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NEC ARANEARUM SANIS TEXTUS IDEO MELIOR, QUIA EX SE FILA GIGNUNT, NEC NOSTER VILIOR QUIA EX ALIENIS LIBANUS UT APES.

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LITERATURE.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

From Harper's Monthly Magazine for July.
HESTER.

As they entered, Colonel Staunton rose to meet them, and came forward. He was like a man who had grown prematurely old. His hair was scarcely gray, and his age might not have much exceeded fifty, but his eye was dim and sunken, his white and hollow cheeks seemed with wrinkles, his step feeble and unsteady, his whole appearance worn out and faded; and yet in strange opposition to all else about him, his manner was almost courtly in its studied urbanity and ceremonious politeness. But it ill-suited him. The artificial smile with which he came forward to meet his visitors sat strangely on his pale, withered lips. The very first tones of his voice raised an involuntary suspicion of insincerity; the still visible remains of eminent handsomeness of form only seemed to make the faded face and figure more unprepossessing.

Lily came in a little in advance; before Mr Thurnell could introduce her, he guessed that it was she who was to be his future niece, and at once addressed her:

"Miss Thurnell, I have to make a thousand apologies—and yet I scarcely know how to regret my inability to visit you, since I am indebted to it for the pleasure I know—"

The sentence broke off abruptly, and in an instant Colonel Staunton stood in perfect silence, but a great and sudden change had come over him. The false smile had passed from his lips; the whole studied expression of high-flown courtesy had vanished from his face; every thing that was artificial and unreal seemed in a moment, as if by magic, to have been torn away from him; more haggard even than before, more deadly pale, he stood still by Lily's side, holding the tips of her fingers in his hand; but her very existence was forgotten, for looking beyond her, his eyes had fallen, and were fixed in wild amazement upon Hester's face.

For one instant every thing was silent, for all was thrown into a sudden, strange surprise; then, in a shaking voice, yet loud and passionate, Colonel Staunton cried, "Who is the girl?" and his eyes did not dim now, but burning with a fierce, uneasy light, flashed for an instant upon Mr. Thurnell, then fixed themselves again where they had rested first.

Mr Thurnell stood by Hester's side and answered steadily and calmly, "She is my adopted daughter; her name is Hester Ingram."

The words had scarcely passed his lips when, with a wild cry, they were echoed through the room.

"Hester Ingram! Hester Ingram a girl like that! Are you daring to mock me?" and from one to another of the astonished group his piercing glance went like a flash of fire; then, with a quick step forward, he was by Hester's side, with his hand upon her shoulder, grasping her firmly.

She shook from head to foot, her color went and came, her heart beat passionately with a wild hope, a wild fear; her eyes met Colonel Staunton's, as he gazed upon her, with a pleading, melting look, that seemed to move him strangely, for, as he looked on her, his lips began to tremble, his frowning brow began to be unknit, the fierce expression of his eyes began to soften as though the reflected light from hers was falling on them.

Some moments passed in perfect silence, then Colonel Staunton spoke again, and it was to Hester that he addressed himself. There was an assumed calmness in his voice as he began, and yet, against his will, it trembled.

"Your name, you say, is Hester Ingram. Will you permit me to inquire, if Ingram was your father's name?" He bent his eyes more eagerly than ever on her face.

"I never knew my father's name," she answered, in a low, agitated voice; "my mother's was the same as mine."

"Her maiden name, you mean? her maiden, not her married name?" he asked eagerly and impatiently.

"I do not know which. When I was very young, she left my father's house; I was too young to know what name she bore there."

"Go on!" he cried impetuously. "She left her husband's house—where did she go? what became of her?"

"She went from one place to another. We were very poor—she died at last of starvation! and, sobbing, Hester hid her face upon her hands. The piercing gaze fell from her face now at last."

"Give me a seat," he whispered, in a low hoarse voice, and, almost staggering, he moved back a step or two, and, sinking

on a chair, his head fell down upon his breast.

No one approached or spoke to him; but kind and strengthened words were whispered into Hester's ear, and kind, warm hands clasped hers. But she could not answer them: her whole soul seemed to be absorbed in the silent, intense gaze that she had fixed on Colonel Staunton's face. Suddenly, when more than a minute had gone by, he lifted his head again, and, rising for a moment from his chair, said slowly—

"Leave the room, all of you; let me speak alone with—my daughter."

A half broken, stifled cry burst from Hester's bosom: not any word from her or any one. Silently, with only from Mr Thurnell one pressure of the hand, they went away, and Colonel Staunton and Hester were left together.

"Hester! come near to me!" he said.

