

Literature, &c.

THE BRITISH MAGAZINES.

From Hogg's Instructor.

THE ORNITHOLOGIST.

I was still young, when a sudden reverse of fortune deprived me of a kind father and affluence at the same time. A home was offered for my acceptance by Mrs. Priestly, a widow lady, whom I had never seen since my infancy, distance and circumstances having combined to effect this separation. Mrs. Priestly was not only my godmother, but she had been the earliest chosen friend of my own lamented mother, and now came forward to extend succor to the destitute orphan. In former years, I remembered to have heard that she suffered deep sorrow, from the loss of her only child, a fine boy, who was heir to a princely fortune, independent of his mother's considerable possessions. There were rumors afloat, at the period of this bereavement, of a peculiarly distressing nature—strange, half-suppressed whispers of some fearful accident that had rendered the widow childless; but the memory of these things had passed away, and Mrs. Priestly's first despair and agony had settled down to a resigned melancholy. On her fine countenance premature age was stamped, a smile seldom visible, while her mourning garb was never cast aside; she was a lifelong mourner.

The outward aspect of Lodimer—so Mrs. Priestly's domain was called—was but little in accordance with the sad heart of its owner, for a more cheerful or animated scene I had rarely witnessed. The villa, surrounded by colonnades, stood on the side of a gently swelling hill, at the base of which flowed a broad and sparkling river, on which numerous boats and picturesque looking barges were continually passing and repassing. Roses and thatch, light French windows and exotics, trimly kept pleasure-grounds, sloping down to the water's edge, drooping willows and silver birches were accessories, doubtless, to produce an effect of combined elegance and grace, while on the opposite banks richly wooded hills were studded with white cottages, glancing in the sunshine; though even during rainy seasons Lodimer never looked gloomy, an indescribable air of joyousness and hilarity pervading it. The calamity which overshadowed Mrs. Priestly's existence had not occurred at this pleasant home, but at the distant seat of the widow's brother, Mr. Lovell, of Lovell Castle where she and her son were on a visit at the time; and still Mrs. Priestly continued to pay an annual visit thither, never leaving Lodimer save for that purpose, but leading a life of extreme seclusion. I had the satisfaction of believing that my society tended to enhance the comfort of Mrs. Priestly; who, with the utmost delicacy and kindness, lavished a thousand nameless attentions—trifling in themselves, but keenly felt by the dependent; calling me her adopted daughter, while her candor demanded and received my grateful thanks, for I fully appreciated the excellent motives actuating Mrs. Priestly's avowal. She wished to prevent false expectations on my part, and yet to set at rest all anxiety respecting the future; informing me, that the bulk of her wealth she designed to bequeath to her nephew, Mr. Lovell's son, but that a moderate provision was secured for her dear orphan god-daughter. But my agitation gave place to surprise, when Mrs. Priestly continued, addressing me:

'You have sense and discretion beyond your years, Evelyn, my love, and when you came to reside with me here, I determined first to ascertain if this were the case, ere I confide my secret to your keeping—for I have a secret—which may not be mentioned at Lovell castle, when you accompany me thither shortly. A few miles hence an individual resides, to whom I intend shortly to introduce you. He is a most unfortunate person, and desires the strictest privacy; but Mr. Edwin is not unhappy, because he knows 'the peace within which passeth show,' while his intellectual attainments are of the highest order. But in case you should weave a romance, Evelyn, out of these details,' added Mrs. Priestly, faintly smiling, 'it is but fair I warn you, that romance and Edwin may not be coupled together, for he is—alas! poor fellow—an unsightly and deformed creature; his captivations are those only of the heart and mind—in this he shines pre-eminent. Again, let me remind you, my love, not to allude to Mr. Edwin in conversation; forget him altogether, except when you speak to me. I know that you are not tormented with feminine curiosity, or I would tell you to ask no questions. This is my secret, Evelyn, which I fearlessly confide to your keeping.'

However, Mr. Priestly did me more than justice, for though I certainly endeavored to indulge no idle speculations on the forbidden topic, yet I was not apathetic enough to forget it; more especially after accompanying Mrs. Priestly to see her mysterious friend, whose *menage*, to say nothing of himself, might have excused a far more insensible person than I was, for feeling a strong interest and sympathy. Surrounded by thick woods on all sides save one, which opened toward the same river that washed the emerald turf of Lodimer, we came to a small spot of ground resembling a 'clearing,' and I fancied we were transported to those wild western lands I had so often read of—the old ivy-covered hunting lodge in the midst adding much to the real beauty of the picture, though detracting somewhat from its savage claims.

