

MRS. TREMAINE'S TEMPER.

A STORY WITH A MORAL.

"What a rude cabman, Grandmamma!" "He certainly is rude, my dears. But after all, perhaps if we knew something more about him, we should be sorry for him, instead of cross, and say 'Perhaps he cannot help it.'"

"Yes, that is just like you, grandmamma. You have always an excuse ready for everyone."

"Well, dears, if you will come indoors and all sit round the fire, I will tell you a little story, just as I heard it, when your mamma was a tiny little girl, and wore funny little short-waisted frocks and a big sun bonnet."

And my children all settled cozily round the old-fashioned hearth while their grand-mother told them the story which, as it is not without interest for "children of a larger growth," I take leave to set down for grown-up readers.

It is a great many years ago, my dears, as it would seem to you (she said), since your mamma was a very little girl, and poor grandpapa, oh, such a handsome gentleman. I had not been married more than four years or so; and one evening I was waiting in the park to meet him as he came home from business. My little girl—your mamma that is—was toddling unsteadily along the paths. It was nearly six o'clock on a beautiful August afternoon, and the sun was still glaring down on baby's white starched bonnet, that she would keep pushing backward over her golden curls, so that I had to stop every minute to tie the strings afresh under her little soft double chin.

It happened that on the seat whereon I sat to perform this little operation for the twentieth time that afternoon, as it seemed to me, there was seated an old lady, very richly dressed in mourning of an old-fashioned style, with a young person who looked like a companion or superior lady's maid, holding a silk parasol over her head. The old lady was not very pleasant looking, and she was talking in a querulous tone to her attendant when we sat down. But as soon as she caught sight of us she became silent, and looked round in anything but a kindly manner. When the bonnet was duly secured, baby ran away for a few steps, and in returning, her unsteady feet led her with a bump up against the old lady's knees. Then, with a little cry, she toddled over to me and leaned against my lap, laughing. But the old-fashioned lady was grievously put out.

"It is disgraceful," she said, "that the children of the lower classes should be allowed to run wild in the public parks, invading the privacy of aristocratic persons."

And the attendant led her away, still muttering and looking round crossly at my little girl, who was laughing merrily enough, understanding nothing of the disturbance she had created in the upper circles of society.

"What a disagreeable, surly-tempered old woman!" I said to myself.

Presently I saw that the strange lady was sitting alone on a chair a little way off, and that her attendant was coming towards my seat. She sat down beside me, and though looking rather embarrassed at first, entered into conversation after a little while.

"I am sorry," she said, "that Mrs. Tremaine should have spoken so rudely when your little girl ran up"—and she laid a hand upon your mamma's shoulder—"but I must apologise for her. She is not quite right in her mind, and sometimes speaks very unkindly and unfeelingly, though she has really a gentle heart and would not like to give pain to anyone."

"Oh," I said pleasantly, "please do not say anything more about it. I was a little bit hurt, but if the poor lady is out of her mind, of course I should not take any notice."

I was sorry for the attendant, who really seemed quite grieved at the old lady's rudeness, and who was a pleasant, kindly spoken person. My little girl had begun to play with her dress, and by this time had invited herself to sit on her lap, where she sat, looking shyly backwards and forwards at me, while the attendant was patting her cheek lightly, and seemed pleased at her childish confidence.

"She is not really out of her mind," said the attendant, gently—"only a little bit 'funny'; and on some days she is very unhappy, and nothing seems to be able to comfort her. That is how she feels now; and she has sent me away in order, as she says, that she may think of her sorrow alone."

"Poor thing!" I said to myself. "After all, riches and a great position are not the true happiness."

"Poor thing! Yes," said the attendant, "she has had a sad life. It is thirty-five years this winter she has been in mourning. Some days she is just quiet, like this; and at other times she is quite uncontrollable, and walks upstairs and downstairs and all over the house, sobbing and wailing and wringing her hands, from morning until night. Then, the next day she will be quiet, and does not speak to anyone, but sits in one room, and looks at the wall or the fire place, saying nothing, and doing nothing but sigh, and sob, and brood."

"What is she grieving about?" I asked, for the woman seemed as though she wished to talk about it, perhaps to account for the old lady's rudeness.

