

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From the London Working Man's Friend.

CHARLOTTE MAY.

"We are such stuff as dreams are made of,
And our little lives are rounded with a sleep."

"MOTHER," said Lottie May, "my head aches, and feels very, very warm. What can be the matter?"

"You are feverish, love, and require rest." So Mrs. May gave her child some herb tea, and placed her in her little bed.

In the night, the mother was awakened by a little groan, and lay and listened half unconsciously for a few moments; then she heard the groan again.

"Its Lottie," she said to herself; and springing softly from her bed, for fear of disturbing the child, she stepped to the side of its bed and whispered:

"Lottie!"

"Is that you, mother?"

"What is the matter, Lottie?"

"My head hurts me a little, mother," and she groaned again as she clasped her hot hands over her soft, brown hair. "Will you give me some water mother?"

Mrs. May's hand trembled so that she could hardly pour out the water; but Lottie could not lift herself up to drink it, and the mother held her; then she held the candle over the bed.

"Mercy!" she exclaimed to herself, as she saw the red and purple cheeks, the large dark eyes, now larger than ever, and blood-shot; the vacant, wild look, and the little hands clasped tightly on the top of her head. "Lottie! Lottie! Charlotte!" said Mrs. May; but Lottie did not answer for some moments; then she opened her eyes suddenly, more widely than ever, and said:

"Oh, mother, I've seen an angel, and its face was like yours; and there were two great wings, and glory all around it, mother; and it called, Lottie, Lottie, Lottie."

Mrs. May trembled again, but she did not show it, or change her countenance before her child.

Then she rang the bell for her maid, and told her to call John, and send for Dr. Mason immediately; then she bathed the head of the little sufferer in cold water, and laid her on the bed again till the Doctor came.

"When was she taken, Mrs. May?" said Dr. Mason.

"She went to bed feverish; I was awakened an hour ago by the child's groans, and found her so."

"What have you done?"

"Bathed her head in cold water; that's all."

"All wrong," said the Doctor; and he felt her pulse, gave her some calomel, told Mrs. May to keep her very warm, and the windows closed, and went home again, wondering why people would get sick at night, he did so hate night practice; or if they must be sick, why could they not wait until morning to be treated.

Lottie lay in a quiet doze, and Mrs. May sat by her side all the long night. Oh how her heart yearned for her child! and she prayed silently that the flower might not be gathered from her; indeed, she never knew how much she loved her little idol until now, when the shadow of Death loomed up like a black cloud on the horizon of her imagination, at which she looked with sickening anxiety. Would it bring thunder, and lightning, and destruction, or pass on with but a genial shower, leaving fresh greenness and life in its path? Was it the shadow of Death, or did the all-devouring tyrant hover near? And she grasped the child's hand, as she thought of the angel's calling. "Lottie, Lottie, Lottie," as if she would so keep Heaven from taking away her treasure; and in the long night-watches it recurred again and again; and each time her heart beat more quickly, a feeling of dread and awe overpowered her, and a tremor, passed over her frame like the feeling from sudden fright in the darkness; yet apart from her child there was no fear in that mother's heart. She felt that she could part with life itself to save her little one.

At last the long, weary, desolate night had gone, and the sun shone into the room fitfully as the clouds passed over it.

Lottie opened her eyes and looked up at her mother, and at the sunshine, and put her arms round her mother's neck, and said in a low, weak gentle voice:

"What's the matter mother? You look so sick! I'm not ill now mother, my headache's gone. Then she looked up at the sun again, and said: "Mother, I'll get up now." The mother's heart beat wildly with hope as she spoke, but the child could not move.

"But mother, I'm better, a great deal better; I'm only a little sick. Kiss me, mother. I saw you by my bed last night, but couldn't speak then."

She breathed hard from the effort she had made, and lay perfectly still, except her large eyes, which followed every movement of her mother about the room.

Then Dr. Jones came, and shrugged his shoulders at what had been done, though he declined interfering, but Mrs. May insisted, and called in old Dr. Armour, the friend of her father's youth also; and the three doctors met and had a consultation about the poor girl.

And Lottie was sometimes worse, and at others better; and at times she knew no one, not even her mother. It almost broke her

heart to see the child stare at her so vacantly and say such strange things. Then her eyes would change, and she would look up in her mother's face and smile, and be again her own dear Lottie.

In this manner two solemn, sad, and weary days of hope deferred passed away, and Lottie grew weaker and weaker.