Quantities of feathered tribes were strutting about within the inclosure, or enjoying themselves in various attitudes of indolence or security; an immense aviary extended down one side of the clearing, fitted up with the view of affording as much solace, and liberty of movements as possible to the inmates. The whole place seemed alive with fowls of the air; and we beheld a human form within the wire work of the aviary, literally covered with birds, small and large, wherever they could find a resting place—on head, arms or back—and more were fluttering and crowding over and around him, as Mr. Edwin—for it was he—proceeded to dispense food to his loving flock. Presently he made his escape, and approached us, with a jay perched on one shoulder and a magpie on the other, appearing to hold whispering discourse with their benefactor, who fondly caressed and chirruped to them in turn. He was of middling stature, perceptibly and painfully deformed; but his countenance was such a one as Raphael would have loved to portray—holy, spiritual and placid, beyond any mortal I ever looked upon before or since. His voice was inexpressibly touching and melodious; it thrilled the heart of the listener, for there was an intonation of sadness in its tone, though the words were cheerful as he conially and warmly welcomed us. We followed him into a long low-roofed apartment, the windows of which looked out on woodland vistas, and on all sides, from floor to ceiling, it was lined with books and cases containing stuffed birds, for Mr. Edwin was devoted to the study of ornithology, and almost rivaled Audobon in patient watching and research.

A married couple of quiet and orderly habits formed the domestic establishment at Ivy Lodge; and the profound stillness and solitude of this sylvan retreat was unbroken, save by the cooing of the cushat dove, and song birds' varied notes, the sonorous hooting of the white owl up among the eaves, and the occasional screams of the splendid peacocks ringing through the greenwood glades.

Here was the paradise of the feathered creatures, here they were all fostered and protected; and Mr. Edwin had attained the mysterious art of taming the wild denizen of the woods as surely and wonderfully, if not quite so rapidly, as did that celebrated horse-leech exert his skill on quadrupeds, whispering in the ear of vicious and hitherto untamable steeds, who immediately became docile and subdued. Even shy and stately swans knew this lonely clearing on the river banks, and frequently came to be fed by Mr. Edwin's gentle hand; the swans had a nest here among the reeds, and broods of cygnets were reared in this haven of peace.

Mr. Edwin had made many beautiful copies of rare birds, which he could not otherwise preserve, the colors being brilliant and true to nature, as well as the size of each specimen; and I felt not a little delighted when he accepted my timid offer of assistance in this branch of his study, for I was afraid that my poor efforts would fall far short of his masterly productions. But Mrs. Priestly reassured me, and she told Mr. Edwin that he had found a valuable coadjutor, for bird painting had always been quite a passion with me—a strange taste, perhaps for a young lady, though I know not why it should be considered more out of the way than copying flowers from nature. However, I exerted myself to the utmost, and succeeded well, for he gave my drawings unqualified approbation, and was eloquent in thanking me. I am sure the amiable recluse read my heart at once, and saw how eagerly and gratefully I availed myself of this opportunity, trifling as it was, of gratifying Mrs. Priestly, to whom I owed so much; for her affection toward Mr. Edwin rendered attentions bestowed on him personally felt and acknowledged by her. This similarity of taste, together with our mutual love and veneration for Mrs. Priestly, induced that kindly communion between Mr. Edwin and myself which afterwards ripened into a lasting friendship, cemented by time. He was, indeed, wise unto salvation. Learned not only in the world's lore, but in that wisdom which maketh not ashamed, he bore his daily cross most meekly, and yet most manfully. Deeply alive to the beautiful, keenly sensitive on all points, tender-hearted and affectionate, he lived alone in the woodland solitude, not, I was convinced, from any morbid disinclination to encounter his kind on account of his personal affliction (he was too humble and good for that), but from some unknown and mysterious cause, some hidden sorrow, which rendered solitude in a retreat like this desirable.

At Lodimer, I never gazed on the gay and sparkling river without remembering that it flowed onward towards the swan's nest among the reeds. I never gazed on the thick rich woods, or heard the wood-pigeon's cooing across the water at the hushed evening hour, without a sensation of tranquility and peace stealing over my spirit, as fancy pictured the lonely lodge, the soft twittering around it, and the dense shadows beyond.

I obeyed Mrs. Priestly, and never asked a question concerning Mr. Edwin, but I pondered much on this interesting subject; and whenever my thoughts turned away from the vanities of this world, they always rested with satisfaction on the ornithologist.