"She is mourning for her husband," she answered, with a sad shake of her head. "It is thirty-six years since she was married. He was an officer in the Royal Navy. 'Handsome Jack Tremaine' he was called, as she is very fond of telling me; and nothing could have seemed brighter than their future promised to be. He was rich, and had distinguished himself in his profession. The wars were over—it was just after Napoleon, the French Emperor, had been sent away to safe keeping in St. Helena,—Captain Tremaine had every opportunity to settle down into a comfortable position as a country gentleman. He adored his wife, and the people used to turn round and look after them as they walked along the country roads together, or galloped on horse-back by leafy ways or grassy lanes, and say, 'there go the two happiest people in England!'"

"But after a while clouds came. Mrs. Tremaine had a violent temper, and could not tolerate the lightest word of rebuke. The Captain, as she says herself now, in the bitterness of her self-reproach, was as loyal and noble a fellow as ever stepped; but Mrs. Tremaine could not believe in him. He was so handsome, and she so fond of him, that she must needs believe that every woman at the Hunt Ball, even at the vil-

lage Church, was making eyes at him—though he had no eyes for anyone but her. If he were out of her sight for half a day she would work herself up into a fury of jealousy, and when he returned would assail him with a storm of accusation and suspicion. So things went on: no man living (she says) could have tolerated her whims with patience; and one day he retorted upon her scoldings, and, upbraided her bitterly for her mean suspicions and unreasonable jealousy. She replied furiously; and from that time their life was one of hourly wrangles and daily reconciliations. There was never a day of unbroken peace in the house; and both felt, in spite of all their mutual love (which seemed really, to have remained as passionate as ever), that their hopeless incompatibility of temper made any permanent happiness impossible.

"At length, after a period of more than usual wretchedness, the Captain told his young wife, one day, that he had resolved to make a voyage round the world in one of the King's ships, of which the command had been offered him for that service. When the prospect of losing him for a whole year—for that was the time he expected to be away—dawned upon her, she was quite prostrated by grief, and for a few days almost the old happiness returned, and the Captain began to think that he had made a mistake in accepting the commission.

"But alas! there was ever something wanting in that house; and the day before he sailed they had a violent quarrel. When he rose in the morning, and put on his uniform to set out by the early coach for Plymouth, Mrs. Tremaine was still brooding sulkily in bed, and would not dress to see him off. But he ran back, even after shutting the hall door to bid her "good-bye"; once again, and to kiss her face as she lay on the pillow, that was beginning to be wet with tear-stains, though her pride would not allow her to respond.

"When she found that he had really gone, however, she broke down, and sent for her maid to dress her. Then she declared that she could not let her Jack go without seeing him again, and taking a man-servant with her, she ordered a post-chaise and drove to Plymouth, where she arrived just after the stage-coach. "Oh it was worth all the journey, child," she has often said to me, "to see my dear Jack's eyes when he saw me jump out of the post-chaise." And so he went away happy, after all; and they promised each other that each should make that year of absence one from another a time of trial and self-discipline, so that when he returned, each should be schooled to quarrel no more, and begin their marriage anew, with a new honeymoon that should never be darkened by a cloud again.

"When he was gone, Mrs. Tremaine did indeed set herself to overcome her selfish and violent disposition; adding daily a few pages to a letter which was to be sent for her dear Jack to a post-house in India, by one of the East Indian Company's clipper; and when it was time for her to send it, she had a new secret to tell him, and one which she knew would make him very, very happy, and would help them both to live peacefully together when the glad time came for his return. For she told him that, before he could get home, she hoped to give him a dear little baby. She was sure it would be the image of him, and therefore, the most beautiful baby that ever was!

"By-and-by came a letter. The Captain was well and the voyage prosperous. He had every hope of being home within the twelve-month. Mrs. Tremaine had made a calendar of the time, now, that remained before he was to come home, and she used to take a pen every morning, as soon as she rose, and strike out one more of the days that separated her from her Jack.

"At last there were only weeks instead of months; and now her attention was more fully occupied, for the baby had really come, as she expected, and was a beautiful boy, with sunny golden locks and blue eyes, just like his father's—eyes which almost made her forget her loneliness when she looked into them.

"And exactly a year and a day after the Captain had sailed, he came back, and, oh, how proud and delighted my lady was to put his baby in his arms! But on Captain Tremaine's face there was something wrong; he had not the old heartiness and strength; he had contracted an ague, while on shore in Central America, which, he said, had never entirely left him. What of that, however? A few weeks of English sunshine would soon put it right, and he would be himself again; but for the first week or two he should take things easily,—and besides, there was the baby to play with.

