

## Literature, &amp;c.

## THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

## THE EDITOR'S SONG.

The Editor sits at his table,  
Writing as well as he's able,  
Paragraphs, leader and puff;  
His scissors, beside him lying,  
While he is in agony trying,  
Of copy to furnish enough.

Toil, toil, toil,  
What a weary life is mine!  
Wasting the precious midnight oil  
In leader, and column, and line;  
Working from morn till night,  
Working from night till morn;  
Oh! why was the steam-press ever made,  
Or why was the Editor born?

Toil, toil, toil!  
And whose is the gain when won?  
Whose are the trophies we achieve,  
And for whom are the laurels won?  
To stand in the foremost rank  
Of every party fray;  
To share the toil, and only to get  
Abuse and neglect for pay!

Toil, toil, toil!  
What a thankless task is ours!  
To break the bread and press the cheese  
That Senator Jones devours!  
To sit on a three legged stool,  
While others have hair-stuffed seats;  
To prepare the hash, and cook up the stew,  
But never to taste the meats!

Toil, toil, toil!  
As the constant drop on a stone,  
So this ceaseless, endless work  
Wears away body and bone!  
Though the poet splutter and write,  
Though the orator bully and brawl,  
If it were not for the editor's pen,  
What were the use of it all?

Toil, toil, toil!  
Christians, Mormons, and Jews;  
Is there a man on this weary earth,  
But grows richer by reading the news?  
Richer, richer, richer,  
As they read it by sun-light and taper;  
And yet, there isn't a soul of them all  
But grudges to pay for his paper!

Toil, toil, toil!  
There's a row in the very next street!  
Somebody's going to murder his wife,  
And I must be off *tout suite*.  
Yesterday, just at this time,  
Two policemen got choked in a riot;  
And so it goes on from morning till night,  
An editor never knows quiet.

[Gets up, knocks his hat over his eyes, and rushes out in a state of distraction, 'To pick up an item!']

From Godey's Lady's Book, for February.

## THE SYMPATHY MEETING.

'There's a chield amang you takin' notes,  
And, faith, he'll prent 'em.

'I HAD a call from your friend Mrs. Parks, this morning,' said Mrs. Cushman to her husband, who had lingered to chat with her for half an hour after their boarding-house dinner. The honey-moon was hardly over, which fact may account for the extraordinary procedure on his part.

'Indeed,' he rejoined, with an appearance of great interest, and added that most stupid, yet most natural of questions, which every body asks and nobody likes to answer, 'What did she say?'

'Oh, she was very pleasant, although she did not stay long. She only came to invite us to take tea with her this evening. I told her that I would go with pleasure, if you had no engagement to prevent your accompanying me.'

'Of course, I am at your service. All engagements, precontracts, etc., are null and void when they stand in the way of your happiness.'

'Come, George,' interrupted the little lady laughingly, pulling his ear just the least bit in the world, 'you need not trouble yourself to make fine speeches to me now. Can you go or not?'

'So you call my expressions of devotion "fine speeches"? What language shall I employ to convince you that I am ready, willing and anxious to attend you? First because you desire it. Secondly, Parks gives elegant supper, and oysters are just in season; his cook has not an equal in the Union at a "scallop" or "stew." Thirdly, Mrs. Parks matronized me in my celiacy and I am desirous that she should see how well I have practised her thousand and one rules for selecting a wife, since mine has a virtue for each.'

'There do stop, Parson Poundtext! You have got around to the point from whence you started. The party is to be small, and we ladies are to go, unceremoniously, with our work early in the afternoon.'

'An unceremonious afternoon!' repeated the provoking husband slowly, 'What does that mean, Lizzie?'

'George your nonsense would vex a saint.'—But such she certainly was not, for she laughed heartily. What a flow of spirits he has! she said, as she saw him from the window lift his hat to her before he turned the corner. 'I can never be gloomy in his presence, the dear fellow.'