As the time drew nigh for our departure to Lovell castle, I observed a degree of restlessness on Mr. Edwin which I had not hitherto noticed, and frequent fits of gloomy abstraction, which he vainly endeavored to shake off in our presence. Mrs. Priestly often conversed alone with him, when traces of agitation were visible on her countenance, and tears on his; and when she bade him farewell, these

words lingered on his lips—'Tell dear Mildred how happy I am.'

Lovell Castle was a dark frowning pile, bearing an ancient date, while some portions were more antiquated still, and had fallen in to disuse. It was a real castle of the olden time; I had often read of such with interest and delight, but now I could explore for myself. Here were dungeons and vaulted chambers, trap-doors and loop holes, intricate passages, secret hiding places, and curious old oaken chests, battlements and turrets, carved work and tapestry, banqueting hall and chapel—in short, all the appendages necessary for romance in feudal days.

The family consisted of Mr. Lovell, Mildred, his eldest daughter by a first wife, and Harold and Rose, the children of the second Mrs. Lovell, who had died when Rose was an infant. Mildred was tenderly beloved by Mrs. Priestly; and, as she never quitted her hypochondriacal father, it was principally to see this dear niece that the widow left her quiet home on the margin of Lodimer's blue waters.

I was absolutely startled by the extraordinary and striking likeness between the ornithologist and Mildred Lovell—the same placid, sweet expression of countenance, the same gentle, winning manners too. While in unobtrusive performance of her duties towards God and man, this good daughter and sister journeyed onward through life, ministering to the comfort and well-being of all, but without exacting a meed of praise or a single glance of approbation. Mildred was nobody at Lovell Castle, but had she been absent, her absence would have been universally bewailed, and her value known: they were perhaps, too used to the blessing to appreciate it, even as the sun shines day after day, and we do not remark it as anything unusual.

Rose was a volatile and thoughtless girl, yet affectionate and kind hearted withal, and dearly loved her elder sister, who had indeed filled the place of a mother to her. Rose had elastic, unvarying spirits, which were not unwelcome in that dull old place; and kept the inmates from stagnation. She and Harold were the father's darlings, though all Mr. Lovell's hope and pride centered in his son. Pre-eminently beautiful in person, active and graceful, Harold Lovell was born the same year as his deceased cousin, Jocelyn Priestly, and the youths had strongly resembled each other, not only in person but in disposition. The partial parents had not perhaps, read those dispositions truthfully, or in both their children they might have traced evil propensities, which went far to counterbalance the good—revengeful passions, and a proneness to selfish indulgence, which not all their brilliant acquirements and feats of gallant prowess could conceal from a close observer of character. They were at the same school together, and at Lovell Castle for the vacation, when that sad catastrophe took place which plunged the family in irretrievable affliction. Mr. Lovell, who had always been a nervous, ailing man, never recovered the shock, and latterly he had sunk into complete indolence, and left the care and management of his affairs entirely to Harold, who, however, ill-filled his duties.

The aversion which Mrs. Priestly entertained towards her nephew, and which she vainly strove to conceal, had once been the cause of painful contention between Mr. Lovell and his sister, though now it had settled down into a silent grief never alluded to by either of them. All these particulars I had heard from Rose; and much I was amazed at Mrs. Priestly's conduct, coupled with the avowal she had made to me respecting the disposal of her property in favor of her nephew; but I knew her to be a just and strong minded woman, and felt sure there was some mystery connected with these family details which Rose was bursting to disclose, the first convenient opportunity. But I gave her no encouragement to do so, for I thought that, had Mrs. Priestly wished me to know the secret motives by which she was actuated, her confidence would have been already betowed; and it seemed a breach of trust and dishonorable, to gain the knowledge by other means. The sweet benignity of Mildred Lovell, her untiring patience and unaffected cheerfulness, as well as the strong resemblance of feature, continually reminded me of Mr. Edwin, and I pondered often on the parting words which I had heard him address to Mrs. Priestly—'Tell dear Mildred how happy I am.'

And what was Mildred to Mr. Edwin? Wherefore was he exiled and alone? What had he done that his name was forbidden to be spoken at Lovell? These ideas constantly haunted me, despite my determination to exclude such idle questionings concerning the mysterious affair.

Rose sometimes communicated some portion of her own gay spirit to me: we were thrown much together, for Mildred was constantly occupied with her invalid parent, and Mrs. Priestly shared the duties of her beloved niece. But I often desired the solitude which was more congenial to my turn of mind, though it was not always easy for me to obtain it, as Rose, from a mistaken kindness, continually watched my movements, and accompanied me wheresoever I desired to go. It was impossible to check the affectionate girl in a direct manner; but I discovered that there was one locality particularly avoided by all the inmates of the castle, which had fallen into decay and was seldom approached by Rose. This was the western wing or turret; and thither accordingly I often bent my steps, in search of quietude, also of a magnificent prospect to be viewed from the summit. In this sumptuous home at Lovell Castle, my thoughts often wandered to Ivy Lodge on Lodimer's banks, and its lonely occupant, apart

from the vanities of life, contented and cheerful under afflictions, which were, I felt sure, of no common nature.