She came, almost mechanically, like one walking in her sleep; but when she had reached where he sat, and saw the hand that was coldly put out to meet her, something that the shock of his last words had deadened within her, sprang suddenly into life again. Forgetting every thing but what he was to her, she broke into a passionate flood of tears, and sobbing "Father!" she fell down at his feet, and clasped her hands around his knees.

He started at her sudden action, and for a moment almost shrank back from her; but, cold, and selfish, and almost heartless as he was, there was something so touching in the gush of undesired, involuntary love with which she met him, that it awakened something like affection even in his bosom, and yielding to sudden impulse that he felt, he raised her from the ground, and whispering, "My poor child, my poor injured child," he held her closely in his arms, and let her weep upon his bosom.

They sat down side by side, and talked together. She told him all her and her mother's sorrowful wanderings—how they had grown so poor and full of misery—how help came only when it was too late to save her mother's life—how the bread, for want of which she died, when it was brought to her at last, she could not eat; and, as she spoke, bitterly weeping herself more than one tear rose to her father's eyes. But when, at last, after they had talked together long, she ventured timidly to ask a question, that from the first had trembled on her lips, to ask what thing it was that drove her mother from her husband's house, his brow grew clouded, and his voice was full of anger, and, scarcely answering her question, he launched out into loud and violent denunciations of his wife's conduct, which Hester bore in silence, with a heaving heart, until her love and reverence for her mother's memory overcame all other feelings, and she broke forth with an indignant protest against his unjust words.

He did not answer her when she ceased speaking; perhaps she said something that touched his conscience; but sat in silence with a frown upon his brow, until his daughter, grieving already that she had said so much, pressed back her tears, and timidly, but with deep earnestness, again began to speak:

"Oh, my father, forgive me for angering you in this first hour! I may have spoken foolishly, speaking of what I do not understand; but think how dear my mother was to me, and pardon me; and if she did wrong to leave you, oh, think of all she suffered!—of the wretched death she died!—and forgive her too! Perhaps—father, I am very bold—perhaps there was some fault both on her side and yours—perhaps each of you misunderstood the other—perhaps—oh, I know this well!—this happens often between people of high, noble natures!—you could not harmonize together, and so there grew up bitterness between you. Oh, father, let me make excuses for you both—not for her only! Let me love you both! I have loved her all my life—I must love her till I die! but my heart is yearning—oh, it has yearned so many long years—to love my father, too!"

Her eyes had grown so full of tears, that she could not raise them to her face; but with hands pressed together, with her head bent down, and trembling with an agitation that she could not still, she waited his answer. It came and thrilled her with delight; for he held her in his arms again, and bade her love him—love him, as she had loved her mother, and prayed God to bless her, thanking Him for having given him back his child, to be a comfort and a joy to him in his old age.

They sat again together, hand in hand, and with the sudden glow of generous feeling still upon him, Colonel Staunton spoke about his wife:

"If I was harsh just now in mentioning your mother, Hester, pardon me. She was a noble and high-minded woman, and I loved her; I loved her, if ever I loved any thing in the world; but she—"

but—we both had faults. We were both warm tempered. She was very haughty, haughty (and in the recollection of the past his brow began again to darken) as no woman should dare to be toward her husband. She left me in a moment of sudden passion. There was a quarrel, a violent quarrel; Hester, can you expect that I should tell you more? She was gone before I was aware of it, and when I knew it, every thing that it was possible to do, Hester—I give you my word for it—I did, to discover where she had gone, but the search was all in vain. After six months I gave it up, and left England. God knows, I forgive her now, all that she has made me suffer! Mine has been a lonely life—a very lonely life, my child! You have found your father a poor wreck, Hester; and it might have been quite different if I had had a kind wife or daughter near me. It is a sad thing to be nursed by none but servants, Hester—a very sad thing?"

Colonel Staunton spoke in such a feeling voice, that the tears sprang into Hester's eyes, and, full of pity, she pressed her lips upon his hand, and murmured, "My poor father!" in such a tone of sympathy, that he probably became more than ever convinced of the greatness of the injury that had for so long been done him.

"But my dear child will not let her father be left again to the care of strangers! My daughter will be my kind nurse now—my kind nurse and my comforter—will she not?"

"Yes, while I live!" was the answer that came from Hester's heart; and again she pressed a long kiss on her father's hand, as if to seal her promise.

