

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

Form Harper's Monthly Magazine for November.

THE QUAKER'S WIFE.

CALLING the box-keeper, the young nobleman, for such he was, signed to him to open the door; he was obeyed, and on Martha thanking him he bowed and rejoined his friends below, who were engaged in an animated discussion as to the pretty Quakeress in disguise. As the box-door opened, Everard Wilson turned, and I will not attempt to depict the expression on his face as he, with some difficulty, recognized his wife.—“Thou!” said he, knitting his brows; then taking her by the wrist, he led her toward the door. “Martha!” he exclaimed, “dost thou understand thine actions? art thou departed from reason? This dress? Oh, shame! that thy husband should blush for thee.”

“Shame on thyself,” said the exasperated wife. “Darest thou to confront me, thou and thy shameless paramour?”

The young female, who had hastily drawn the curtains, and had sat apparently much amazed at this scene, and who, with her eye-glass directed toward the excited Martha, seemed likewise considerably amused, burst at this crisis into a loud laugh. She was about to address Martha, when when Everard laid his hand on her arm.

“Silence,” said he, “I will not have her addressed by thee—dost thou understand? not one sentence.” Then turning to the disgusted and alienated wife, “Woman,” he said, “I am thy husband; on thy duty I command thee to depart home. This is no time or place to explain, if I even choose to do so—but I do not. Come I will assist thee to thy conveyance.—Edith,” to the strange female, do thou remain here—alone—mark me. I trust thee for a few short moments; let me not on my return find myself deceived;” so saying he took his wife's hand and led her out, resistless, powerless, stupefied with combined anger, terror, and apprehension. As one in a dream, she suffered him to lead her; then as Everard dispatched a message for a chair, she demanded if he meant to leave the “Woman of Belial,” and depart with her?

“I do not,” said Everard; “My duty leads me to remain here: ask no questions, for I shall answer none. Thou hast much transgressed this night, and it will need all my love to accord thee pardon.”

“Thou,” said Martha, “pardon me! I thank thee; thou hast said well; henceforth join whom thou wilt. — Street,” she said to the chairman, as, repulsing Everard's assistance, she entered the sedan; the bearers went on, and Martha, in the midst of her indignation, was reminded by her chillness that she had lost the wrapping in which she came, so that she would have to enter her own house in her assumed dress was very evident. When the chair stopped at her own home, she gave orders to the men that her women should bring a cloak out; her orders being obeyed, she enveloped her person in it before she quitted the sedan. But, truth to say, the quiet Quaker household were sufficiently scandalized at their mistress's proceedings without beholding with their own eyes her strange and unseemly transformation.—Martha's first step, after destroying her opera costume, and securely hiding the remains from the prying eyes of Rachel, was to abandon her own apartment, and lodge herself in a remote one; she had succeeded in discovering the source of her unhappiness; she felt degraded in her own estimation; her husband had all but avowed that she had forfeited his, and a more thoroughly miserable woman perhaps did not at that moment exist.

The next morning, having spent the night in tears and lamentations, she despatched a letter to Everard, requesting that if he could not satisfactorily account for his conduct he would prepare measures for an immediate separation.—Everard turned pale when he read this letter, so haughty and uncompromising in its tone—as he thought, so unwelcome. He had been all that night preparing for a humiliating confession, but one which would have restored him Martha's unbounded love and confidence. Now, the demon of pride stepped in and whispered, “To act thus, I will not wound my own feelings to save hers.” He therefore returned an answer, avowing it impossible to explain at present, the matter involving another person's honor. He also requested his wife to summon her parents and provide her own man of business. Martha, heart-sicken, and firmly convinced of his guilt, did as he desired, and the result of these proceedings was, that she returned to her own family in a state of health which afforded the most serious grounds for apprehensions of the worst kind.

Thus did twelve months pass away, mournfully enough to Martha. Her appearance was so altered that, save for elegance of demeanor, few would have recognized the beautiful Quakeress. Her own fortune had been returned, and all allowance from Everard declined.