When Mrs. Cushman and her unceremonious work-bag made their *entree* into Mrs. Park's parlor, they found most of the afternoon guests already there. Our heroine's reception was flatteringly cordial; and she was speedily working and chatting quite at her ease, casting, meanwhile, well-bred glances at the rest of the company. She had seen nearly all before at her 'reception,' or when returning her bridal calls. There was but one stranger, and her name 'Oram,' did not seem new to her. She was still young, and retained traces of striking beauty, shadowed by a pensiveness that betokened sorrow or ill health. Mrs. Cushman's seat was next to hers; and even her manner of paying the compliments of the day, trite and commonplace in the mouths of most people, evinced a desire to contribute to her enjoyment. They were like old acquaintances in ten minutes. Mrs. Oram became more silent as the others joined in; and when, at length, they took the lead in the conversation, she spoke only at long intervals, as if to show that she was not selfishly inattentive. The news of the day was summarily disposed of by the dozen busy tongues. The new-style bonnet was pronounced 'shockingly unbecoming' to all but young and pretty faces, yet it appeared that each one present had either procured, or intended to purchase one; and those baggy incumbrances, by a fashionable misnomer called 'oriental' sleeves, which officiate as spoon, ladle, or broom, as coffee, soup, or dust, came within their sweep, were voted to be 'exceedingly graceful and pleasant, especially in summer.' One lady, who looked as if she might have been 'literary,' affirming that they 'gave quite a classic appearance to the figure.' The crochet-mat, then in Mrs. Cushman's hands, was next admired, and several polite applications made for the pattern.

'I am passionately fond of such work,' said Mrs. Harris, examining the iris-hued network; 'but with my large family, recreation of any description is out of the question.'

'When do you expect to get into your new house Mrs. Cushman?' Inquired Mrs. Parks. 'Before long, I hope. I am very tired of boarding.'

'Do you really prefer housekeeping?' asked Mrs. Harris.

'She has never tried it yet,' said another significantly. 'She will change her tune in less than a month, and wish herself back in her boarding-house.'

'I think not, Mrs. Lane. I am domestic in my tastes, and have a positive liking for what is generally termed the labor of keeping an establishment in order.'

'You are inexperienced. You do not know what you are bringing upon yourself. When boarding, you can live just as you did while single; no bother about servants and dirt.—Your husband comes in to a good dinner, over which you have not been puzzled and heated; the house is clean from bottom to top—you never think how it is kept so; you have but to sew, visit, and enjoy yourself. I have tried both ways of living. Take my advice: rent out your house, stay where you are, and don't fly into trouble before it comes to you.'

Lizzie thought of the snug dwelling George had exhibited such taste in preparing for her, and was emboldened to reply, half proudly—

'Indeed, I have no fears. As to inexperience, I have kept my father's house ever since my fifteenth year, and should never have resigned the charge, but for my marriage.'

'Ah, you will find this a different affair.—Husbands and fathers are not alike easily satisfied.'

Again, George came to Lizzie's aid. She contrasted his indulgent good nature with her father's fastidiousness and capricious notice of whatever she did.

'I should imagine that a husband would be more apt to overlook the imperfections of a novice than a parent, who considers it his duty to correct every fault.'

'My dear Mrs. Cushman,' exclaimed Mrs. Merry, blue-eyed and rosy-cheeked, who was called 'Anne' by all, and seemed to be a universal pet, 'you never were more mistaken in your life. But I don't wonder; I was as silly once. I married as soon as I quitted school, with my head full of the noble, long holiday I was going to have. There was something grand in the idea of being the head of a family, the lady of the house; and I coaxed Arthur to settle at once. He suggested renting until we should have made the experiment; but I told him that I was not to be hauled from pillar to post in that way. I wanted to live and die in the home to which I went as a bride. This and a deal more stuff pleased him so much, that he went to great expense in buying and fitting up a perfectly new building in one of the best situations in town. We took possession on our return from the wedding-tower. My toy was very entertaining for a week or two. Everything was so new and pretty; the servants were upon their good behaviour; Mr. Merry ditto; and I anxious to give satisfaction. But somehow,

