

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our readers will observe a change in the arrangement of the Ornamental Title and Advertisements of The Ladies' Companion. The object of this change is to allow of the first leaf being detached from the rest of the work in binding up the numbers into a volume. A Part will be published every month, in a neat cover, the price of which will be always 1s. 2d., whether it contains four or five numbers.

The Ladies' Companion.



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THE INEXPERIENCED GOVERNESS.

BY SARAH TOMLINSON.

PART I.

AND now, dear Edward, you must give me your candid opinion of Miss Lee," said Mrs. Seaward to her husband, as the door closed on the children and their new governess. "I could almost fancy from the expression of your countenance," she added, "that you are not quite satisfied with her, and if so, I shall regret more than ever, that you were not with me at the time I made the engagement."

"It is rather early to form a judgment," said Mr. Seaward, "when the young lady has not been in the house six hours. We must wait a few days, and see how she manages the children, before we say much about her one way or the other."

"Certainly," replied the wife, "and we must also make allowances for the awkward position in which a girl will naturally feel herself on first leaving home, and before she has become acquainted with the family she has entered."

"To say the truth," replied Mr. Seaward, "it was the absence of this awkwardness which struck me unpleasantly in Miss Lee. I would rather have seen a little diffidence on her first introduction, and a little caution in ascertaining our opinions before she advanced her own. Ease of manner is graceful in a woman, but there are occasions when one naturally expects a little timidity and reserve, and this is one of them,—when a very young and inexperienced woman enters the house of a stranger, and takes upon herself an important office there."

"Really, Edward, you are too particular, and expect too much serious thought in a young person like Miss Lee. She is of a cheerful disposition, and has arrived here at a lovely season of the year, when our valley is perfectly charming. No wonder she is delighted with everything around her, and disposed to lively conversation. For my part, I think it a great advantage to the children to have a cheerful unreserved governess, who will not teach them stiffness and formality; while it will certainly be more agreeable to us, as we make her quite one of the family."

"I admire cheerfulness, Ellen," said her husband, "but I dislike free and confident manners, and a loud voice; and these appeared to me to be the characteristics of your new governess. But, as you say, she is excited, and in high spirits, and we must not judge of her hastily. In person she is certainly a fine girl, with apparently an excellent share of health and vivacity. The school-room will probably tame down the superabundant flow of spirits which has impressed me unfavourably."

"No doubt," replied the wife; "and you must remember, Edward, that she will be a most economical governess to us; for I have secured her services at a very trifling salary, and she is so clever in dressmaking, that I shall get all the children's clothes made, and perhaps some of my own, free of expense."

"Take care," said her husband, smiling, "that you do not attach more importance to the making of their clothes than to the training of their minds."

"Of course not," said Mrs. Seaward, in a tone of some annoyance. "Miss Lee must be competent to teach such little children as ours; and it will be quite time to pay a high salary for an experienced governess when the children are old enough to profit by it."

The notion, that much experience is not necessary in the management of young children, had taken such firm possession of Mrs. Seaward's mind, that her husband knew it was vain to combat it; nor were his own opinions entirely settled on that point, although he was much more inclined to coincide with the maxim prevalent in the house of his younger brother, namely, that none but steady and decided persons, whether nurses or governesses, can be safely trusted with the care of very young minds.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Seaward inhabited the same beautiful valley in which the mansion of the elder brother was situated. The pursuits of the brothers were similar; for each farmed his own estate. Their families were also similar as to number and age; but their mode of bringing up their children was very different, owing to the opposite ideas of the two mothers. While Mrs. Seaward economised in the salaries of dependants, and spent largely in dress, entertainments, and whatever might gratify her ideas of social enjoyment, Mrs. Charles Seaward economised in mere luxuries, and spent freely, but judiciously, where the real interests of her family were concerned. Thus it happened that the children at the Lodge (as Charles Seaward's humbler dwelling was called) were always better off for books, maps, instructive games, and whatever might benefit their minds, than the children at the Mansion; while in all matters of dress, fashion, and external polish, the latter maintained undisputed authority over their cousins.

In this state of things, the decision of both mothers to engage a governess for such of the children as were now beyond the nurse's care, was made about the same time; but the choice fell on very different individuals. Mrs. Seaward, eager to secure a governess who would be contented with an almost nominal salary, and who would be willing to make herself generally useful, formed a hasty arrangement with Miss Lee, whose showy person and lively manners had attracted her notice during a visit to the county town. Mrs. Seaward was aware that the father of Miss Lee was a respectable stationer of that town, and had sent his daughters to a good school, that they might be fitted to earn their living by tuition; but she was not aware, that, having waited long before he could obtain a situation for the first who left school, he had imprudently allowed her to assist behind the counter, where, being a fine girl, and much admired, she had acquired that flippancy and confidence of manner which had produced an unpleasant impression on Mr. Seaward.

