

## Youths' Department.

## PASSENGES IN THE LIFE OF A PRIVATE GOVERNESS.

By the Author of "Mind whom you Marry."

CHAPTER I.

(Continued.)

I cannot say I slept well that night. Every hour struck by a neighbouring church clock until four in the morning found me awake. It was not that the streets were noisy, that the atmosphere was too hot, that London had already begun to disagree with me, that my sleeping apartment was not comfortable, that strange shadows were in the room, that mysterious sounds were outside the window, or that the house was noisy within doors—it was not, I say, any of these things that prevented sweet sleep from weighing my eyelids down—no; but it was the thoughts suggested by the inquiries about billiards and cards. I had from infancy an intense horror of such words as gamblers and gambling—an horror infused by my mother, whose father begged himself by dice, and then committed suicide. We cannot help our feelings at all times; and, right or wrong, I had always felt a strong antipathy to the very instruments by which the gambler ruins himself or others, even when the game is but an amusement, apart from any winning or losing. My wakefulness, under these circumstances, will not be surprising.

"Can the head of this house," thought I, "be addicted to anything of this kind? Shall I not have a difficulty in the moral training of children where I instinctively feel the atmosphere is not best adapted to the training of our spiritual nature?"

Sleep at length came, and on awakening in the morning I found I had been kindly left to slumber on until between nine or ten.—Very little was done that day; indeed it was not until the following week we got fairly into harness.

Three months passed away, during which time I tried to teach my two pupils as much as I could, to have as little to say as possible with the upper servants, who seemed very anxious to tell more than I wanted to hear, and to do my duty to the parents who engaged me consistently with the dictates of my own conscience. Of course I could not shut my eyes and ears; and what dreadful things I saw and heard will make up the contents of the following chapters.

It was, however, during these three months that Mrs. Huddersfield was called away from home to visit a dying sister, with whom she remained three weeks. Before this time the young ladies and I breakfasted at half-past eight, in order to be able to take a short walk before ten o'clock, the hour we commenced studies. Mr. and Mrs. Huddersfield seldom were seen down stairs until between ten and eleven. Of course I knew the reason of this was the late hour they went to bed. Their life seemed one of fashionable pleasure. Perhaps not once a month did they spend a quiet evening at home. Sundays were usually the days chosen for their dinner parties when they did stay at home; and although cards and billiards were constantly used, yet it was an understood thing that if they played for money to increase the interest of the game, all was to be returned on separating. Generally, however, of an evening Mrs. Huddersfield returned from the theatre, or some other place of public amusement, alone; while her husband would pass away a few hours with some select gentlemen, as Mrs. Huddersfield would express it; but what they did, or how they passed their time, did not transpire: she would sometimes laugh and say, "Ladies, you know, Miss Tyler, mustn't be too inquisitive."

It was while the mamma of my two pupils was staying with her dying sister that by her request I took her place at the breakfast-table with Mr. Huddersfield. I do not profess to be either a phonologist or physiognomist. I think sometimes looks deceive; but there are some countenances so unnaturally distorted by the intense working of strong feelings within, that in spite of ourselves the expression of their faces will say something to us about the secret of their hearts. Again and again did I try to get rid of the unpleasant suspicion that would come as morning after morning I did the honours of the table. Sometimes he would be very communicative on a variety of topics; while at others, do all you could, not a word was to be got from him—so absent he seemed; so fixed his gaze; so cloudy his brow; while sometimes his lips moved, as if speaking to an invisible person who needed no articulate sounds. Then he would suddenly start; remember himself; throw his features into quite another form; apologise for his absent manner; and perhaps say, "It is not all gold that glitters"; "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown;" and "There are beneath the mirrored surface of the sleeping ocean ugly things far down in the deep."

"Are you religious, Miss Tyler?" he asked one morning after waking up from one of his very unpleasant absent moods.

"I hope, sir, I am," I replied firmly, knowing he had often said he "despised religious people."

"You hope you are, do you? Why?"

"I think, sir," I said, "I have feet, hands, eyes, and ears. If these had not been trained, I should have been imperfect."

"I should think you would," he laughed; and taking a drink of his coffee. "Well, go on; I like to hear you women talk sometimes."

"I think too," I added, endeavouring to remember my position, and the subject of conversation, "I have mental faculties—such as understanding, imagination, memory; if these had not been cultivated, to some extent at least, it would be unjust for me to receive your money for the education of your daughters: consequently, though my bodily powers might have been developed, I should still have been imperfect."

"Well I have not much objection to that; what then? for I suppose the broadside is to come."

"Now it seems to me, sir, that I have a spiritual nature within me; something that yearns for a Being like the God of the Bible. Sympathy and communion with this Being, I call religion; and it appears to me that, although my bodily, mental, and moral powers were all developed, so that I could fulfil properly my relations to those about me in this world, yet if my spiritual faculties lie dead, and I have nothing to do with this highest walk of life, in which my spirit has fellowship with God, I must be an imperfect woman."

"Well, Miss Tyler, I don't think you're a bad hand at logic at all; and if I had had your head last night—I do not say I should have used it for the purposes of religion—but it might have saved me from a terrible burden that is almost driving me mad."

There was an awful manner in his making this last remark that made me tremble from head to foot, as he abruptly left the room.

(To be Continued.)

AN INTERVIEW.—Conversing with a man given to scepticism, on the subject of religion, he admitted that he had no religion, and said further, that "he had made a resolution not to have, until all religious denominations were agreed as to what religion was." We told him that they were already so agreed—that in all the grand, fundamental doctrines of the Bible, there was a remarkable unity and harmony of views among them. But says he, "I am resolved to be of no man's belief, till all the denominations are agreed on every point, fundamental or not fundamental." Well said we, you had better make an

other resolution, and that—not to touch another morsel of food, till all the clocks of the world strike twelve together. Then, he replied, "I should certainly starve to death." And said we—taking the other course you will as surely lose your soul. And thus closed our interview.

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