She never heard of him, for all communication between the families was interdicted.—Quakers are silently vindictive, and Friends

Clifton, loving their daughter fondly, resented strongly her wrongs. One day she received a note written in a small female hand, requesting Mrs Wilson would visit a house in a street named in the neighbourhood of Bloomsbury, where there was a dying woman who had injured her. Such an invitation Martha would scarcely have refused at any time, but perhaps a foreboding of who this enemy might be, induced her still more urgently on this occasion to go.—She desired Christiana Marcourt to attend her thither, and Christiana, who possessed her confidence, and was much respected by her, consenting, they departed together to the locality indicated in the note, and arrived at the door of a mean looking house. A woman servant ushered them to a room on the first floor; there, stretched on a couch arranged as a bed, lay a girl evidently in the last stage of rapid decline. The invalid beckoned her visitors to take chairs close to the couch, for a cough distressing even to hear, interrupted the poor girl every minute. Martha, who had recognised her opera rival, turned pale, and the tears came into her fine dark eyes; she evidently anticipated a heart-rending confession of wrongs and injuries done to herself; judge, then, how great was her surprise, when, after a paroxysm of coughing was over, and the sick girl able to speak, she addressed Mistress Wilson by saying, “I sent to tell you—for I could not die till I had done so—that your husband is innocent of all guilt as regards myself, for I am—his sister.” An exclamation burst from the lips of Martha. She continued, “hear what I have to say while breath is yet given me. It was shame first sealed Everard's lips, and pride seals them now, and the fear that false shame and wounded pride together will seal them when I am gone, has induced me to send for you to-day.” A pause ensued; the unhappy young creature was breathless and nearly fainting; when a little recovered, she related such circumstances as I shall narrate precisely as I heard them.

At sixteen years of age Edith Wilson, notwithstanding the strictness of her education and the sobriety of her father's household, possessed an incorrigible levity of heart and mind. Gifted with great beauty, her gaiety was not the pardonable effervescence of youth, but the frivolity and natural vicious tendency of an idle disposition joined to strong passions. She formed, secretly, acquaintances out of the society; and many a night, when her parents deemed her retired to rest, had she quitted her paternal roof, and been a partaker of all the secret and not over-reputable diversions, which even in the strict and Puritanical city of Philadelphia found votaries among the young and viciously inclined. Some natures are so warped, so gnarled, and knotted by secret vice, that not all the pious training in the world could bend them straight. One bad female acquaintance, many vile books, had so perverted Edith Wilson, that at eighteen she secretly laughed at all moral or religious notions. I do not wish, however to dilate on the errors of this guilty young creature; suffice it, that when she was by her parents formally betrothed to a staid and somewhat elderly merchant of the Quaker persuasion, she eloped from her father's house, robbing his bureau of a large sum in money, and sailed from New York undiscovered, though her distracted brother and father lost no time in pursuit. She made her voyage alone and unprotected. On arriving in England, though to continue so, formed no part of her plan, girted with the rarest beauty and immense vivacity, destruction, seeking for it as she did, was inevitable.

When her brother Everard (whose chief object in coming to England was to discover and reclaim her if possible,) some short time after his marriage, did recognize her, to his unimagined horror and subsequent torment, she was dressed in splendor, loling in the carriage of a well-known profligate nobleman. Everard, though burning with shame and confusion, stopped the carriage, and addressing his sister by name, insisted on her alighting and entering a private hotel close at hand. The shameless girl defied him, till he, threatening to pursue her for robbery, she found herself obliged to succumb, and dismissing her gaudy equipage, accompanied her brother in silent rage to the house he pointed out. A long and most unsatisfactory conversation ensued. Edith persisting in her right to pursue any course of life she pleased; her brother, equally determined to force her into decorum and submission, asserted his resolution never to leave her unwatched or unguarded.—At first the wretched girl laughed the idea to scorn, but she soon found Everard was perfectly in earnest. He dispatched a messenger with a note to an old servant of his, now retired from service, and to whom he resolved to intrust the charge of his sister when he was forced to be absent. When the old man arrived, obedient to his late master's summons, he desired him to call a hackney-coach, and to look for lodgings in a certain part of the town he named; and leading the indignant Edith to the coach, placed her in it, and drove slowly thither. She had then recourse to tears and entreaties, but they had as little effect as her passion. “Lost as she was,” he told her, irrefragably for earth, he would try to save her for heaven.” She asked, with scorn and baited rage flashing from her beautiful eyes, if he intended to take her to his house. He indignantly asked if she thought such a thing possible. What! pollute his pure

and beautiful Martha's eyes with the sight of such a sister! Thus they reached the apartments which Andrew, who was waiting in a street previously agreed on, had hired; and here, these plainly furnished rooms was Edith Wilson told she must consider her home for the present. She raved, stormed and threatened, but to no purpose. She was never left unguarded by her brother or his servant; and being without money she had no means to break her chain.