As for Miss Lee herself, she was perfectly delighted with her new position. "A charming little phaeton, and a sweet pair of ponies," as she wrote in a letter to her friends, "were sent to meet her at the high road, where the coach passes within two miles of the village," and "fleet as the wind" (for the young lady was prone to exaggeration) she was conveyed "through the loveliest scenery in the world, towards a noble mansion, surrounded by fine old trees, extensive shrubberies, and velvet lawns." The letter went on to describe the beauty and convenience of the house, the richness of the furniture, the elegance of the mistress, and the "fairy-like" appearance of the children, and concluded with the following modest estimate of the writer's own position:—"I am quite at home here already. Mrs. Seaward is like a sister to me; and Mr. Seaward, though a severe-looking man, is evidently pleased with me; for he pays the greatest attention to all I say and do. In fact, it is a great acquisition to them to have a person of conversational powers in the house; for the gentleman is reserved and silent, and the lady must have found it very dull before I came. Excuse my saying more; for we are to have a large party to-morrow, and I am going to assist in making the pastry." Then, in a postscript, she added: "It is most fortunate that my country cousins taught me to ride on horseback; for there are ponies at command whenever I like to ride on the downs, and my eldest pupil is a capital rider."

Mr. Seaward's party was, in truth, a brilliant affair. It was his pride to keep up old English customs, and adopt old English hours; and it was also a matter of convenience in that remote part of the country to assemble the

guests early, that there might be time for the departure of such as could not be accommodated for the night within the hospitable walls of the mansion. It was an unexpected blank to Miss Lee that she was not invited to make her appearance among the guests till the evening; but the children were yet too young to be allowed to dine with the company, and Mr. Seaward did not choose that they should be committed for the day to the sole charge of the nurse, as his wife, out of consideration for Miss Lee, and gratitude for her efficient aid in the kitchen, had ventured to propose.

Up to this moment Miss Lee had not felt that she was otherwise than a guest in the house. It is true she had gone through a few easy lessons with the children each morning, and that she had superintended the rising and retiring to rest of two little girls who slept in her room; but she had been so free to adopt her own hours and her own plans,—she had been so often called away from even this little attempt at school-keeping to give advice and assistance in some household matter, or to take advantage of a fine day for a ride on the downs, that the fortnight had been one of continued enjoyment, and her state of temper one of continued sunshine. The day of the party was the first on which a cloud rested on the brow of the young governess, and the first on which her little pupils found their tasks irksome and long, and their school-room a very disagreeable place. She had been accustomed to help them over little difficulties in their lessons, but that day she left them to encounter them all alone. Stationed near the window, which commanded a view of the gardens and grounds, and of the public road beyond, she watched first the successive arrival of the guests, and then their dispersion in groups to view different improvements and alterations which had been lately made on the property.

“What a merry group that is going towards the plantation!” thought Miss Lee. “How archly the little lady in the blue dress and plaid scarf is looking up in the face of that handsome young man. Yes, he is really handsome; for he has just turned his face this way, looking for that beautiful spaniel that is bounding after them, and I see he has a fine complexion, and a splendid pair of black whiskers. Now he has offered his other arm to that tall girl with the pale face and drab ringlets; but it is only out of compliment, because she was walking alone. He bends towards the little lady, and talks to her most, and she is certainly a graceful little creature; but, as she is so short, she ought not to have had her dress flounced up to the waist.—What are those two dark-eyed girls laughing at so violently? Oh, at the awkward civility of the fair fat young man, who is helping them over the wooden bridge. How prettily their black ringlets flutter out from beneath the pink silk bonnets. I must positively have a pink bonnet next summer: it is so becoming with dark hair.”

“If you please, Miss Lee, will you hear me say my lesson?” was little Gertrude’s request, urged for the third or fourth time, before the governess could withdraw her eyes from the attractive group. With a sense of annoyance Miss Lee took the child’s book, found the lesson imperfect, and returned it to be learned over again, using at the same time a hasty expression, which brought tears into Gertrude’s eyes.

At length the various parties of guests had all disappeared in the distance, and Miss Lee, with a deep sigh, turned away from the window, and sought to employ herself in school duties. But everything went wrong: the children were disobedient and tiresome; the lessons were badly repeated, the copy-books were disfigured with blots; and as for the multiplication-table, or at least that fragment of it which the children had yet acquired, it presented on this occasion such insurmountable difficulties, that Miss Lee’s patience was quite exhausted, and she imprudently declared that Gertrude should lie on the reclining board *until she could say it*.

Now Gertrude was very quick, as most children are, at perceiving anything like inconsistency or injustice in her elders, and she felt that she had been unjustly treated that morning. Miss Lee had not given her the usual help in her lessons, yet she had scolded her for not saying them properly. Miss Lee had been looking out of the window all the time she was writing her copy, yet she had afterwards been very angry because Gertrude, tired of waiting, had made a pen-and-ink sketch on the cover, in the course of which she had had the misfortune to blot the opposite page. Therefore, when Miss Lee, releasing the two younger children from their morning studies, pronounced judgment on her eldest pupil, the pouting lip and determined look of the little girl showed that, as she

took her place on the reclining board, she was meditating, not how to please, but how to thwart her governess, and falsify her words.

