering it to her husband, lest he should ridicule it on the one hand, or, on the other, exercise a severity which should lead to a collision. But matters grew worse and worse constantly; Robert was now seldom home till late at night, and then he came heated and flurried, and hastened away to bed, as though his mother's loving eye were a monitor he could not meet. She sought opportunities to warn him, as she had formerly done, but he feared and evaded them, and so several more weeks passed by—weeks of more importance than many a life-time. Finally Mrs Lane became seriously alarmed and consulted with her husband.

"I have business with you to-night, Robert," said Mr Lane pointedly, as the boy was going out after dinner, and will see you in the library at nine o'clock."

"I—I—have—an engagement, sir. If some other hour—"
"No other hour will do. You have no engagement that will be allowed to interfere with those I make for you."

Robert was about to answer—perhaps angrily—when he caught a glimpse of his mother. Her face was of an ashy hue, and a large tear was trembling in her eye. He turned hastily away and hurried along the hall; but before he had reached the street door, her hand was upon his arm, and she whispered in his ear, "Meet your father at nine, as he has hidden you Robert; and do not—for my sake, for your mother's sake dear Robert—do not say anything to exasperate him."

"Do not fear, mother," he answered in a subdued tone, then as the door closed behind him, he muttered, "he will be exasperated enough with little saying, if his business is what I suspect. What a fool I have been—mad—mad! I wish I had told him at first, without waiting to be driven to it; but now—well I will make one more attempt—desperate it must be—and then—if the worst comes, he will only punish me; that I can bear patiently for I deserve it, but it could kill my poor mother—Oh! he must not tell her."

Mrs Lane started nervously at every ring of the door bell that evening; and when at nine she heard it, she could not forbear stepping into the hall to see who was admitted. It was her husband; and only waiting to inquire of the girl if Mr Robert had yet come in, he passed on to the library: Mrs Lane found it more difficult than ever to sustain conversation, she became abstracted, nervous and when at last her few evening visitors departed she was so manifestly relieved that Ella inquired in surprise, if anything had been said or done to annoy her. It was past ten, and Robert had not yet appeared. Finally the bell was pulled violently, and she hastened to the door herself. With lived lip and blood-shot eye, her son stepped to the threshold; and starting at the sight of her, he hurried away to the library, without giving her another glance. How slowly passed the moments to the waiting mother! How she longed to catch but a tone of those voices; both so loved, that she might know whether they sounded in confidence or anger! What Robert's course had been she could not guess; but she knew that he would be required to give a strict account of himself, and she dreaded the effect of her husband's well known severity. A few minutes passed (they seemed an age to her), and then she heard the door of the library thrown open, and a moment after, a quick, light step sounded upon the stairs. It was Robert's.

"You are not going out again, my son?" she inquired.

"Father will tell you why I go, dear mother," said the boy pausing, and pressing her hand affectionately. "I must not wait to answer questions now." He passed on till he reached the door, then turning back, whispered, "Be at Mrs Hinman's to-morrow evening, mother," and before she had time to ask a

question or utter an exclamation of surprise, he had disappeared up the street.

But poor Mrs Lane was soon made acquainted with the truth. Mr Lane was somewhat vexed with himself for not perceiving his son's tendency to error before; and, like many others, he seemed resolved to make up in decision what he had lost by blindness. It was this which had occasioned his sharpness when he made the appointment, and he considered his dignity compromised when nine o'clock passed and his son seemed resolved on acting in open disobedience to his command. An hour's ruminating on the subject did not tend to soften his feelings; and when at last the culprit appeared, he was in a mood for anything but mercy. He demanded peremptorily a full confession, and Robert gave it. He did not colour, soften or extenuate, but boldly—too boldly, perhaps—declaring that he scorned falsehood, he told the whole. He had fallen into gay society, then into vicious, and he was not the one to occupy a minor position anywhere. Wit and wine seduced him, and in an evil hour he sat down to the gaming-table. He had played at first for a trivial stake, then more deeply, and too night in the hope of retrieving his bad fortune, he had plunged in almost past extrication. At any time Mr Lane would have been shocked, now he was exasperated, and spoke bitterly. At first Robert did not retort for he had come in resolved on confession and reformation, but finally repentance was drowned in anger and he answered as a son, particularly an erring son, should not. Then a few more words ensued, unreasonable on both sides, Mr Lane asserting that debts so contracted were dishonest ones, and should not be paid, and Robert declaring that they *should* be paid, if he gamed his lifelong to win the money, till, finally, the old man's rage became uncontrollable. It was in obedience to his father's command that Robert left his home that night, with the order never to cross the threshold again.

