

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From Hogg's Edinburgh Instructor.
THE WORD IN SEASON.

Mrs Jenkinson's rebuke to his sister had fallen heavily on Jack's mind. At first he was angry at the hard and cold manner in which Bessy's mistress had spoken regarding so small and so well meant an action, but when Mr Jones appeared, his wrath changed to vexation at the whole business, and his own share in it, for Jack felt assured that all would be communicated to him. The Jenkinson's, young and old, whatever might be their individual differences, agreed on two articles of pride, to which even their knowledge cousin the young mechanic adhered. The first that the deceased Mr Jenkinson had kept a shop in the preserve and pickle line, with seven men and boys employed about it; and the second, that Mr Jones, the great manufacturer of the Royal Coburg button, was mamma's eldest brother. Mr Jones was one of the many men in England of whom it might be said that they made their own fortunes. Early neighbours in Bradford recollected him keeping a small hardware shop, and could trace his progress from one upward step of business to another, till he established the above-mentioned manufactory in Birmingham, some five years before. There were many greater capitalists, but no prouder man, in the town than Mr Jones. The thought his 'hand had gotten him this,' with which he surveyed his warehouse, and the scores depending on him for bread and work, had a self-magnifying effect on a mind naturally narrow, and capable only of money making. He kept his workmen at an awful distance, admitting the existence of no opinion but his own among his neighbors, and expected to be served like a sultan by his less wealthy relations. On that point at least Mr Jones was satisfied: all his relations, and his friends, including the Jenkinsons, had speculations on his will—not that the rich manufacturer was indeed heirless, but, while his pride grew, and his wealth increased, vexation and disappointment had found their way into his dwelling. In the rising days of his fortune, Mr Jones had married a notably industrious woman. Her days were careful and troubled about many things of the housekeeping kind. But she left him a widower. In less than three years Mr Jones was too busy either to miss her or marry again; but the pair had an only son, and the design of his life was to make that son a gentleman as he understood the term. Accordingly the boy was sent to some of the best schools in England, and in due time to college at Cambridge, equipped, trained and tutored, expressly for the estate which his father was to purchase for him out of the gains of his hard working life. People said that Harry Jones was worthy of all the old man's hopes and pains. He grew up handsome, lively and clever. There was still in his father's library a long shelf full of prize books which he had brought home from schools and colleges: he had a world of friends, and good reports of his character and conduct came from every quarter; but, in the midst of his college course, the young man lost place, prospect and his father's good graces, as it seemed for ever, for he married the kitchen maid of an inn.

The old man at once disowned him. He could have forgiven him anything but a low match, and his son was too proud, or knew him too well, to seek his forgiveness. From that time Harry disappeared, as far as his former friends and associates knew. Perhaps their search after him was not earnest. Some said he and his wife had sailed in a ship of free emigrants for Australia; some that they had taken to very humble ways of living in England; and Mr Jones never mentioned his son.

The disappointment of his long-cherished designs had no power to slacken his endeavors after riches. The manufactory took the place of wife and son to him. He lived alone in a great brick house, and was daily served, flattered and fawned upon by many hopeful expectants of his decease, whom the old man long outlived.

Jack worked in his factory, and though the idea of acknowledging a mere mechanic's relationship to his sister's family would have more than disgusted Mr Jones, the great man had taken particular notice of his industry and prudence, and Jack feared that the story might make himself and sister appear foolish in the eyes of Mr Jones.

With many resolutions never again to mind people at the doors of gin-shops, he walked silently, and one might say sullenly, on, beside Bessy, bidding her good night at Mrs Jenkinson's door, which happened to be in the next street.

According to Jack's fears, the tale was related in Mrs Jenkinson's sagacious manner, 'just to show what such people could take upon them,' that evening in the drawing room, when Bessy had been sent off with Mary and Anna to the usual routine of lessons and bed.

Mr Jones wondered that Jack had not more sense. Mrs Jenkinson considerably blamed the sister, who, she averred, had got notions about doing good not becoming her station.

George Frederick remarked that the shop-door sermon must have been an excellent joke; but the young lawyer's wonted laugh at his own wit seemed for that time insin-

cere. Neither his mamma nor Miss Elizabeth and still less the great button maker, had remarked how attentive he was to Bessy's comings and goings, and what, in his own opinion, attractive airs master George Frederick gave himself in her presence. The genius of the Jenkinson family could, however, condescend to the poor relation and governess only in bye and stealthy ways. Indeed, in common with all would-be great young men, George Frederick's opinion of women, unless blessed with rank and fortune, was rather low, and the prediction of a titled heiress for a bride would not have astonished him in the least.