It is an unfortunate thing for a governess to use a threat which it is beyond her power to carry out to its fullest extent, and so Miss Lee found it in the present instance. Had she merely said, “Because you have been careless in your lessons, you shall remain on the reclining board for the next hour,” or “the next two hours,” she would have said no more than it was in her power to enforce; but Gertrude knew very well that no power of Miss Lee’s could keep her there until she had learned the lesson, supposing she could maintain her present obstinate determination not to learn it at all. Therefore, while Miss Lee supposed that Gertrude was diligently conning over the task assigned to her, the child was really engaged in counting the number of flies on the ceiling, and wondering how it was that those insects could walk about with their heads downwards. Her governess meanwhile, unsettled and restless, threw aside the crochet work, which had been the previous employment of her fingers, and drew forth a writing-desk, the grand resource of a governess when she is in trouble.

But to whom was Miss Lee to confide the griefs and mortifications of the day? To write to her father or to either of her sisters on the subject would have been too absurd, after the exaggerated account of her happiness which she had dispatched on the previous morning. Therefore, it was to an old schoolfellow that Miss Lee addressed, in strictest confidence, her pathetic remarks on the trials of governess life, illustrated by an account of the neglect and seclusion to which she was herself on that day condemned, while every one else was happy and joyful. “Even the servants,” she complained, “have their kitchen guests, and the sound of their unchecked laughter is now in my ears, as I sit in my lonely school-room with a refractory pupil; while papa and mamma and their numerous guests are walking and riding over different parts of the estate before dinner to see the alterations going on. Oh, my dear Matilda,” she continued, “how painful is the sound of laughter when the heart is ill at ease, and how little do those who are enjoying themselves in the midst of their own family understand the feelings of the poor governess as she sits a prey to her own thoughts, musing on ‘the light of other days’ which has for ever faded from her view!” Here Miss Lee actually brought herself to think that she was a most unhappy and disconsolate damsel, and the tear which dropped upon her letter, confirmed her in this belief, while its traces had such an effect on the sympathising heart of her dear Matilda, that, on the receipt of the epistle, that young lady shed a copious shower of similar precious drops, and from that day forth became the champion of distressed governesses and the eloquent declaimer against cruel mammas who shut out the poor teacher from every kind of enjoyment.

Miss Lee had just completed her letter when the nursery dinner was announced, and she immediately felt that she was in a dilemma about Gertrude. The child had not made the smallest progress with her lesson, and Miss Lee must either break her word, or deprive the pupil of her dinner. She decided on the latter, and had left the school-room for the nursery, when Gertrude set up a loud and passionate cry; and at the same moment Miss Lee saw from the staircase window that the guests were just returning across the lawn to the house. In great alarm she hastened back to the school-room; made Gertrude promise that she would behave better next time, and then conducted her to the room where the other children were assembled at dinner. The child was soon pacified, for she felt that she had gained the victory; and Miss Lee was greatly annoyed at hearing her whisper to her sister, “She could not make me learn my tables, after all.”

The rest of the day passed off better than could have been expected from the unfortunate commencement. The children were busy all the afternoon arranging a miniature feast, the materials for which had been sent up before-hand from the grand dessert which was laid out in a room below, in readiness to be taken in, when the cloth should be removed. It is astonishing how much Miss Lee’s mind had been relieved by the confidential communication she had made to her dear Matilda. She could now hear the hum of mirthful voices, coming from the dining-room in gusts, as the servants bearing the dishes went in and out, without any of those mournful sensations which she had described in her letter to her friend: on the contrary, as the time approached when she would have to make her own appearance on the scene, her spirits rose, and

she began to select from her drawers the dress and ornaments which she could wear with the best effect, and also the frocks and sashes to be worn by the children.

According to previous arrangement, the gardener sent up a quantity of choice flowers from the conservatory, and of these Miss Lee proceeded to form a number of small bouquets which she arranged in three little baskets for future use. The business of the toilette now commenced, and the children tastefully—some people might have said, fantastically—dressed, were placed under the care of the nurse, while Miss Lee performed her own duties in the way of adornment. These being completed to her satisfaction, she bent her steps towards the drawing-room, followed by three little girls, each bearing a basket of flowers.

The entrance of the governess and her pupils caused quite a sensation amongst the guests; for Miss Lee was young and handsome, and the children looked so pretty, and distributed their bouquets with so much simplicity and ease of manner

was most wanted, others fell in heavy ringlets on the cheek and neck, and increased, by contrast, the effect of the clear complexion. For a few moments Miss Lee's eyes were cast down, so that the long dark lashes almost swept the cheek; but when she raised them, a close observer might have noticed the sparkle of gratified vanity with which she met the attentive gaze of the "handsome young man with the splendid whiskers," who instantly dropped the glass from his eye, through which he had been regarding, from the other extremity of the room, the features of the young governess.