For two or three weeks, Mrs Lane, now and then, of an evening, met her son at the houses of her friends; and then he disappeared almost entirely. While she could meet him, and speak a few words, even in a gay party, and perceive that he regarded her with as much affection as ever, she continued strong in the hope of final reformation and reconciliation, but when, evening after evening she carried a hoping heart abroad, and dragged home a disappointed one, imagination busied itself with a thousand horrors. Her first-born, her only son, the darling of her young heart, her pride in the first years of wedded life, he whom she had loved so fondly, and cherished so tenderly—to what vice, what suffering, might not he be exposed! Then she had no confidence, no friend to sympathize with or encourage her. Since the first disclosure she had never mentioned Robert's name to her husband and Ella knew only that some angry words had estranged her father and brother for a time, and she was enviously ignorant of Robert's guilt and danger.

The evening on which our story commences, Mrs Lane had intended to spend abroad with her daughter, but had been prevented by the receipt of the note above mentioned. Robert had never been home since he was commanded to leave it, and though anxious both about the cause and result, she could not but be rejoiced at the thought of seeing him again in her own private sitting room. She had many things, too, to learn. She wished to know where he lived, how he supported himself, and what were his intentions for the future, and she wished to expostulate with and advise him, in short, her mother's heart told her that everything could be done in that one evening.

While Mrs Lane walked up and down her little sitting room wishing that ten o'clock would come, her son entered his small scantily furnished apartment in a decent boarding-house, and throwing himself upon the only chair within it, he covered his face with his hands. For a long time he sat in this position, then he arose, and taking down a pocket pistol examined it carefully, primed it, and laid it beneath his pillow. Immediately, however, he took it out charged it heavily, and laying it on the table, folded his arms and gazed upon it, muttering, "It may be needed when I least expect it. I have one friend, at least while this is by." After pacing two or three times across the narrow space between his bed-head and the little window at the foot, he opened the door of a small closet, and taking thence a cloak and muffler, carefully adjusted them, then slouching a broad-brimmed hat over his eyes, he hurried down the stairs into the street. Two or three times Robert Lane paused and reasoned with himself, before he reached his father's door, and even when his hand was extended to the bell-knob, he hesitated.

"I must see her, at any risk," he at last exclaimed, pulling lightly upon the cord.

The girl started when she opened the door, but gave no other token of recognition. Robert inquired for Mrs Lane, and following after the girl, found himself in the back sitting-room, remembered but too, too fondly for his composure. As soon as the door closed behind him, he cast off his mufflers, and throwing himself upon a little ottoman at his mother's feet, leaned his forehead on her knees.

From the Columbian Magazine.
ILLUSTRATIONS OF POPULAR PHRASES.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET.
GIVING A HOME.

"Pray, can you tell me anything of my ac-

complished friend, Isabel Carrington?" I asked, on my return to P—after a year's absence. "I have been much distressed to learn of her father's misfortunes and death, and anxious to know what has become of her."

"Mrs. T—arched her eye brows, and replied, 'I do not know.'"

"Not know, and you were so very intimate with her?"

"She left P—soon after her father's death," said another lady, "and is I believe, living in C—supported by her own exertions."