Mrs. May sat at the side of her sleeping child hour after hour, and gazed at the shrunken hands and rough crimson cheeks, and listened to her deep breathing, every breath of which seemed like a groan. Oh, how freely would she have given her life to bring back the hue of health to those levered cheeks! She took up her embroidery, to try and wile away an hour of this torturing uncertainty, but the needle trembled in her hand, for the work itself was a seat for Lottie's little chair; she could not take a stitch. Then she took up her favourite author, but the letters seemed blurred; she could not distinguish a word; her pen to write, but the tears fell and mixed with the ink—emblem of her fast coming black despair. Then she knelt by the couch of her child to pray, but she could not; her prayers were the "groanings that could not be uttered," and she went to the window, and looked up towards the sun, but there were clouds over the sky; it seemed as if there were clouds over the sunshine always now. In the street she saw Dr. Jones's and Dr. Masson's gig approaching; but she left the room, for she began to lose faith in them, and went into the garden, where there was more air to breathe; she sometimes thought she would choke in the rooms, they seemed so small now.

When she came back, Dr. Armour was there also.

"Dr. Armour," said Mrs. May, with an appealing yet firm look, "will my child die?"

"Heaven grant she may not!"

"Doctor, I have steeled my heart to bear even her death. Will my child die?" And her look became more firm and grave, but she held her hand tightly over her heart.

"I am not omniscient, madam; your feelings probably tell you as much as all my science can. I fear the worst."

Mrs. May rose to her feet with a fixed and vacant stare, and moved slowly forward thro' the rooms. She had never yet in her heart thought that her child would die; woman like she had hoped against hope. For a moment she looked round vacantly; then all the scenes of these three days of torture crowded to her brain; the blood-shot eyes, the red, furrowed cheeks, the breathing a succession of groans, the Doctor's words, his look; and then like a flash of lightning through her brain passed the words, "Lottie must die," and she uttered a piercing scream and fell senseless on the floor.

When she came to herself, she was on her bed, and Dr. Armour standing by her. Recollection returned, and she said, with an unnatural calmness which startled him:

"Doctor is my child dead?"

"Not yet. But do not rise, madam, you are too weak."

Mrs. May looked at him with a surprised look, then rose and went to her child's bedside. Lottie knew her mother; and when Mrs. May took her hand, she felt it pulled slightly, and bent down her head until her lips touched those of her child, and she felt them move a little to kiss her; then she tried to speak, but could not! and the mother stood by the side of the bed with glazed eyes, in which were no tears, for she could not weep. Oh, how she wanted to weep, but could not, and her eyes burned her as she gazed at the dying girl.

The doctors stood round in silence, for they knew that she was dying; the mother bent over her in silence, she too, felt that she was dying; and the child gasped, and a slight gurgle was heard in her throat, and she lifted her head suddenly, and said, with a faint voice, "Mother!" and fell back on the pillow quite dead.

"God of mercy, help me to bear this!" said Mrs. May. "Almighty Father, help me to bear this! and she fell on her knees and clasped her hands in agony."

The doctors slowly and silently left the room, and went down stairs to have a chat before they separated.

Mrs. May started suddenly from her kneeling position, and looked earnestly at her child, last hope of her heart, last link that bound her to earth; and she hurriedly felt her feet, hands, heart, and put her ear down to the still, silent lips, then glided swiftly and noiselessly down stairs, to the back parlor, where the folding doors were ajar.

"Lower down; the breathing showed that. I was afraid we were to be kept up all night."

"I think you gave her too much calomel, Mason."

"Not a bit; she should have had more yesterday, instead of your arsenic."

"Well, well. Curious case."

"Very."

"Gentlemen," said the old grey-headed Dr. Armour, who had wept at the death bed, and had not spoken before, "gentlemen, it is unprofessional for me to say so, and late in life to acknowledge it, but this is all wrong somewhere. The child should not have died, and I must * * *

Mrs. May had been checked by the tone of the indifference, almost of levity, of the first speakers; now she threw open the doors, and stood there, drawn to her full height, and with her earnest eyes dilating, with a look that made them shrink as if she had seen a spectre: but she only said:

"Heaven help ye, gentlemen, in your ex-

treme need. Dr. Armour, for God's sake come back and tell me if the child's dead!"

They returned, but the corpse was growing cold.