This life continued some time, till one day, reading the Gazette, she discovered that a rich and childless relative, ignorant of course of her misconduct, had left her a large sum of money. Not being able to claim it without Everard's assistance, she formed a new plan—she effected extreme penitence and humility; and so perfectly deceived her brother, that having claimed the legacy for her, he was induced to place the power of disposing of it in her own hands, and hoped that she might be now trusted. She pursued this new conduct for some time, till Andrew and her brother off their guard, she gave unbounded license to her love of expense. Her object being to see her former admirer, she engaged a box at the opera; and Everard found to his horror that opposition was in vain; nothing seemed effectual but his constant surveillance.

A billet from Lord — having been intercepted by Andrew, and Edith persisting that she would frequent her Opera-box, Everard announced his determination to go with her. It was received with the wildest shouts of laughter. “In that dress?” “No,” said her brother, “I shall wear the dress of the world: to save my sister from further sin it will be admissible.” And assuredly his presence did preserve her from the interviews she had so much desired, when Martha's inopportune appearance surprised them. Edith was about to tell her the truth—it was then that Everard by an expressive gesture forbid her communicativeness.—During his absence that night she contrived to see Lord —; and two months after her brother's formal separation from his wife, she eloped in the dead of night to her profligate lover.

The rest of her history I dare not dwell upon; it is such as Hogarth has described in some of his matchless pictures. Cards and extravagance soon dissipated her own money; and he, whose protection she had sought, became wearied of her expensive whims.

A short time before her interview with Martha, her brother had discovered her perishing from hunger, illness, and misery, in a low and wretched dwelling—into such an extreme of misery had her vice plunged her. He would have taken the wanderer to his own home, for he perceived the end was at hand; but she so ardently begged to be alone, that he permitted her to choose the humble refuge in which Martha found her. She entreated that she might effect a reconciliation between her brother and his wife ere she died; but to this proposition he would not listen. “He thought,” said she to Martha, “that you should have trusted him better.”

“And so I should said the weeping Martha, tenderly wiping the dying girl's brow, damp with the exertion of her narrative.”

Martha Wilson had many subsequent interviews with her fallen sister, and it was at the very last that, hastily summoned to the death scene, husband and wife met again. It was by the side of that death-bed that they felt how slight had been the cause of their dissension; and the only feeling which prevented a reconciliation—pride—in that awful moment of human suffering and expiation was crushed in the dust.

Edith Wilson died calmly and even happily, trusting that the tears with which, like the sinner of old times, she had washed the Saviour's feet, might in his eyes wash away her many sins, and trusting, with a childlike devotion, that faith in His mercy would save her.

THE BUSIEST MAN AT THE DIGGINGS.

Wherever there is money to be earned John Chinaman is earning it. He is a butcher in Dupont street, a merchant at Sacramento, a fisherman and fish-drier on Rincon Point, a washerman at the Lagoon, and his idea of what will do for a flat iron there, amazes the Anglo-Saxons. His enemies insinuate that linen has a tendency to return as cotton from his hands. In everything, as in washing, his notions of work are Asiatic. If Chinaman have anything to lift they first ascertain if one man can lift it; and if he can they send four to perform the duty. Ale—their work is done on the same scale. For ease in carrying heavy burdens, the Chinaman depends on the balancing weights at each end of a pole carried on his shoulder. If he has a bundle weighing 50lbs; to hang on one end of his pole he will hang 50lbs of anything as ballast on the other. John Chinaman, in figure and costume, much differs from western notions of the graceful or the beautiful. Little Californian boys shoot at him arrows barbed with pins; men passing him on the pavement jostle him; dogs snap at his heels. He is disliked except by his countrymen, but they back him with energy. Is he before the recorder and wants an alibi? Twenty John Chinaman will prove that he was in twenty other places at the same time in question. John Chinaman has his own