Thus Hester found her father: thus at last, her life's wish was fulfilled, and in the fulfilment the whole current of her life was changed; for she had to leave the house where fourteen years had passed over her head so peacefully and so happily; she had to leave the generous, warm-hearted friends who had been kind and dear as a father and a sister to her, to become the unthanked nurse of an ailing, and overbearing, and selfish man, who, having acknowledged her as his child, and made her the heir of his property, considered that he had purchased the undoubted right to her ceaseless and faithful services while he lived. And she, in her gentle, patient way—it was strange how, with such parents, she had grown up so sweetly tempered—bent herself to his will, and never murmuring, for ten long years, devoted herself entirely to him, living in what sweet Lily Thurnell indignantly called an absolute imprisonment—and called not untruly; for ever, as the time passed on, Colonel Staunton grew more and more fretful and impatient if she left him even for a few hours, complaining, with such bitter words, that it was hard his own daughter, a girl who had been a poor dependent upon a stranger's charity until her good fortune led him to discover her, should grudge the little attendance on him that he asked; and so wounding her gentle heart—he soon learnt how easily it could be wrong—by talking with affected emotion of the relief his death would be to her, that at last she scarcely ever ventured from the house; and for some years she never saw either Mr Thurnell or Lily, except when they came, sometimes at long intervals, to visit her at her father's.

A little paler, and a little thinner, and a little sadder-looking, poor Hester grew with every year, and with every increasing anxiety and regret her kind friends watched the gradual change; but she never complained, never said that she was ill or weary, never breathed, during all her years of trial, a single discontented word. She had learnt in her childhood such a lesson of patient suffering, that to bear without murmuring seemed almost natural to her.

After ten years had passed, Colonel Staunton died. He never, to the last moment of his life, recognized his daughter's noble spirit of self-sacrifice, but because he spoke kindly to her, and ceased his usual outbursts of ill-temper during the last few days of his illness, she thought herself repaid for all she had done for him; and when he died, she felt as sorrowful and desolate as though she had lost a real father and a friend. On the day of the funeral, Mr Thurnell took her home with him again; and there, once more, in the sunshine and the warmth, her heart expanded, and her joy returned, and her pale cheeks recovered their glow of health.

And in that home she still at this time lives, for she has never married, saying laughingly, that she had no time to spare upon a husband; and, indeed, to judge by how fully her time is occupied now without one, it would seem that she must be tolerably in the right; for Mr Thurnell, though a hale old man, is troubled now and then with a fit of gout, and at such times Hester is his willing nurse; and, of

late years, too, he has been a good deal impressed with the opinion, that the spectacles of the present day are not at all to be compared with those of twenty years ago, and therefore he entertains anything but an objection to Hester's reading out to him—and accordingly Hester does read loud for two or three hours a day. Then Lily, who lives mostly in London, for Mr Staunton is a lawyer there, is so continually beseeching Hester to come and stay with her, that she has, at least three or four times a year to perform a little journey on the Great Western Railway for that purpose, and seldom returns home again without one or other of Lily's children, whose constitutions, they being already the strongest and healthiest little fellows in the world, grandpapa and Cousin Hester are always extremely anxious still more to strengthen and improve by country air; and Hester is consequently rarely without a wild high-spirited boy, to take charge of which—for she has an unconquerable love for helping him in all his games—occupies no little portion of her time. Then there are old women in little two-roomed cottages who always brighten at the sight of Hester's gentle, cheerful face upon the threshold; and mothers, with large families, who are not much skilled in needle work, and can never get their children decently clothed, unless Hester buys, and cuts out, and sews for them; and fathers who are always falling out of work, and leaving the management of their affairs to Hester; and a school which Hester has built herself, and where she must go and teach; and so many more little duties and pleasures than it is possible to enumerate, to be got through every day of her life, that the only wonder is how she finds any time—not for a husband, he is out of the question—but any at all even for herself.

And so, quietly, and busily, and peacefully, Hester Staunton's days pass on. Around her there is nothing but sunshine and content, and love; and, each making the others life happy, she and her father—for once more they have become father and daughter to each other—thank God from day to day for the Providence that brought them first together.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal. THINGS TALKED OF IN LONDON.

The United Kingdom Electric Telegraph Company, who obtained their act two years ago, are given signs of life; they propose to erect lines between London and all the chief towns and ports, to transmit messages at very small charges—say, a penny a word, something like the rates in the United States; and to let the exclusive use of a wire to any mercantile house requiring it. It has often been argued, that England is too small a country to make cheap telegraphic communications either needful or profitable. We shall see, if ever the Company's project exists in a tangible form. Meantime, preparations are being made at Holland's for the under-sea telegraph to Orfordness; and late advices from the Mediterranean, state that Malta and Sardinia are to be connected in a similar way. It is perhaps safe to say, that no useful invention has ever spread itself so rapidly over the world as the electric telegraph.