"But the English sunshine did not do its work, and the poor fellow, from going to bed early, had to take to his bed altogether, attended with the most frantic anxiety and affection by his wife. Nothing could be too good for him—no care too great. She was at his side morning, noon, and night. And to make matters worse, the baby fell ill also, and pined away and died! The Captain never rallied from that shock. Within a few days of little Jack's burial, he died in his wife's arms, fondling her and murmuring her name with tender epithets in his last breath.

"For many weeks it was supposed that she would have died too; and it had been better for her to have joined her husband and her babe—poor soul. When she recovered, she was as she is now—one day violent and passionate with grief, another, just vacant and brooding."

I looked up to where the poor lady was sitting. She had buried her face in her handkerchief, and was rocking herself to and fro in her sobs. The attendant hastily arose. But my baby—your mamma, my dears—had slipped from her lap some minutes before, and was standing now by the side of the strange lady, plucking her dress. I ran to draw her away, but the attendant touched my arm.

"Do not go," she said, "the little one will bring her to herself."

"So we saw her stoop and kiss your little mamma's golden hair; and presently the lady rose and led her towards us. By this time her eyes were dry, and she held the child by the hand, looking down very kindly at the little face. Still, to me she was not very polite.

"Why do you tie your child's bonnet-strings under her chin like that, woman?" she said; "don't you know that they will make an ugly ridge under her chin, and make it impossible for her to wear evening dresses when she grows up?"

To please the old lady I stooped and tied the strings at the back of the little curly knob. And the old lady smiled approvingly, and kissed the baby again. Just then, your grandpapa came up, and baby ran to meet him.

"And that is why," said grandmamma, "that I am not so ready as I once was, perhaps, to be cross with people who do not behave as nicely as I am sure all of you, my dears, always behave to everyone!"

The Genuine Friendships of Life.

To be rich in friends is to be poor in nothing. It is to possess that infinite reservoir of what may be, for want of a better term, denominated interest in life, in that it predetermines success in whatever line of achievement one may choose to work. A range of warm and strong friendships creates the magnetic atmosphere that vitalizes every element within its influence, so that it is not that social enjoyments and companionships are in any sense interruptions to specific work, however important, but that they yield instead the very elements out of which it is best created. The genuine friendships of life are largely discovered, not acquired. We find them rather than make them. They are predestined relationships, and are recognized intuitively. "We meet—at least those who are true to their instincts meet—a succession of persons through our lives, all of whom have some peculiar errand to us," writes Margaret Fuller. "There is an outer circle whose existence we perceive, but with whom we stand in no real relation. They tell us the news, they act on us in the offices of society, they show us kindness and aversion; but their influence does not penetrate; we are nothing to them, or they to us, except as a part of the world's furniture. Another circle within this are dear and near to us. We know them and of what kind they are. They are not to us mere facts, but intelligible thoughts of the divine mind. We like to see how they are unfolded; we like to meet them and part with them; we like their action upon us, and the pause that succeeds and enables us to appreciate its quality. Often we leave them on our path and return no more, but we bear them in our memory, tales which have been told, and whose meaning has been felt. But yet a nearer group there are, beings born under the same star, and bound with us in a common destiny. They are not mere acquaintances, mere friends, but when we meet are sharers of our very existence. There is no separation; the same thought is given at the same moment to both; indeed, it is born of the meeting, and would not otherwise have been called into existence at all. These not only know themselves more, but are more for having met, and regions of their beings which would else have lain sealed in cold obstruction burst into leaf and bloom, and song. The times of these meetings are fated," she goes on to say, "nor will either one be able ever to meet any other person in the same way." It is one of the paths to success and happiness in life, or rather, it is success and happiness in itself, to be swiftly responsive to impressions of his character, to recognize the angel when he draws near. Dickens touched the deeper truth in this relation when he wrote that the people who have to do with us, and we with them, are drawing near; that our paths from whatever distant quarters of the globe they start, are converging; and that all that is set for them to do for us, and for us to do for them, will all be done.

Religion and Riches.