Bessy was as keen as most girls to perceive but neither vain nor silly enough to be caught by such covered and master-like advances. She went quietly, and to all appearance unconsciously about her work and walks, and the young solicitor had been hitherto obliged to live and act without notice.

Often had his pride been piqued and wrath roused, by repeated failures in his scheme of conquering Bessy's heart; often had he tried to think her a dull, common-place creature, on whom it was not worth while to make an impression, but, in spite of all, his respect was won by her wise and gentle ways, and the vain, indolent young man caught himself in many a waking dream, proudly sharing with Bessy the fortune he should have inherited, and the fame he would have won. Still she did not admire him, or appreciate his genius—at least George Frederick thought so, though she had contrived that she should hear sundry little poems of his, which were read in the family circle, to the great glory of all the Jenkinsons; and also, that, if he could only bring his mind down to it, he would certainly make a fortune by the law.

George Frederick did not know how often Bessy had told Jack in confidence of his exceeding cleverness, and how she excused his airs and vanities, which her brother could not forgive, on the ground that Providence had given him such extraordinary talents, but not a mother like what theirs had been.

Master George Frederick pursued his legal studies in the manner of a man who knew them to be far beneath him; occasionally stooped to conquer Bessy, with wonted success; and wrote small verses on great subjects between Mrs and Miss Jenkinson laboured hard at gentility and Fern wool. Mr Jones and the Royal Coburg Button Manufactory went on as they had done before the commencement of our story. Jack toiled at his trade. Bessy washed, mended, and heard lessons till another evening, which found her and her brother in the same quiet street. The Jenkinsons were not with them then. Jack had reached the summit of his early ambition, for Bessy and he, each carrying a bundle of their last and slightest moveables, were on their way to a small house, which, thanks to repair and change, now opened where the gin shop had been. Its landlord had offered them the place at a reduced rent, partly because he had known their father, and partly because few families likely to pay could be accommodated there. The house consisted of a shop, a back parlor, two closets which the landlord called bed rooms, and another with a fire place in it, which he designated a kitchen. Well-to-do people would scarcely have thought the best apartment sufficiently large for a pantry, but it was a house of their own, the chattels their neighbor had kept for them were more than sufficient to furnish it, and all their savings, together with some credit, went to stock the shop with a miscellany of small wares likely to draw custom in the poor suburb of a great town. How Jack gloried in that shop and rejoiced in the back parlor when he and Bessy sat down there with their own kettle, on the hearth, and their own tea cups before them, need not be told; but his sister remembered that the little carpet had been darned by their poor mother, and the Bible in which she used to read stood first on the book shelf.

There were great evenings of planning and consultation between Jack and Bessy over their new estate. At first it was arranged that the brother should continue at his trade, while Bessy looked after the shop and house-keeping, and it was wonderful how things prospered under her zealous and careful management. She dressed dolls and made necklaces to attract juvenile pence, worked babies' caps and stitched dummies for more advanced customers; and Jack was always in a hurry home when his work was done, to do what he called balancing the books and talk with Bessy in the back parlor. Trade came and increased steadily; the shop assumed an appearance of flourishing, though humble business; all the neighbors came there; servants from greater streets began to find their way to Bessy's counter; and the Jenkinsons at length took a friendly interest in the establishment. They had filled Bessy's place with a gaily dressed, high spoken lady, to whom a larger salary and better accommodations were awarded, because she had been in France with a baronet's family, and could teach the twins *bon ton*. Master George Frederick had got quite disgusted at some difficulties in his profession, and given it up, saying he would devote his life to literature, which devotion he prosecuted in the meantime by preparing a volume of poems, and carrying on a brisk though covered flirtation with the new governess. George Frederick nevertheless persuaded his mother to patronize Bessy, and Mrs Jenkinson came with all the authority of a rich relative. She and her son were decided that Jack ought to make buttons no longer, but increase his stock of

fancy things and take entirely to shopkeeping as it was far more genteel. They talked so much of what themselves and their friends would buy, that Jack tried to believe the plan must make his and his sister's fortune; but the main argument in its favor was the gentility.