things began to get a little awry. I could not worry myself to death with the servants. They had their orders. Was I to waste time and patience following them about, to see that they did their work? If it was not done, I should find it out soon enough; and if they obeyed, there was no use in watching them. Then Arthur got cross. Instead of, as at first, praising my management upon all occasions, he said nothing about it when others were by, and gave me what he called 'a few gentle hints' when we were alone. 'Gentle,' indeed! 'Twas downright scolding. 'Matters would go more smoothly if I gave them my personal superintendence.' It was my 'duty to be at home at such and such hours' (that is when he was there); 'the servants were wasteful and slovenly, and I too negligent of their misdemeanors.' For a while, I did not suspect what he was at. I had no idea he wanted me buried alive, though I knew that some men would gladly be widowers even on these terms. He always wound up by being wonderfully good and affectionate, 'to allay,' he said, 'any feeling of vexation at being what I considered reprobated,' and I could not get angry. But just let me tell you of a little scene that took place when we had been married about six months. You must know that my most intimate friend, Ginnie Hubbard, lived just opposite to us. We had been schoolmates, and changed our names on the same day; so it was most natural and proper that we should be a great deal together.—Now, Ginnie had more spirit in the tip of her little finger than I have in my whole body, and, as Mr. Hubbard was easy tempered, they got along swimmingly. Arthur said she was a capital housewife, but I don't believe she knew anything more about cookery than I did. Only that's the way with men; they will praise any man's wife, if, by so doing, they can disparage their own. Well, as I was saying, I loved Ginnie very dearly, and one cloudy afternoon when I did not dare to walk far from home, I ran over to sit an hour with her. Mr. Hubbard was out of town, and she was very lonesome, and overjoyed to see me. We talked and sewed until dark, when I said I must really go home.

'Oh, no,' said Ginnie; these winter afternoons are so short. It is only six o'clock. Only think, Rosa Grant is to be married!'

'Rosa was another school-fellow; and this led us to a long confab about old times and old friends, until I was astonished to see tea brought in.'

'You must stay!' said Ginnie. 'You can go after our supper is done, and be in time to give Mr. Merry his.'

'This was true, for Arthur often stayed out until eight or nine. I make no pretensions to sense (I believe Arthur thinks I have none); but I knew that it was not polite to run off the instant I left the table; and Ginnie commenced telling me a rigmorle about a man who had shot himself, or his wife, I forget which. After I thought a decent time had elapsed, I peeped at my watch, and you won't believe me when I tell you that it was after ten. Ginnie held the light in her porch until she saw me safe in mine, then she called out 'Good night!' and went in. I opened the front door. The entry was dark. That stupid Bob had not lighted the lamp; he always wants to be told to do it. I looked into the front parlor, it was like midnight; and nearly breaking my neck by falling over a chair, I groped my way to the door of the other room. One solitary, folorn candle was on the mantel-piece, the fender was covered with ashes and cinders, and there was not a living coal in the grate. Arthur was marching back and forth across the floor. Men always do that when they are out of humor. He stopped, and looked at me.

'Good-evening,' said I.

'So you have come!' said he.

'I put out my hand towards the bell rope.'

'Stay!' said he. 'What do you want?'

'Some coal,' I replied bridling up.

'You may spare yourself the trouble of ringing. There is none in the house, and it will be stormy in the morning. Why was I not apprised of this in time to send some up?'

'How was I to know anything about it?'

'Robert says he told you of it last night,' he answered sternly.

'I could not deny this, although I had not thought of it since. He resumed his promenade, and gave me time for reflection. What was the cause of all this fuss? I had spent an evening with a friend. If he had seen fit to stay out until twelve, instead of ten o'clock, it would be no concern of mine, he would say; but I was to be treated like a child that deserved a whipping. My spirit was fairly up; so I said—

'What has happened to put you in such an amiable mood?'

'He did not answer immediately; but after two or three more strides across the room, he stalked up to me.

'You are pleased to sneer, and I shall not attempt to move your sympathies in behalf of one who, after battling all day in the world, fondly expected something like comfort at home.'

'That was the text, and you never heard such a "scorer" as followed. I say "never heard"; but you will if you go to housekeeping, and forget, while talking with one you love, that you have the pantry keys in your pocket, and a fam-

ishing, fuming husband at home. I asked why he did not send for me?'

'And have it reported all over the country that my wife cannot leave the house for an hour without being summoned to wait upon me! No; if your sense of duty does not induce you to attend to your household, my commands shall not.'