"Then nothing was saved to her out of her father's property?"

"Nothing at all."
"It is strange that she chose to quit this place," observed Mrs T—. "There was a very good opening for the exercise of her talents, Mrs— and I would have exerted ourselves to get her a class in music, and one in drawing and fancy work. She might have maintained herself handsomely. But she was too proud, it appears, to earn her bread in the village where she once lived in luxury, and would go elsewhere."

"Although we all kindly called upon her, and offered our patronage," said another lady.

"That is what I call ingratitude," remarked a third; and the sentiment was echoed by a fourth and fifth.

"The advantages of remaining here were no doubt, properly represented to her," I observed.

"Oh, certainly," answered Mrs T—. "It would not do, of course, for us to notice her in the way we formerly did, when she was looked upon as an heiress, and was at the head of her father's fine establishment. The proper distinctions in society must be observed. But we would have sent our children to receive instruction from her."

"A great condescension, truly toward a person you were once proud to claim as an acquaintance," said a lady, who had not before spoken, in a corner of the room. "But you are mistaken; Isabel Carrington is not dependent for a maintenance upon her own efforts. Her uncle has given her a home."

"Her uncle!" I repeated.

"Yes, her mother's half brother. He resides in C—, and on the death of Mr. Carrington wrote to invite Isabel to his house."

"How generous how kind," remarked several of the company.

"In truth, Isabel may consider herself fortunate," observed Mrs—. "I am slightly acquainted with Mr. Lantrem, her uncle. He has a large family of children of his own, and it is very noble of him to give her a support."

"For my part, said a dowager-looking matron, "I do not like this living upon others. I should prefer independence with a mere crust. And with such talents as Isabel has to be content to receive charity!"

The lady's opinion was well illustrated, for she had five great daughters, who dressed in the extreme of the fashion, on the means of their uncle, for it was well known—the mother never paid her debts.

"Very true," assented Mrs T—. "It would have been much more proper for Isabel to stay in P—; and turn to her own resources, than to become a burden on those who have children of their own."

"I cannot believe Miss Carrington would be a burden to any one," I ventured to say.

"Perhaps Mr. Lantrem does not think her so," was the reply, "but he is not rich, and many have claims upon him. At any rate it was generous of him to offer his niece a home, she is only to blame for having accepted it."

In the midst of my indignation at the exhibition of so much ill-nature, I was glad to hear the orphan had found a friend. Poor Isabel! young and lovely as she was—possessing a rare beauty that made her an object for the shafts of envy—refined, delicate and sensitive—she needed the protection of one who could stand in the place of a parent. How charmingly she had borne prosperity! With what grace and dignity she had presided over her father's house, (her mother had been deceased many years) fulfilling every duty, yielding all could be required to the claims of society, yet finding time for the cultivation of those mental acquisitions which were to her a pure source of happiness! She was both thoroughly and brilliantly accomplished, possessing exquisite taste as well as scientific knowledge in music, an artist in drawing and painting, mistress of the French and Italian languages, and well acquainted with English literature in the works of the best authors. In fancy work and in dress her taste was so perfect that she was consulted as an oracle by all the young ladies of her native village, and her judgment never failed to settle any disputed question.

More than two years afterward I chanced to be in C—. A large party was given the evening of my arrival, and I went, in the expectation of seeing Isabel, as I learned that there was an intimacy between the family and that of her uncle. Mr. Lantrem and his wife were introduced to me. He was a middle-aged gentleman, of very urbane manners, and his wife a lady-like person, evidently in delicate health, with a soft voice and sweet smile. The appearance of both pleased me, and I augured well for the happiness of the orphan girl. She was not there, and in answer to my inquiries, her aunt informed me she was well, but seldom went out. I heard no one else speak of her.

The next morning I called at Mr. Lantrem's house to see my friend. As I entered I heard the sound of a piano, and a sweet voice sing-