"Near-sighted, too!" thought Miss Lee, "how interesting!" for although to have been a little deaf, or a little lame, would have been deemed by that young lady a serious misfortune, yet to be a little blind was considered by her a decided advantage to the gentleman or lady so afflicted, not only as giving an air of gentility and *nonchalance*, but as affording a convenient excuse for overlooking any one whom it was not desirable to recognise.



that they were universally admired. Mrs. Charles Seaward invited Miss Lee to a seat near her, and regarded her with evident approval, for there was an air of modesty about the governess (who was slightly abashed by the number of the guests) and a becoming simplicity in her attire which suited that lady's taste. Miss Lee wore a dress of plain white muslin, relieved by a scarf and sash of pale pink: the only ornament of her head was the rich profusion of her dark hair, which shaded features of great regularity and of the Grecian cast. Her complexion was a clear white, redeemed from any appearance of unhealthiness by the roundness of the cheek, and the ruddiness of the lips; but never, except on extraordinary occasions (and this was one of them) exhibiting the slightest tinge of colour. Miss Lee's forehead was high and white as alabaster, but it was narrow, and it was only by a skilful adjustment of her hair that she prevented the unpleasant effect which usually results from that peculiarity. But those redundant tresses were cleverly and gracefully managed, and while some were confined in the precise spots where their aid

Mrs. Charles Seaward entered into friendly conversation with Miss Lee respecting her pupils; while little Gertrude, who happened to be passing behind the sofa on which they were seated, failed not to notice that Miss Lee called them "charming little creatures," and said they were so clever that they gave her no trouble whatever. "She called me stupid and obstinate this morning though," said Gertrude, to herself, while she privately resolved in her child's heart not to "mind it," when Miss Lee should say so again.

Mrs. Charles Seaward talked of the village and its poor inhabitants, of the beauty of the surrounding scenery, and of the numerous walks and rides which Miss Lee would yet have to enjoy, before she could exhaust the novelties and pleasures of the situation. Miss Lee expressed unbounded admiration of the neighbourhood, and praised indiscriminately everything mentioned by the lady, even to the wooden tower of the church, which Mrs. Charles Seaward was just about to speak of as the great deformity of the valley, and one which the generosity of the parishioners ought not to allow to remain. The

beauty and number of the wild flowers having been mentioned, the lady recommended Miss Lee to explore a certain green lane beyond the churchyard, "which," said she, "is a very favourite walk with us, on account of the variety of its flowers. There, early in the spring, we find the banks sparkling with celandine, and scented with violets, and close under the hedge the curious little moschatel. If you go there now you will find the marshy bit of ground on the left hand side quite purple with the large handsome blossoms of the meadow crane's-bill, which I never saw in such profusion elsewhere, while Herb Robert from the opposite hedge peeps out as if he were smiling at his fair relation."

"How delightful!" exclaimed Miss Lee, at the same time secretly meditating an escape from her present position. Like many other townfolk, she was profoundly ignorant on the subject of flowers; but instead of frankly confessing it, and thus gaining the respect of her auditress, she gave the impression that she was perfectly familiar with the subject, and thus encouraged a continuance of the strain in which Mrs. Charles Seaward delighted to indulge, when she could find a person who took an interest in it.

"I am sorry," said that lady, "that we have not that fairest of flowers, the little wood-sorrel, growing in our valley. I dare say you have often met with it, in Somersetshire, where you tell me you were staying last summer."

Miss Lee said she had never chanced to see it, at which her companion expressed surprise, seeing that the banks in some parts of that county are completely covered with it. Affecting to think that her pupils were now growing troublesome to the company, Miss Lee rose and consulted their mamma as to the propriety of their remaining longer.

"I will ring for the nurse," said Mrs. Seaward; "for we cannot spare you, Miss Lee, for the remainder of the evening."

In the general stir which now took place among the company, as the ladies drew near the harp and piano, Miss Lee was not sorry to find herself at a distance from Mrs. Charles Seaward, while that lady, in a confidential communication to her husband, said, "I am rather disappointed in Miss Lee. She is not as interesting as she looks—her voice is extremely harsh, her pronunciation is not very correct, and she deals in extravagant language and sudden exclamations."

While the music was going on, Miss Lee (whose accomplishments in that way were not sufficient to allow of her taking part in it) was engaged in an interesting conversation with a young gentleman intended for the army, who had felt it expedient, on that account, diligently to cultivate a pair of sandy moustaches. Miss Lee was excessively gratified at hearing that this gentleman had seen her riding on the downs, and had admired her clever management of a restive pony; and out of gratitude for his complimentary speeches she took care, before supper was announced, to make it perfectly clear to his comprehension that she always rode out at the same hour, that she always ascended the hill by one particular route, and that no one ever accompanied her except Gertrude and the lad who had charge of the ponies.

"A pretty fair invitation," thought the young gentleman, as he led Miss Lee to the supper-room.

If Miss Lee had been flattered by the attentions previously received, she was perfectly intoxicated by the praise bestowed upon her at the supper table. Mrs. Seaward had good-naturedly whispered to one or two ladies near her, that such and such elegant dishes were decked out by Miss Lee, and that such and such blanchmanges and jellies were the work of her hands. "Astonishing! Wonderful!" was the exclamation of ladies unaccustomed to explore the mysteries of confectionery. "What is so astonishing?" naturally inquired their neighbours; and thus the fame of Miss Lee's performances was circulated throughout the room, and several gentlemen pretended extravagant avidity for everything prepared by such fair hands.