I compared the pious recluse with the heir of Lovell, toward whom an inexpressible feeling of repugnance reigned in my breast.

Harold was devoted to field sports and the pleasures of the table; he was in fact the real master, consulting only his own time and inclinations on all occasions. His bloated, though still handsome countenance evidenced excess; while a dictatorial manner, as of one unused to reproof or contradiction, was habitual. A constant restlessness and irritability, a quick turn of the eye, a wild glance, betokened a mind ill at ease. He was a scotter at religion, too, an unkind brother, and an undutiful son to the doating father, who yet believed and saw no faults in his offspring. Despite her brother's harshness, Rose, with devoted sisterly affection, extenuated Harold's conduct, and it was very beautiful to witness her womanly tenderness and forbearance.

It might be that Mildred was the child of another mother, and that circumstance had somewhat weakened the ties of blood; but notwithstanding her general kindness of demeanor toward all, including Harold, there was a perceptible shade of coldness when addressing him. She never volunteered an embrace, to be cast off, like the persevering, warm-hearted Rose; she never clung to her brother, praying him to remain at home, when he was about to engage in any hazardous or foolish exploit. No; there was some sin and sorrow which had weaned and divided this brother and sister, until the erring one should return and repent. And who could doubt that Mildred Lovell would open wide her arms to receive the penitent.

[To be continued.]

From Mrs. Kirkland's 'Book of Home Beauty.'

WOMAN'S HOME DUTIES.

It may be only a fancy of ours, that Providence has so decidedly fitted woman for household cares, that she is never truly and healthily happy without them; but if it be a fancy, it is one which much observation has confirmed. If there be anything likely to banish the fiend *ennui* from the dwellings of women of fortune, it is the habit of assuming a moderate share of the daily cares which go to make home home. To do everything by proxy is to deprive ourselves of a thousand wholesome, cheerful, innocent interests; to nourish our pride and indolence at the expense of our affections; to sacrifice the life of life to a notion of gentility, poor, hollow, and barren; nay, is there not something almost impious in scorning the position for which God so evidently designed woman, and living an artificial life of our own devising, deputed our duties and privileges to hirelings?

It is a singular delusion this of some women, and of American women in particular, for we know that even in England women of fortune are much more truly domestic in their tastes and habits than we. We remember a story of a certain duchess cleaning some picture frames, when a protegee who happened to be present officiously desired to take the office upon herself.

'Child!' said her grace, 'don't you suppose I should have called a servant if I had not chosen to do it myself?'

The German ladies, with all their cultivation, take the most intimate interest in householdry, and they are remarkable for cheerfulness of temper, for natural and charming manners, and for the intelligence and vivacity of their conversational powers. Who knows but the terrible dearth of subjects of conversation among us might be somewhat mitigated, if our ladies spent a part of every morning among the various cares and duties, on the proper performance of which so much of the comfort and happiness of life depends, and which call into action far higher powers than those required for the bald chit chat of an evening party, or the inanities of a morning call?

The universal sentiment of men is in favor of active domestic habits for women. It is said that men 'love to see women delicate,' and so they do, doubtless. But does any moderate amount of attention to home affairs deprive a lady of her delicacy? It may prevent the delicacy of dyspepsia; but few gentlemen admire that. Indeed, we have yet to discover the man of sense who is displeased by his wife's personal care of the comfort and economy of her house. No houses are regulated with such neatness, accuracy, and elegance as those in which the ladies of the family take a personal part in household duties.

Goethe says of a young woman of his friends, and a man of genius is entitled to speak for his sex:—'After the death of her mother, she displayed a high degree of activity as the head of a numerous young family, and alone had sustained her father in his widowhood. The future husband could thus hope an equal blessing for himself and his descendants, and expect a decided domestic happiness. Every one confessed that she was a woman to be wished for. She was one of those who, if they do not inspire vehement passion, are found to excite a universal pleasure. A lightly formed, symmetrical figure, a pure healthy nature, and the glad activity that rises from it, an unembarrassed care for all daily necessities—with all these she was endowed. The observation of these qualities was always agreeable to me, and I always sought the society of those who possessed them.'

Children are plagues or pleasures, as their parents educate them.

A good character is a good fortune