way of shopping. He enters a store and gazes for a long time silently and stolidly at the article of his desire. The store-keeper at last retires in dudgeon. John attempts then the expression of his mind in English, ascertains the price asked for the article and bids about one-tenth of it. His offer is refused, and he departs; he never offers more at the first visit. After a few days he returns to renew his offer and, if it be refused, to buy on the store-keeper's terms. The Chinaman is successful as a miner, but he dislikes digging; for rocking and tomwashing he displays genius. He lives sparingly, unless poultry be put in his way: for he has a wonderful greed for chickens. In forty-nine, the Chinese were eminent in San Francisco as keepers of the cheapest and best frequented eating houses. They were the only men who had on hand an unlimited supply of potatoes—then a Californian luxury. These trades have now declined. The founder of the best of them has removed, and is said to be a thriving eating house keeper in the Sandwich Islands.—Dickens's Household Words.

HOW A SIEGE IS CARRIED ON.

THE first object is to establish a body of men in a protected position within a certain distance of the place to be attacked, or in technical language, to “open the trenches.” The trench as its name implies, is an excavation forming a kind of sunken road in a direction parallel with that of the enemy's fortifications, and of such dimensions that troops and guns can move along in at pleasure. The earth taken from this road is thrown upon the side towards the town, so that a bank or parapet is raised for the further protection of the troops in the trench. At the most favourable points of this covered road batteries are constructed which open upon the work of the place and when sufficient advantage has been obtained through their fire, a second trench parallel to the first, and connected with it by a diagonal cut, is opened at a shorter distance from the town, and armed with fresh batteries, which go to work as before. This process is again and again repeated, and the “approaches,” as they are termed are pushed forward by successive “parallels,” until they are carried up to the very walls, of the place which by that time have been “breached” or battered down at this point by the besiegers' guns.—Then comes the period of the “assault.” The troops advance in strong columns from their covered road, rush through the breach, and take the town. The best chances for the defence consist in difficulties of the ground, which may either be so rocky as to prevent the execution of the approaches, or as is often the case in Flanders, so exposed to inundation at the command of the garrison that the trenches may at any time be put under water, and the besiegers swamped at their posts. If the garrison, too, is very strong, it may make successful sorties, fill up the trenches opened by the enemy, spike their guns, and greatly delay the approach of the batteries to the walls of the town. In the absence however, of any such impediments to the works, it is perfectly understood at the present day that every place, however strongly fortified, must ultimately fall.

COMPLEMENTARY.

SIR E. Bulwer Lytton in one of the early chapters of “My Novel,” writes—“The stage-coach stopped at the inn as was its wont, for a good hour, that its passengers might dine like Christian Englishmen—not gulf down a basin of scalding soup, like everlasting heathen Yankees, with that cursed railway whistle shrieking like a fiend in their ears.”

HOME.

Love watches over the cradle of the infant—over the couch of the aged—over the welfare of each and all; to be happy man retires from the out-door world to his home. In the household circle the troubled heart finds consolation, the disturbed finds itself in its true element. Pious souls, when they speak of death, say that they go home. Their longing for heaven is to them a home sickness. Jesus also represents the abodes of eternal happiness under the picture of a home, a fathers house. Does not this tell us that the earthly home is appointed to be a picture of heaven and a foretaste of that higher home.

SCRAPS.

How sacred, how beautiful is the feeling of affection in pure and guileless bosoms! The proud may sneer at it, the fashionable may call it fable, the selfish and dissipated may affect to despise it, but the holy passion is surely of heaven. And is made evil only by the corruption of those whom it was sent to bless and to preserve.

No person should be at all delicate about asking for what is properly his due. If he neglect doing so, he is deficient in that spirit of independence which he should observe in all his actions. Rights are rights, and if not granted should be demanded.

The late Rev. Sidney Smith observed that a railway whistle seemed to him, something like the scream an attorney would give when the devil caught hold of him.