All this was too much for Miss Lee. Little accustomed to the sort of society she was now in, and completely inexperienced in that kind of complimentary joking which is well understood to mean nothing, she viewed several of the gentlemen near her as absolutely smitten with her charms; and while giving present encouragement to all, she felt that it would one day be a serious business to decide which was to be the favoured lover, and whose were the hearts she should be compelled to break. Her manners, therefore, became more free and unrestrained, and her voice and laugh louder than ordinary. The only drawbacks to her delight were, that the

gentleman with the black whiskers, since the first steady and penetrating gaze, had taken little notice of her, and that latterly the father of her pupils had been eyeing her with a more than usually severe expression. At length the party broke up; and while Miss Lee retired to dream of her numerous admirers, the different groups of guests, in dispersing to their several homes, failed not to notice the scene which had taken place at the supper-table,—the ladies deciding that the new governess was "an ill-bred young woman," the gentlemen that she was "an agreeable flirt."

(To be continued.)

LETTERS TO MY GOD-DAUGHTER.

THE GREEK TRAGEDIES.—SOPHOCLES' "ANTIGONE."

I CAN well sympathise with your feelings of mortification, my dear Nina, at finding how many things you are ignorant of, notwithstanding the many years you have passed at school. I do not mean, however, by lamenting your ignorance to cast any blame upon your school or school-mistress, as I believe you were conscientiously and thoroughly taught all that you were sent to learn; but a knowledge of Greek and Latin is not now considered necessary for females; and without studying Greek it was scarcely likely that you could become acquainted with the works of the Greek tragedians; and "Antigone," respecting which you enquire, is a tragedy written by Sophocles.

Few things are more curious in the history of the human mind than the undue value which has long been set upon the Greek and Latin languages. At best, they are but the means of acquiring knowledge; but they were long more valued than any other kind of knowledge whatever. Perhaps, in the middle ages, a portion of the high esteem in which this kind of learning was held, might arise from its being exclusively in the possession of the rich and noble; as the length of time requisite for the acquirement of the learned languages placed them far beyond the reach of those who had to labour for their daily bread. Whatever may have been the cause, certain it is that, in the reigns of Henry VIII. and the succeeding monarchs, a knowledge of Greek and Latin was the only kind of learning valued, even for females; and every woman who possessed more mind than was necessary to work a sampler, or make a pudding, understood the Greek and Latin languages as well as many learned Professors do at the present day. It was a strange state of things, when women were either profoundly learned or profoundly ignorant, but there can be no doubt of the fact; as, without adverting to the well-known instance of Lady Jane Grey, we find Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mary, and many ladies of both their courts, well skilled in the learned languages. Even at the present day, though Greek and Latin are no longer thought necessary for women, they are still considered essential to the education of a gentleman.

But to return to your question. Of all the numerous tragedians who existed among the Greeks, the works of only three have been handed down to us; and these three are Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Sophocles was younger than Æschylus, and older than Euripides; but he may be called a contemporary of both; as we find he contested with the former for the tragic garland, and outlived the latter. The style of Sophocles was so remarkable for its sweetness and its polish, that he was called the Attic Bee; and the sound of his verses is said to have resembled the most harmonious music. He seems indeed to have been one of the most favoured of mortals, as he was endowed with beauty, talents, and wealth, and he was descended from rich and honoured parents. His early life was a scene of uninterrupted prosperity, and he lived to extreme old age, in the full possession of his faculties; as, though an accusation was brought against him, that he had become

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R. and MRS. CHARLES SEAWARD had viewed with disapprobation, increasing as the evening went on, the freedom of Miss Lee's manners; so that the lady, who had been at first prepossessed in her favour, now took the opposite extreme, and declared that after this specimen, she should wish to hold no farther intercourse with the governess,

and should even be sorry for her children to have any communication with their cousins, while the latter were under the care of such an objectionable person. Her husband thought it would be impossible to separate the children without having a misunderstanding with the parents, but he agreed that Miss Lee was not the sort of person he would wish his children to copy, "I hope you have been more fortunate in your own choice," he added, "for I could not easily put up with a person who is always thinking of herself instead of her pupils."

"I feel assured that that will not be the case with Miss Heathfield. She is ten years older than Miss Lee, and those ten years have been spent in constant tuition. I understand she has had many trials, and these have perhaps given her the subdued and gentle manner which I noticed with so much pleasure."

"I hope she will not be a melancholy person," said the husband; "for, above all things, I dislike a whining voice and a sorrowful countenance in those who have the care of children."

"Miss Heathfield has the best reason in the world to be cheerful," said his wife; "for she is a truly religious woman, and has borne her trials, I am told, with the utmost fortitude. It is only on account of the excellent character I have of her principles and conduct, that I have consented to wait, to my own inconvenience, until she shall be at liberty to come to us. Her aged mother, for whose sake she has just resigned a situation, now requires all her care, and it may be several months before the poor old lady's gradual decline shall terminate in death, for there is not the slightest hope of her recovery."

"It is unfortunate there is such a prospect before Miss Heathfield, for she will come to us brimful of tears and troubles; and you know how anything of that sort distresses me," said the kind-hearted husband.

"Do not let us anticipate evils," replied his wife. "It is better to suffer inconvenience than to trust our children to unworthy hands, and it will at any rate be more tolerable to bear Miss Heathfield's tears than Miss Lee's laughter."