'Then he went out, banging the door after him; and I sat down upon the rug to have a comfortable cry all to myself. I had not shed more than a dozen tears before he came in again.

'Annie, you must not sit here in the cold.—Go up stairs!'

'And I had to obey. I have learned since not to regard these little *contemptes*. If Mr. Merry begins to rail, I leave him with the walls for listeners. All husbands are tyrants, and mine is no worse than most people's.'

It was impossible to listen gravely as she rattled off this story with the mimicry and gesture of a spoiled child. So winning did she appear, as she looked up from her low seat in the corner, that it must have been a callous heart that could not find in her youth and beauty, excuse for the thoughtlessness that in her seemed scarcely to deserve the name of fault.

'Hush, child!' said a middle-aged lady, with an affection of reproof. 'Be thankful that your husband loves his home.—You would find it much worse if he sought his enjoyment elsewhere. Now, there's Mr. Sherman; he has an engagement for every evening in the week. I believe he was a member of all the societies that ever were set on foot.'

'He is very active in every project for doing good, I know,' responded Mrs. Parks.

'So people say; but, for my part, I think it is the duty of married men to stay at home and mind their families. I am jealous of these new fangled enterprises. I cannot forgive them for usurping my place. No poor wife can call them "benevolent organizations." I never enquire where he is going, if he asks to have an early supper. He drinks his tea scalding hot, seizes his hat, and is off. I put the children to bed and then sit alone all the long evening, shaking with fright if the wind rattles the windows. I dare not sleep, and am too nervous to read or sew. Every burglar in the city knows that I am a lone unprotected woman; and this keeps me in nightly dread of housebreakers. Besides this, I am wretched lest some ruffian should attack him in the unfrequented lanes, through which he passes at all hours of the night.'

'Oh, horrible!' cried Mrs. Cushman, who was of a very timorous disposition. 'Why do you not entreat him to stay with you?'

'Ah, my dear, those times are over now. If I had been married only as many weeks as I have years, I might hope to be heard; but one gets used to refusals in ten years.'

'I never should get used to them!' thought Lizzie; and the crochet-needle grew to twice its usual size, as if seen through a magnifying lens.

'You have one consolation, Mrs. Sherman,' said Mrs. Lane; 'you have everything your own way indoors. Mr. Sherman does not pretend to interfere with or condemn your arrangements. As for my husband, he begins to quarrel so soon as he gets within sight of the house. "Is anybody dead, that the blinds are all shut?" The house feels like a vault. It is enough to give a man the blues to come into such a dungeon.' Or, if they are open, 'How long since you opened a tavern? It is no fault of yours, if your neighbours' curiosity is not gratified.' I slave all the morning in the hope of eating one dinner in peace; but no! If I were to put the only rickety chair on the premises in the attic, under lock and key, the plaguy thing would contrive to be the first on which he sat. The child who has been latest at the sweetmeats, or who has the most ragged apron, is invariably first to meet him. Either of these circumstances upsets him completely; and, once wrong, heaven and earth cannot set him right. He looks over the dinner table in search of something out of order, before he will taste a mouthful. 'Tom, where are the salt-spoons?' And before the boy can bring them, up he jumps, and snatching them from him, throws them the whole length of the table. 'Zounds, madam, I should think that I have enough to do out of doors without housekeeping!' If he is particularly crabbed, he will not be waited upon, but shoves his hair back and helps himself, especially if what he wants is at the other end of the room. I have been dreadfully mortified, when we have had company, by his going out to the hydrant for a pitcher of water, while we were in the midst of dinner, the servants standing by doing nothing. Then the soup is 'dish-water'; the fish 'as raw as when it was taken out of the river'; the turkey 'might as well be stuffed with cotton.' Sunday is worse than all! He has nothing to do between sermons but growl. The Sabbath evening lecture is upon the evils of my housewifery, ending with, 'There is not an Irish labourer in the United States who lives in such a pig-sty as I do!'

Lizzie's eyes had dilated more and more as each relation progressed, and now her mouth shared in their expansion. If Mesdames Merry and Sherman had astounded Mrs. Lane's language shocked her. It's very homeliness lent it force. It sounded like unvarnished truth. She had never conceived of such brutality. All