There is something very seductive in the passion for wealth. Under the garb of "honest industry" and the duty of "providing for one's own household," men will contract the vice of avarice, which is one of the most dehumanizing, soul-destroying vices to which poor human nature is subject. When a man has succeeded in business and becomes even comparatively rich, he is very apt, as we say, to "feel his oats." He becomes proud, self-confident and self-sufficient, and is very apt to make himself very disagreeable in the society in which he moves. It is in the manner of religion, especially, that the deleterious effects of prosperity are most strikingly exhibited. Too often it destroys that beautiful humility and that holy charity which are the very life and soul of true religion. It is especially in those who have risen from a humble condition to a degree of wealth and prosperity that these features are most strongly developed. The whole history of church warns us to be on our guard against the seductive influence of prosperity. Let the rich realize their responsibility for the right use of their riches. Let the poor, while they fail not in diligence in their various callings, learn to "be content with such things as they have," and while we all realize the danger of prosperity, let us learn to tread the world beneath our feet and seek diligently for the treasure which endureth unto eternal life.

The Hebrew Faith.

For 3,000 years the Hebrew nation has lived in expectation of a Messiah. Its literature teems with references to the glorious event. Prophet, priest and poet have pictured his coming and his triumph, and the whole world has accepted these teachings as divine. Christianity, indeed, sees in Jesus the fulfillment of these prophecies. Islam finds their fulfillment in Mohammed, while the Jew, rejecting each of these as well as many other claimants, has looked for some other yet to come; but all alike have accepted the prophecies as sacred and unimpeachable.

This wonderful faith, which has characterized Judaism through all the centuries, has been its most powerful and beautiful feature. The Hebrews have suffered and been scattered as have no other people, but they have always been upheld by a firm, unflinching assurance that some day a descendant of their famous ancient king would come and restore them to their home and to a chief place among the nations of the earth. For thirty centuries this belief has been their stay and strength—a precious common bond which has bound their hearts together and preserved them a separate and peculiar people.

Slow Torture.

Teacher—"In China criminals are frequently sentenced to be kept awake until insanity and death results. Now how do you suppose they keep them from falling asleep?"

Little Girl (eldest of a small family)—"I guess they gives 'em a baby to take care of."

Old Cheese.

Mamma—"What's the matter, my pet?"

Little Pet—"My tongue hurts tellible."

Mamma—"Did you bite it?"

Little Pet—"No'm; zee cheese bited it."

HEALTH.

House Plants as Purifiers of the Atmosphere.

It is a pleasing characteristic of cultured people generally that they seek to adorn their homes with green plants and flowers. Place is willingly made for them in the favorite rooms where the warm and life-giving rays of the sun can find an entrance. Especially in winter, when fantastic icicles hang from the window-frames, and forest, field and meadow slumber under a mantle of snow, there is no more pleasing and grateful occupation for the lover of flowers than through careful tending of choice plants in his comfortably warmed rooms to summon Spring, as if with an enchanter's wand, and gladden heart and sense with the beauty and perfume of leaf and flower. For the chamber conservatory it is usual to select free-blooming or ornamental-foliated plants, which should be annually transplanted in a fresh sandy loam, enriched with humus, or the surface should get a light mineral flower-dressing. Further requirements are a moderately warmed room, with a sunny exposure, and the plants should stand near the window where the full sunlight can stream upon them. Given these conditions, nothing more is wanted than an occasional light sprinkling from a water-pot to ensure the unfolding of leaf, and bud, and flower.

There is a very general impression, moreover, that growing plants exercise an important sanitary influence, purifying the atmosphere of the chamber, by absorbing the noxious gases of animal respiration; but this is a theory which will hardly bear close investigation.

Men and animals give off carbonic acid gas by respiration and through the pores of the skin. A grown man takes in about a pint of air at every breath; the oxygen, or a portion of it, passes into the arteries, where it is taken up by the red corpuscles and utilized by the combustion of fat and the albumen of the tissues. In this process of combustion the oxygen unites with the carbon to form carbonic acid, which passes, over to the venous blood, which carries it to the lungs, whence it is exhaled.

In pure mountain or sea air the proportion of carbonic acid is only 3 parts in 10,000; the respired breath contains four to five per cent. of carbonic acid; that is over a hundred times as much as pure air; the atmosphere of a close room is quickly polluted by the presence of a person in it; not merely by reason of the carbonic acid, which is deleterious enough, but because, at every respiration impure, watery vapor, carrying decomposing organic matter, is given off along with it. It is this latter which generates the offensive odors in a close, crowded room.