So completely had Miss Lee lost ground in the estimation of the family at the Lodge, that Mrs. Charles Seaward took no further notice of her, and avoided as much as possible all intercourse between the children. In so doing, she did not show her usual discrimination, for there were points in Miss Lee's character which might have been improved by the judicious advice of a sensible woman; and the young governess, grateful for the attention shown her at the party, would have been favourably disposed to listen to any suggestions coming from such a quarter. The fact of her inexperience should have led to a kinder and more lenient judgment of her actions. But it is too much the case that a governess, even in the first situation she undertakes, is expected to exhibit that self-control and good judgment, that profound regard for her pupils, and that constant propriety of deportment, which are the gradually acquired fruits of long experience, and which have their rise in deep and conscientious views on the subject of education. Miss Lee met with much more consideration from the elder Mrs. Seaward, who, in reply to her husband's condemnation of what he had witnessed at the party, kindly said, "Remember, Edward, she is very young, and this is her first situation. In a little time she will understand her duties better, and will not make so free with our guests."

But Mrs. Seaward was not the person to reform what was amiss in the character of her governess. She showed very plainly, that she herself valued a handsome exterior more highly than a cultivated mind, and that matters of dress and decoration were sufficiently important in her view, to set aside the most serious studies. To secure Miss Lee's services in making a dress, or in preparing for company, she would frequently allow the business of the school-room to be remitted for a day or two, and there was always a degree of uncertainty, very unfavourable to progress, in the proceedings of the governess and her pupils.

Thus month after month passed away with very little im-

provement to the children, and without that salutary effect to the governess which a better and more regular system might have produced. Meanwhile the rides on the downs, and the flirtations with the young gentleman of the moustaches, had been successfully carried on; but coming at last to the ears of Mr. Seaward, he all at once prohibited horse-exercise, and was about to deliver a very serious lecture to Miss Lee on the impropriety of her conduct, when he was pacified by the remarks of his wife, who, with her usual indulgent feeling towards the governess, said, "What can you expect at her age? Take my advice and overlook the matter entirely, for in another week the young man will be far away. She will forget him directly he is gone, and there will be an end of it. I really cannot afford to lose so useful a person for the sake of a little innocent flirtation."

"I yield to your advice this time, Ellen," said her husband; "but remember, if I hear of another affair of the kind, Miss Lee must leave us directly. Gertrude is now old enough to understand the meaning of these assignments, and to join in the deceit attending them; which must have been the case for some time past, or they could not so long have escaped my notice. I shall not easily forgive Miss Lee for training my child in deception, and for setting her such an improper example."

Still Mrs. Seaward urged the many good qualities of the governess, her readiness to help in whatever household occupation was going on, her skill in needlework, her general good temper, her fondness for the children, and her contentment with a very low salary. Thus, by making it appear that Miss Lee was indispensable to her comfort, and that she "might search the whole county and not find her equal," Mrs. Seaward brought her husband's mind into a more contented, or, rather, a more resigned state, for he began to consider a governess a great though necessary evil, which it was his duty to suffer in the best manner possible.

Although Miss Lee had reason to suspect, from the prohibition on her rides, that the object of her frequent visits to the downs had been discovered, yet she had no friendly caution given to her on the subject, no gentle admonition to show that her conduct was disapproved. On the contrary, Mrs. Seaward, by indirect hints and jokes, led her to think of it as a natural and almost inevitable circumstance that a young lady of her age must be engaged in some love affair.

Accordingly, when the flirtation on the downs was over, Miss Lee began to look out for one elsewhere. But the admirers, apparently secured on the evening of the grand party, had dropped off one by one; the handsome man, whose slightest attentions would have been more highly prized than the open and declared admiration of others, was lost to her for ever, for he was now on his wedding tour, with the "graceful little lady" for his bride. Under this melancholy state of things, Miss Lee became exceedingly romantic. She wrote long letters to her "dear Matilda," expressive of her wounded affections and blighted hopes; she privately conveyed away from the library a few exciting novels, and in the quiet of her bedroom, during the warm summer nights, she spent hours in their perusal, and often became, in imagination, so completely identified with the heroine of the story, that it was a painful transition to be recalled to every day life by some movement or softly-breathed sigh on the part of the two little girls who slept, with cherub-faces, at her side.

In consequence of these nightly vigils, Miss Lee became paler than ever, her appetite failed, and her beautiful tresses were suffered to stray in unaccustomed disorder. "That foolish girl is fretting about the young soldier," thought Mr. Seaward, for he was not aware of the process by which young ladies sometimes acquire a love-lorn appearance, while their hearts remain untouched. In fact, Miss Lee was suffering from an inveterate fit of novel-reading, brought on by insufficient mental employment of a wholesome kind. Had some intelligent friend been at hand to encourage her better feelings, and to interest her mind in profitable studies, to give a few hints for the improvement of her imperfect drawings, to lead her to the study of plants, and to show her how many delightful methods there are in which a governess may advance her own interest and happiness, at the same time that she is benefitting her pupils, Miss Lee might have been saved from much subsequent misery and disgrace.