Mrs. May clasped her hands round its neck, bent her head over its face, tear after tear rolled down her cheeks, and there she sat through the long night, clinging to the garment that had held her Lottie.

Mrs. May sat by the little coffin that contained her child's form. She had grown much older in the two long, weary, solemn days that Lottie had been dead. She could look at the death-sleep, and the little hands crossed on the bosom, and the closed lids over those dark, expressive eyes, and place fresh roses, and geraniums, and heliotrope, about the calm, life-like corpse, without weeping now; but there was a deep, fixed, almost stern expression of grief on her pale, classic face, which seemed to ask no sympathy, and was feeding on the springs of her own life. She could not pray yet. Often had she fallen on her knees since the little one's last faint "Mother!" but no utterance followed, for her heart only asked in agony, "Why, oh, why had he taken away her Lottie?" And thoughts high and deep passed through her mind, of time and space and Heaven and immortality, until imagination had wandered and lost itself in the dim confines which separate thought from the impenetrable mysteries which surround us, until all consciousness of time and space in her present life were lost; and then the question would recur, did He take her away, or was she sent uncalled from the earth, by unholy errors, by poisoning drugs; and she shrank from the question shuddering.

Carriage after carriage drove up to the door, the rooms were filled with the friends and acquaintances of the mourner and the mourned, and a solemn-looking man opened the Bible, and read, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Then he said many beautiful things about the child, which he had known from its birth; but Mrs. May could not listen, and sobbing out her anguish, left the room; for why had He taken away her Lottie? After the ceremony was over, she returned, and stood by the coffin, and looked at her child for the last time. She thought of all her grave and repose, even amongst her little play-mates, and all her arch and winning ways, and hot tears fell on the cold form. Then they closed the coffin, and placed it in the carriage with Mrs. May alone; she would have it so. They drove slowly down Broadway, and Mrs. May was startled by the noise of carts and omnibuses. It seemed strange that they drove on so furiously while Lottie was carried by; and crowds of people lined the streets, all gay and unheeding. Mrs. May drew down the curtains, and hid them from her sight. They passed over the south Ferry, and so on to Greenwood; and between the beautiful sculptures and white monuments (standing over buried hopes, like the rainbow over the abyss of the cataract, or the fair face over a crushed heart) until they came to Lottie's grave. It was a sweet spot, on the southern side of a gentle rise that overlooked the Bay and Narrows, and caught the first smile of Day, as he rose from the horizon and bathed himself in light; and the last rays of the sun rested on its bosom, while the twilight lingered there when darkness had hidden all below. Lottie had often played on it, and told her mother which was her corner. Poor child! she little thought how soon she would take possession; indeed, she always said it with a happy smile as if she had been immortal, and would never need any earthly resting-place.

Mrs. May remained in the carriage, and when they took the coffin towards the grave, there was again that fixed and glassy look, those tearless eyes. How she longed to keep even the corpse for ever near her.

They lowered the little coffin into the grave, and, as the earth fell on the lid, said, "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes!" and a little mound marked the place where, down in the earth the fair-haired girl awaited the final reckoning.

They came to Mrs. May as they passed out but she waved them away, and one after another left, until she was quite alone. Then she descended from the carriage, and went to the grave; and the servant brought a basket of flowers, and wept as he retired, for they all loved Lottie; and Mrs. May bent over the grave and strewed flowers about it, she felt so wholly desolate, now that they had taken away the last link, the body of her poor child. The sun went down, and the night came on, as she knelt there, and tree, and leaf, and insect, all were hushed as still as the grave beneath her; and she looked up to the heavens, and saw the stars, like tapers on the pall of darkness which shrouded her, and she gazed and gazed, and her heart longed for a revelation of her child's fate and her own in that mysterious sphere, and her heart was softened as she gazed. She then bent over the grave again, and took a little flower and put it in her bosom, and thought of her child and her last faint "Mother!" and the tears came to her eyes, her bursting heart felt vent, and she wept, oh, how long and passionately, as if existence itself were welling from her eyelids! Then she looked up again, and the sky seemed to have lost its darkness; and the stars dilated, and seemed to fill the heavens with glory; and her spirit became more rapt and exalted, as if spiritual influences were about her with which she could commune; and her lips were opened at last. She prayed long and earnestly to the Father who had taken her idol. She felt now too truly that it had been her idol, and she blessed His holy

name, and knew why He had taken her Lottie. Her mind became more exalted; a transcendent exaltation took possession of her soul, and it seemed to expand super-sensually until it lost sight of earth and its earthly tainment, and rose to the feeling, the consciousness, of the INFINITE. She seemed to have a dual existence, a being separate from her being; and looked down on herself, as she knelt at the grave, with an infinite pity. And her soul expanded in its exaltation, until she felt herself a link between the Infinite Holiness and the great Soul of Humanity; and while a feeling of infinite love and pity for mankind took possession of her soul, their errors and weaknesses shrank into the background: even her own sorrows became vague undefined, distant, almost little.