The improving condition of the nation generally is a fertile subject of talk, and many are the theories and predictions as to what will grow out of it in the future. Some contend that a great untaxed class, growing every year stronger and richer, will prove a source of danger in time to come. If this be true, so much the more necessity to educate. Were the artisans of Sheffield properly educated, they would stick to work, now that work is abundant, instead of wilfully wasting time in idleness or worse. They will find out their mistake ere long; for the young and better-taught generation are treading fast on their heels. Wages are still on the rise, farm-labourers are becoming every day more conscious of their value, and we shall doubtless want a large number of reaping machines for the next harvest. Government has asked the Agricultural Society to undertake the collection of a series of agricultural statistics, probably to serve as data for future legislation; but the buccinic corporation are disinclined to the task; so, unless some other means be devised of arriving at the facts, we must remain yet longer in ignorance of much that is desirable to be known concerning farms, their economy, crops, cattle, &c., and the physical and moral condition of those who till them. There is scarcely another country in Europe in which these subjects do not appear in periodical reports.

A Peruvian railroad is talked about; it will be a paying one if it touches the vast beds of nitrate of soda lying at the foot of the Andes, ready for transmutation into corn and gold. A new geographical survey of Spain is to be set on foot, which

will doubtless lead to the discovery of undeveloped resources in that country; and if the Dona will only try to turn them to account, they may again hold up their heads among their contemporaries. The railway from the French frontier to Madrid, ought, as its construction proceeds, to stir up the Iberian blood to something like enterprise, while at the same time offering a route to trade and tourists.

If our promised customs reforms are to produce their natural effect of facilitating and increasing trade, so much the more reason is there to wish success to a long-talked-of project for some means of preventing shipwrecks on the Goodwin Sands. The scheme now contemplated provides for an extensive breakwater, a harbour of refuge, and a light house, the constructions to be open-timbered, to offer less resistance to the sea than would be the case with solid works. The fact that 500 lives and £500,000 worth of property have been lost in the Channel within the past eighteen months, and chiefly on the Goodwin, is stronger than any argument that can be urged in favour of the scheme. If this scheme can be realised, what a triumph it will be of modern Engineering!

A report just published shows that the Mint has not been idle, and it may afford some idea of the working capabilities of that establishment, to give the results. From January 1 to March 31 of the present year, there were coined 4,304,227 sovereigns, 62,260 half-sovereigns, 382,214 florins, 817,440 shillings, 483,120 sixpences, 4158 farthings, 4488 threepences, 4752 twopences, and 7920 silver pennies. What evidence such an aggregate furnishes of the vast and ceaseless demands of commerce! The weight of gold converted into coin was a little more than 92,784 pounds. No wonder the gold diggers are kept so busy in Australia. Appropos of the land of gold—many disappointed emigrants have come back; nothing was as they anticipated—gold digging, employment, country, climate, all proved to have been charming only in the distance.

Another portion of Southern Africa has been explored by Mr Campbell, who travelled 150 miles up a river which flows into Lake Ngami, where he heard of other large streams, stretching far to the interior of the continent, and found the natives everywhere disposed to trade. How much more buying and selling enter into the views of travellers now than formerly! in which we may see a sign of the times—trade being the prime mover of the present century. If as Thomas Carlyle says, it is the destiny of the Anglo-Saxon race to spin cotton for all the world, the sooner we become acquainted with all our customers the better. We are shortly to know something more of Kalmucks; for the Imperial Printing-Office at Vienna has just cast a font of Kalmuck type, and is going to print Professor Julg's researches in that language. We are also about to renew our acquaintance with Andagsear; the princes of that country having come of an age, is determined to revoke his mother's edicts for the expulsion of the English missionaries; and now Mr Ellis is to go out with a small party, to resume the interrupted work under the new auspices. If Madagascar would but emerge from its barbarism, its exhaustless resources would render it a most tempting field for emigrants not afraid of an equatorial climate.

From God's Lady's Book. TALKING OF OTHERS.

It is very difficult, and requires all the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove; to talk of people, without violating the laws of charity or of truth; it is best therefore to avoid it. By substituting books, and the vast variety of characters and opinions which they present, you give yourself and your companions ample scope for the expression of your thoughts and feelings, for the discussion of various questions, for sharpening each other's wits by collision of sentiment, correcting the judgment by comparison and discrimination, and strengthening the memory by repetition and quotation.

THE LAST WORD.

If you consider having the last word a victory, we advise you for the future to resign it and suffer the defeat. Husband and wife should no more fight to get it than they should struggle for the possession of a lighted bomb shell. Married people should study each other's weak points of the tea, in order to avoid them. Ladies who marry for love should remember that the union of angels with woman has been forbidden since the flood. The wife is the sun of the social system. Unless she attracts, there is nothing to keep heavy bodies like husbands from flying into space. The wife, who would properly discharge her duties, should never have a soul above trifles. Don't trust too much to good ten-