Against that, Bessy's fears of increased liabilities and uncertain sales had no weight; all the credit and capital which Jack could muster were put in immediate requisition for the fancy things, and he retired from button making with the leave of Mr Jones and the approbation of all the Jenkinsons. Into the varieties of his new goods we will not enter. Most readers know what a comprehensive term 'the fancy line' is; but Miss Elizabeth and her mamma agreed that Jack had got darling things, and the homely trifles of Bessy's administration were huddled away into corners. Jack was rather ashamed of them now. His promotion to shopkeeping had been so sudden, that he felt awkwardly vain of the business. His idle and dictation loving relations now thought him worth notice, and their daily visits and advices served to augment the young man's pride if not his profits. His confidence in Bessy was shaken by these great advisers. They rarely approved of her cautious measures, and Jack thought his rich cousins must know best.—The opportunity of direction, so dear to the hearts of mankind in proportion as they are unfitted for it, was not thrown away on the Jenkinsons. Under their instruction, the shop was remodelled, till its grandeur became the amazement of the street, and as the natural consequence of Jack's deference to their opinions and increased respectability, he was a general favorite with the family. Mrs Jenkinson occasionally invited him to tea; Miss Elizabeth found innumerable errands to the shop, so did an old officer of her acquaintance, but Jack did not observe that; and Master George Frederick made him a member of a literary society, consisting of his own humble companions and imitators who met every Saturday evening to read original papers in his mamma's drawing room. The gale of prosperity was faint, but sufficient to upset that untutored character. Jack grew to be a gentleman merchant in his own imagination: old clothes and acquaintances were alike disdained; he bought flash finery, assumed new airs, and paid especial court to Miss Elizabeth.

Bessy was left far behind in the march of his gentility. As her brother's expenses multiplied, hers were necessarily abridged, small as they had ever been, and as the world's folly and falsehood grew upon him, Jack came to consider his sister a sort of inferior or servant to his grandeur.

Nobody invited or patronized her, and Bessy did not care for that, but their old and loving companionship was broken; there was no more strolls together in the summer evenings, no more talks by the fire when the shop was shut on winter nights. At times Bessy thought she ought to be thankful because her brother had learned no dissipated habits, and his associates were so respectable; but the hours were dreary which she worked away in the house alone, and the girls could not help regretting the little twins and their lessons.

Perhaps she thought of George Frederick, too; how his airs were now put on for the new governess, doubtless not in vain, as had told Jack in confidence that there was one woman who could understand him, and the Governess was known to distribute scraps of poetry, signed by F. J., among her friends.

Bessy was thinking sadly of these changes, as she sat one summer Saturday evening, darning her own worn shawl by the waning light for the next day's church, when Jack, who had gone as usual to the literary society, returned in high excitement.

Their meeting had been broken up by the intelligence that Mr Jones was seized with apoplexy while looking over his accounts, after a late dinner, and the doctor did not believe he could survive till the morning.

That night Jack could talk of nothing but the wealth the Jenkinsons would inherit by the old man's will, and how Miss Elizabeth had advised him to lay in a stock of jet ornaments.

'Indeed, brother,' said Bessy, on whose mind a fear of worldly risk had been growing, 'we have more goods than custom already, and I think Miss Elizabeth neither knows nor cares much about our business.'

'She may have more interest in it than you think,' said Jack with a look that told of great expectations and greater vanity. 'Mr Jones's will may be a good thing for us all; but I am dreadfully tired now, and must go to bed.'

Bessy lit her low gas and darned on, wondering if the match would turn out well for her brother, and where she would find refuge from the grandeur of her intended relation; but the same night Mr Jones passed from money making, factory and flatterers, to look over life's accounts, and the following week brought a succession of shocks till then unparalleled in the Jenkinson family.

First, Mr Jenkinson's long disowned son arrived, with his wife and three children, not from Australia, but a small secluded village in the primitive County of Norfolk, in time to take possession of his father's great house, superintend the funeral, and prove himself heir; for, to the general amazement of his relatives, the rich and rigid old man had made no will.

Next it came out that, in prospect of the unbequeathed legacy, Master George Frederick had, only the day before, clandestinely married the new Governess, whom people

then discovered to have been a lady's maid of doubtful repute.