This consciousness, this exaltation, vouchsafed to the best of us so rarely, from the low or grovelling for ever barred, may come sometimes perhaps to mothers at the birth of their first-born, oftener at its death. A revelation to great minds at the moment of their best conceptions; to others at the moment of death, or when death suddenly becomes imminent and near, and fear does not paralyse the soul. Sometimes it comes with the fervid devotion of the worshipper, filled with a holy and living faith; seldom if ever, in mere religious ecstasy; this, the flash of the torch, soon out and lost; that like the June sunshine, lighting all things, and drawing them from the earth to warmth and life. But it comes to none without leaving him better, wiser, stronger to endure and bear, and with deeper sympathies for the sufferings and errors of his kind.

Mrs. May knelt there, wrapped in her new existence, hour after hour far into the night, until her servants were alarmed, and they came and accosted her; but she answered them calmly, and left the grave with a blessed peace in her heart; and they drove over the lonely road, and through the quiet and deserted streets, towards her desolate home, a sad, but a wiser and better being; for her soul had known the divine depth, and her heart had become the sanctuary of sorrow. God had taken away her loved ones for a time, but he had given his own love in their place, and she wept no more.

From the London Working Man's Friend.

SCIENCE AND COMMERCE.

In the early age of the world, Labour the sturdy son of Industry and Want, worked alone in the fields, and toiled day by day for the support of his numerous family. He was a strong well built fellow, whom no fatigue could conquer and no disappointment depress. He had married early—as was then, and still is, the custom among the toilers of the earth—but he chose a helpmate fitting his condition. She was called Endurance, the daughter of Poverty, but her real name was Courage, many children blessed their union, some of whom were strong and handsome, while the rest were weakly and deformed. These children, the offspring of Labour and Endurance, are known by various names among men.—The elder sons and daughters are called Content, Hopefulness, Enterprise, Self-Reliance, Perseverance, Prudence, and Ambition; while the latter-born have received the titles of Idleness, Unthrift, Recklessness, Combination, Riot, Intemperance, Scoff, and Ignorance. As the family grew up, many were the little bickerings which their parents had on account of their several propensities—the father inclined to the well conducted among them, while the mother, as is the custom among women, strove to excuse the shortcomings of her younger children, for in the great love she was apt to overlook their faults. With the care of so many sons and daughters, of such opposite tempers and inclinations, constantly pressing upon him, it was no wonder that labour failed to become rich. But, in spite of all this, he was still a hardworking, contented, and hopeful man; and as years crept unconsciously upon him, and he was no longer able to endure the heat and burden of the day, he was fain to rely on the strength of character which peculiarly distinguished the wife of his youth, and the good qualities common to the elder branches of his family. If Riot and Intemperance caused, as they often did, confusion and discontent in the household, the kindly feelings of Prudence, and the quiet smile of Hopefulness, were sure to make peace among them; if Unthrift and Recklessness dissipated in a day the earnings of a whole week, the genius of Enterprise and the impulse of Perseverance made up, in some measure for their lack of knowledge and worldly wisdom.—And so, in the course of years, the daughters married, and left the house of their parents, and the sons went out into the world to seek their fortunes, and their families increased and multiplied exceedingly throughout various ramifications—and the old couple were again left alone, as in the days of their youth.

But it pleased God to comfort their age with yet another little child. He was fair and comely and pleasant to look upon, with light-brown curling hair and sparkling eyes; and his parents esteemed themselves blessed in the possession of so handsome an image of themselves. To the father's strength and energy were added the mother's simplicity and beauty; and, as the child grew up, they noted that he possessed the characteristics of Activity and Courage, as well as the better qualities which distinguished his elder brothers. He was the last born of a large family, and his parents called him Commerce.

Years passed away, and the child grew to be a man. In his earliest youth, he had ex-