The summer was now nearly over, and the governess and her pupils were preparing for a child's party which was to be given on Gertrude's birthday. Gertrude had a fancy to make numerous circlets of wire, as a foundation for the wreaths of flowers with which she intended to crown all her youthful

guests. "I will get up very early on my birthday," said she, "and collect a quantity of flowers, and then it will be a nice amusement all the morning to make the wreaths." "I do not think papa will like to have a quantity of flowers gathered from the garden at this season, when they are becoming so precious," said her mother. "Then I will get what I can in the fields to make up enough," said the child. Accordingly on the morning of the important day, Gertrude persuaded Miss Lee to take her out early to search far and wide for flowers. "Let us go to the green lane," said the child, "for I saw some beautiful flowers growing there by the side of the brook, when I was with aunt Seaward; and she called them Purple Loosestrife." To the green lane they went, and after following the windings of the brook for some time, they saw on its opposite bank the tall handsome spikes of blossom of which they were in search.

"How provoking!" cried Gertrude, "they are all on the wrong side, and the brook is too wide to step across. I wish I had a stick with a crook at the end."

"Let us try my parasol," said Miss Lee; and, leaning forward, she was trying to secure the coveted blossoms, when a voice at her side said, "Shall I get them for you, Miss?" and

of talking to her, he said that if she would come a little farther down the lane, he could get as many as she liked of the same kind of flowers. Thus an acquaintance was speedily struck up. Miss Lee, with her usual communicativeness, told the youth where she lived, and for what purpose she was gathering flowers, and also managed to discover that her companion was an inhabitant of a village three miles off; but what his trade or profession was, she could not exactly make out. The young man behaved with a sort of rustic gallantry, and, taking care that the child was out of hearing, he said at parting, "I will bring you a better nosegay than this at sunset, if you will promise to wear it at the party."

"Yes, gladly; but how shall I get it?"

"I dare say you can tell me where I could meet you for a few minutes."

Miss Lee blushed, and was conscious of indiscretion, but replied hastily, "Yes, at the little wicket gate beyond the shrubberies at the back of the house."

"Till sunset then, good bye."

It was matter of great surprise that evening that Miss Lee absented herself from the drawing-room for a full hour when the festivity was at its height, and it was observed that she



without waiting for an answer, the speaker sprang to the other side, and proceeded to gather a large quantity of flowers.

Miss Lee was quite taken by surprise; for the youth who performed this friendly office was, to use the language of her own thoughts, the "noblest creature she had ever beheld," and had it not been for the unfortunate "Miss" with which he addressed her, she would at once have set him down as some hero of romance. The dress of the young man was of that non-descript character, that Miss Lee could not be certain whether it was the shooting dress of a gentleman, or the holiday dress of a mechanic; but whatever it was, it set off to advantage his fine athletic figure, while on his head a loose black velvet cap, falling on one side, had an air that was perfectly *distingué*, and revealed in striking contrast a really noble brow, partly shaded, as he stooped to gather the flowers, by the short curls of his chestnut hair. The ruddy glow of health was on the cheek of the young man; and when he presented the flowers to Miss Lee, the expression of his hazel eyes struck her as exceedingly beautiful; at any rate it told a tale of wondering admiration for herself. The young man received her thanks with awkward shyness, but in order to prolong the pleasure

continued to do so on subsequent evenings about the same time. At first it was supposed that she had gone to her room to indulge in some of those melancholy thoughts which had lately appeared to prey on her mind, but a sudden return to more than her former gaiety and good-looks, forbade the supposition, and Mr. Seaward began shrewdly to suspect the real state of the case, and to look out for the confirmation of his suspicions. One evening he came to Mrs. Seaward's room, with a mixed expression of amusement and annoyance on his face, and said, "I have a bit of unexpected news for you, Ellen. Your governess is keeping nightly assignments with the 'Village Adonis.' I would not tell you of it until I was quite certain of the fact; therefore, I have taken the trouble to observe their proceedings on two successive evenings."

"Is there no possibility of your being mistaken?" said Mrs. Seaward, half-laughing. "It seems too ridiculous. Young Bright is a carpenter's son, and his parents are very low people."

"True; but the old man has a good trade, and it has been his pride to give his boy some 'larning' as he calls it; so that the youth is a little above his fellows as to schooling, as well as very much above them in personal appearance."

"Oh, as to beauty," said Mrs. Seaward, "his handsome face is quite a calamity in the village. The rector's wife told me not long ago, that her cooks and housemaids regularly fall in love with the Village Adonis, and that all the other young men of the place are overlooked while there is the least chance of attracting the carpenter's son. But then what a disgrace for a person in Miss Lee's position, to enter the lists with all the servant-girls who are running after young Bright! What can be done?"

"Leave this affair to me," said Mr. Seaward, "and it shall soon be settled."

Miss Lee saw that there was something awful in Mr. Seaward's face, when he called her into his library the next morning, and she mustered up all her courage for the occasion.

Mr. Seaward abruptly enquired whether she was aware of the station and circumstances of the young man to whom she had lately given her company, and if so, whether she intended to marry him.

Miss Lee became very pale, but replied firmly: "I am fully acquainted with everything. Mr. Bright's father is a tradesman, and so is mine. The young man bears a good character, and I have promised to become his wife."

"Then, Miss Lee, you must be aware that this is not the place in which you can receive his addresses. Be so good as to prepare for your immediate return to your father's house."

