

Family Circle.

(From the Christian World.)

MARGARET TORRINGTON.

OR, THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

By the Author of "Vivian Vaughan," "The Julian's Wife," "St. Basil's," &c.

"The life brings them into their desired haven."—
PALM, CIVIL, 20, and 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

(Continued.)

A VISITATION.

"You here!" he roared, after a few leonine salutations had passed between him and the Doctor.

"You here, you scoundrel!" And he pointed his huge stick at Gilbert as if it were a rifle, and his quondam protegee a head of game.

"Who told you to come here and meet me on my return, eh?"

"I invited Mr. Tredgold to dinner," returned Nora, haughtily. "I had no idea that we should be honoured by the company of Mr. and Mrs. Sanderson," she screamed, with her hand on her breast.

"You expected us to dinner, of course! It was all Mrs. Sanderson's fault. But you need not elevate your voice, Mrs. Doctor. I hear perfectly if you speak naturally, but distinctly. Yes, we were coming to dinner, but my wife chose not to be ready. However, she will be ready next time."

And she really looked as if she would! Poor Sibyl seemed as if all spirit were beaten or shaken out of her, as far as her husband was concerned. She had evidently played Kate to his Petruchio; and seven months of matrimony had taught her the wisdom of submission; but the old gleam was in her azure eyes, as defiant, as coldly sparkling as ever. Anyone who thought to measure lances with Sibyl because she had performed yielded to marital authority would find himself miserably deceived. Her accustomed weapons were all in fighting order. I saw that at a glance; and it was only to Giant Grumbo himself that she would strike her colours. Heavy knows what would have become of her had she refused to let her tyrant set his foot upon her neck, and keep it there! Perhaps she dimly guessed how matters might end if Petruchio were foiled, and so made a virtue of necessity, and became a pattern of obedience.

"They told me you were drowned!" said Mr. Sanderson, again addressing Gilbert. "Who told him?" I wondered. "You were not drowned, I suppose, after all?"

"No, sir," returned Gilbert gravely. "I am afraid I had been drowned, you would not see me here to-night; but I was very near going to the bottom, and there were rumours which might have reached you."

"And pray, sir, how dare you allude to rumours? If my wife is a little younger than myself, what is that to anyone? If you had married her, you would have had a wife a little older than yourself. I wish you had married her; that I do. She is a Tartar, a vixen, a shrew, a fool, a doll! We went to a ball at the Tulleries, and some one asked who that elderly young woman with the skinny shoulders and the nut-crack nose and chin was! I have not much reason to be proud of my beautiful bride, have I? Now, if you had taken her, I might have had Margaret Torrington! I like a woman with a spirit! I like a brave, frank, outspoken woman, who knows her own mind, and means what she says. I am sick of weak, sallowing coquettes; poor cowards, who torment their maids till they begin to think of suicide! vindictive Xantippes who can drown cats! Yes, ma'am, I said cats! You needn't frown; we all know here who drowned poor pussy! I was alluding to people who drowned cats in pump-troughs, and yet whined, and pined, and cried, and made abject promises, the first time they felt the weight of a lawful husband's hand."

Sibyl coloured violently, then turned deadly pale. No wonder her once fair face had lost its charms: it was perfectly distorted between the contending influences of passion and slavish fear. She kept silence, for her tyrant was watching her, and seemed to keep her in order with his hard, staring eyes, as if he were a Bethlehem hospital keeper, and she a raging lunatic. But Leonora shrieked out, "You don't mean to say you beat her!—beat my sister!"

Mr. Sanderson did not hear her, and Captain Druce signed to his wife not to repeat the question. But Gussie, hot, indignant, and in no wise afraid of Giant Grumbo, sprang to his side, and shouted in a clear, full-throated voice, "Do you really mean that you beat Sibyl?"

"Of course I do," he replied with a chuckle. "However should I manage her without? Moral education does not answer my dear Sibyl; so, being the senior, you know, my pretty Gussie, and, therefore, bending a husband's fondness with a father's wisdom, I use brute force. Nothing else will do, you see. Take my word for it, Captain Druce, when a woman is obstreperous there is no kind, no useful, so easy, and, in the end, so kind, as physical coercion. It saves future scenes; it lets the lady see where she is, and where she is at once; she knows her place, and learns to keep it. Ah, nothing like a little wholesome discipline to begin; and you know the old proverb, 'A woman, a spaniel, and a walrus-tree.'"

"Sir, you are a brute!" thundered Captain Druce, who was of so chivalrous a nature that his wife used to say he would give place to a duchess, simply because she was a woman. And, with his most martial tread, the gallant gentleman strode out of the room, followed by his stately sister Agatha, who deemed herself compromised by remaining any longer in the vicinity of a man who actually boasted of beating his own wife!

But I will not pursue the conversation; our pleasant evening was completely spoiled, and it was only for Sibyl's sake that Nora refrained from unceremoniously requesting Grumbo to depart. Another hour the ill-matched pair stayed with me, Sibyl smarting continually under the oblique hints and sharp thrusts of her lord, yet never daring to give him one of those emphatic rejoinders for which she had been so famous in her maiden days; though I saw that, as the time passed on, and snore succeeded snore, and snore followed snore, that her patience was on the eve of evaporating. Most devoutly I hoped they would go home before Sibyl was provoked to extremity; for who knew whether Mr. Sanderson's might not think fit to administer "discipline" before us all; and then what could we do—look on, or interfere? The former course would seem to be impossible, and the latter might occasion a real comical, drawing-room tournament! And everybody knows that pugilistic frays are not a la mode at the West-end, however they may delight some of the inhabitants of the opposite quarter of the metropolis! We were selfish, undoubtedly; but we were all very much relieved when Mrs. Sanderson's carriage was announced; and we rejoiced to think that, if a passage-at-arms were inevitable, it would be fought out in the abode of the combatants themselves.

But we were all greatly shocked, and little as we loved Sibyl, we felt very sorry for her. We had never anticipated anything like this. We had imagined the ill-assorted pair living what is generally called a "cat and dog life," we were prepared for a steady virtual, if not actual, separation from the two whom the clergyman had married and joined together; but the idea of the unhappy pair quarrelling, and that to which the unhappy pair were subjected had never occurred to any of us.

GREAT MUFFS.—The balance of our London English boots we offer for sale at a discount on selling cost. D. H. BAKER, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

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