Mrs Jenkinson turned out her new daughter in law, with the declaration that her family prospects were ruined and their name forever disgraced, on which the poet, hoping to achieve fame and fortune by his talents, retired to the most expensive lodgings accessible in town, from whence a series of wrathful epistles passed between him and his family; and his wife advertised to teach deportment and the piano.

There was great gossip and much laughter at these occurrences. The Jenkinson's fell at least fifty per cent. in the estimation of their genteel friends; rumors of living above their income also began to arise, and the new Mr Jones did not notice them. Report spoke of him as a reserved domestic man, whom old acquaintances averred they would never have known to be the dashing student. He kept his family quiet, and looked after the business as strictly as ever his father had done, but his workmen said, with more considerate ways.

Jack's neighbors remarked that he had a disappointed look, and Bessy never spoke of the Jenkinson's if she could help it. Her brother went to their house sometimes, with the intent of acting the comforter, but latterly Miss Elizabeth was nowhere to be seen, and the servant began to say that Mrs Jenkinson was not at home. Jack was puzzled but nearer difficulties were now pressing on him and his sister. Fancy things were but little wanted in that neighborhood, and Jack's zeal for selling them was not according to knowledge. The old goods had been put so completely out of sight that customers ceased to enquire for them, and went elsewhere. In consequence, he had done no business that season, while his expenses had been unusually great, in spite of all Bessy's care and industry. Their savings and earnings too had long since dwindled away; and the creditors, to whom the greater part of the stock was still owing, became importunate.

Jack had been too deeply engaged to observe the coming evil, though it cost Bessy many a troubled hour, till the girl began to fear that worldly mindedness was growing upon her, and the nights became sleepless with thoughts of debt and danger. But her earnest warnings had been generally answered with a maxim, caught from George Frederick, that 'women are always afraid of something,' and, when a quiet hour for examining their books, or taking counsel came, Jack was sure to be in a hurry after the Jenkinsons. Now that creditors were pressing, and sales scarcely supplied their daily expenditure (by this time on the most meagre scale) Jack's courage fell at once, but not his pride. Like most weak people, he could not be brought to look misfortune fairly in the face, or think what was best to be done, but the greater part of his time was spent in useless regrets over the past.

'If he had continued at his trade—if he had not opened shop at all—how well he would have been. Now, he must go into the Gazette—perhaps to prison. It was all by taking that house. What would the whole street say, and the Jenkinsons think, of them?'

He was talking in this strain as they looked over their books one evening in the empty shop. His words cut Bessy to the heart, for the implied blame was in them, but she knew her brother's mind was sorely pressed.

'Jack, dear,' said the girl, 'perhaps we were both wrong, but we did it all for the best. What signifies what the street says? If you must go into the Gazette, so did many an honest man; and as for the Jenkinsons, they care little for us.'

'How do you know what they cared for?' cried Jack in a burst of grief and anger. 'I shouldn't care myself if it were not for Elizabeth; I know it will break her heart.'

Bessy was about to reply, but she was interrupted by the entrance of young Bryce, an attorney's clerk, who had formed one of the Saturday's meeting at Mrs Jenkinson's.

'I should doubtless congratulate you in the matter of your cousin, Miss Elizabeth,' said the young man, who was noted as a news gatherer, and known to be spiteful.

'What about her?' cried Jack eagerly.

'Why,' said Mr Bryce, 'she has at last caught—I mean the old lieutenant has prevailed upon her to become Mrs Williams, and the wedding is fixed for this day week.'

Jack crushed the ledger between his hands and retired into the parlor at that intelligence and Mr Bryce, having looked at a purse, which he promised to think of, went his way to communicate the news, with some additions, to his next acquaintance.

Jack had little time for reflection or composure. Scarce was Mr Bryce gone, when a commercial traveller, from whom the said purse, with many of its congeners, had been ordered under the Jenkinson's way, stepped in to request the settlement of his little account, sharply reminding Bessy that this was the third application, and to all her apologies, the man answered only that he would call to-morrow, when if they did not pay, his firm would take legal proceedings. As he went out with that threat, the clerk of Mr Stephen's, their principal creditor in town, entered with a bill, which he said would be protested next day if his employer did not get the cash; and while Bessy was pleading with him for some delay, there arrived a note from their landlord's man of business, informing them that their last quarter's rent was long due, and if not paid immediately he must distrain their goods.

A report of failure and poverty had gone