Miss Lee was startled and surprised. She thought Mr. Seaward severe and unjust, but she proudly answered: "It will be a great convenience to return home immediately, that I may make preparations for my wedding."

So departed the young governess, and so ended Mrs. Seaward's experience in that way; for her husband, distrustful of the class, on account of the faults of one individual, would not admit another governess into the house, but forthwith dispatched his children to the best school which the county afforded.

A long story might be told of the trials of Mrs. Henry Bright (under which name Miss Lee not long after returned to the neighbourhood); of the discomfort of her home, which was under the roof of her father-in-law; of the dissatisfaction of the old people, at their son having married a fine lady; of the impossibility of meeting their extremely penurious notions; of charges of waste and extravagance, sounded in the son's ears by his avaricious mother, until he began to believe that his young wife was bringing them all to ruin; of the first quarrel, and its consequences, in weakening the strong affection of the young couple, and driving the husband away from home; of the gradual change in Henry Bright, from being the best looking and best behaved young man in the village, to being the slovenly frequenter of a village ale-house.

All this would make a long, and true, and painful story; but I will only say that, when some of their former guests visited the Seawards, a few months since, and went with them to the neighbouring village church (their own church being at last in the hands of an architect, with a view to being relieved of its preposterous wooden tower), they saw a sickly-looking young woman sitting alone in a pew, in the opposite aisle, whom, notwithstanding the woful change which had passed upon her, they recognised as the former fascinating Miss Lee. No pains were now taken to adjust the ringlets on her marble forehead, but across its breadth there were lines of sorrow that ought not to have marked so young a brow. Sincere pity shaded the countenances of several of the guests, and brought a painful flush on the hollow cheek of the late governess, who, as they left the church, returned with grateful surprise their friendly greetings, so long had she been accustomed to be passed without the slightest mark of recognition by the families at the Mansion and the Lodge.

KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE.—I know it is the custom of the world to prefer the pompous histories of great men, before the greatest virtues of others, whose lives have been led in a course less illustrious. This indeed is the general humour. But I believe it to be an error in men's judgments. For certainly that is a more profitable instruction, which may be taken from the eminent goodness of men of lower rank, than that which we learn from the splendid illustrations of the battles, and victories, and buildings, and sayings, of great commanders and princes. Such specious matters, as they are seldom delivered with fidelity, so they serve but for the imitation of a very few, and rather make for the ostentation than the true information of human life. Whereas it is from the practice of men equal to ourselves, that we are more naturally taught how to command our passions, to direct our knowledge, and to govern our actions.—*Sprat's Life of Cowley.*

THE EMIGRANT'S DAUGHTER.

WE were but children when our parents came
From England o'er the broad Atlantic's foam,
And unto us all countries were the same,
And where they smiled upon us, *there* was home!

The world was unto us a play-ground wide,
Where fresh and sparkling lay the morning dew;
And sweet it was among its paths untried
To range, when they that loved us wander'd too.

All there was new, and beautiful, and strange,—
We thought; and lightly on our feelings lay
The grief of parting, or the sense of change,
From scenes where we had sojourn'd but a day.

But she, our elder sister, keenly felt
Things that our childish spirits bore unmoved;
And mourned the Home where she had longer dwelt,
The friends that she had longer, dearer loved.

And like the plant of which old legends tell,
Around the mother-soil she called her own
The fibres of her heart had twined so well,
They might not quit their hold without a groan.

Yet what she suffer'd then she strove to hide;
And when we left our home, she did not speak,
But turn'd so pale, it seem'd the rose that died
Knew it would bloom no more upon her cheek.

And on the scenes that we must leave behind
She turn'd the fix'd and earnest gaze, that fain
Would grave for ever on the heart and mind
All that may never meet the eyes again.

Her parents sobb'd aloud: their hearts were stirr'd
As fast around there flock'd a well-known band,
To give the parting wish, the parting word,
To take the last kind pressure of the hand.

Old friends, old neighbours, in that hour we found;
Those we had loved but little, with the rest
Gained a strange value,—even linked and bound
Unto the heart with all it loved the best!

Each shade of doubt and coldness, that perchance
Had gathered 'mid our being's daily strife,
Fell from the soul for ever with the glance
That looked Farewell, and knew it was for Life!

Our sister's young companions round her came;
She spoke not, wept not, till a sudden cry
Burst from her lips that vainly strove to frame
Their trembling utterance to the word "Good bye!"

Her thoughts had wandered, but the trance of pain,
It seem'd, the anguish of that moment broke;
And at their kisses and their tears, again
Her soul, with all its tenderness, awoke.

Her spirit in that grave had overpast
The bitterness of Death—it found relief;
And all the look that on her Friends she cast,
Was love, deep love, that left no place for grief.

She turned unto them—in her smile serene,
The shadow of the past reflected lay:
"Oh! sometimes think how happy we have been;
Forget me not, dear Friends, when far away!"

"Farewell, dear Ellen! we shall meet again,
And love you in a happier world than this!"—
She prest them to her heart, and raising then
Her eyes to Heaven, made softly answer "Yes!"

DORA GREENWELL.