The respiration of plants is closely analogous to that of animals, every part of the plant—leaves, root, stem, flowers, and fruit—absorb oxygen, and give off carbonic acid, and this process is continuous day and night, but in the process of assimilation which takes place only under the influence of light, the plant draws from the carbonic acid of the atmosphere all the carbon required to build up its substance. The ground-work of the common notion that plants purify the atmosphere of occupied rooms during the day, although they vitiate it to a certain extent at night is, hence, intelligible enough; but, as a matter of experiment, it has been determined that a grown man inhales about twenty-four quarts of oxygen an hour and exhales an equal amount of carbonic acid, or as much as a square metre of leaf surface could assimilate in a summer day of fifteen hours. It is, hence, evident that the influence of plants in absorbing the respired carbonic acid of occupied rooms is very slight, while as respects the removal of the organic impurities, and, in some cases, infectious germs, it is of no appreciable account.

Indeed, under certain conditions, chamber plants may be directly instrumental in vitiating the air. This is sometimes due to the vapors exhaled by the soil of the pots especially when it is enriched with decomposing animal manures, such as bone-meal, blood-meal, rotten manure, etc. There are, moreover, known instances in which the soil contains the germs of malaria parasites. In such cases, the warm chamber, with the occasional watering, furnish all the conditions favorable to the development of the malarial poisons in the pots, and cases of intermittent fever have been directly traced to the influence of chamber plants.

While admitting that flower-culture in the house is one of the most æsthetic, instructive, and grateful occupations that the members of the family can be engaged in, I must, nevertheless, contend that the popular opinion that the plants purify the atmosphere is an erroneous one. There is one and only one means of purifying the atmosphere of the house, and that is frequent change of the air either by artificial ventilation, or partially opened windows.

Perfect Health.

Dr. A. Wilson says: "The possession of perfect health is the first great essential for happiness; it is equally the first essential for the perfect exercise of mind; and it therefore forms the first item for our consideration when we ask the question, 'Is life worth living?' To the healthy man or woman who takes care of the body, all things in the way of advance and enjoyment, physical and mental, are possible. Conversely, with a body weakened, no matter how or why, most things become impossible, or, it not actually unattainable, they are at least achieved with difficulty, and through pain and tribulation of spirit. Sound health is the first condition for enjoying life; and, if we reflect upon the common causes of life's failure in a social sense, we may easily prove that much of the want of success is due to physical incapacity to enjoy existence. This incapacity, again, largely arises from the lack of knowledge about health and its laws."

Ma's Boy Talks.

Mrs. Gaddabout—"Has your ma called on those new neighbors yet?"

Boy—"No, an' she won't neither. She says they wouldn't 'a' returned your call if they'd been anybody worth knowing."

It is a certain sign of an ill heart to be inclined to defamation. They who are harmless and innocent can have no gratification that way; but it ever arises from a neglect of what is laudable in a man's self, and an impatience of seeing it in others.—[Sir Richard Steele.

Progress in Science.

Experiments on the ventilation of tunnels on Saccardo's system have recently been carried out in Italy. In this system fans and ventilating shafts are dispensed with, but air is compressed into a reservoir, outside the tunnel, to which it is led in suitable mains. From these mains it is allowed to escape at different points inside the tunnel, from which it drives out the foul air.

A process for coating iron and steel with zinc at ordinary temperatures has been lately developed by the London Metallurgical Company. By this process the tendency of iron and zinc to form an alloy and the reduction of the temper in steel due to the intense heat of molten zinc are said to be avoided.

A French technical journal recommends the use of coal tar for water-proofing masonry. A small amount of India rubber dissolved in benzine will increase its durability. It should be applied boiling hot, and if the color should be objectionable it can be dusted with plaster of paris before drying.

An important invention has been made in the adaptation of magnetic electricity to the prevention of the slipping of car wheels. The use of it is said to increase the hauling power of an engine many per cent.

Recent improvements in photographic plates have been so great that accurate photographs can now be taken of a rifle ball traveling at a speed of 3,000 feet a second.

A mile was recently run by a compound locomotive on the Pennsylvania Railroad in 39½ seconds. This would correspond to a speed 91.7 miles per hour.

Home has the First Claim.

The first thought of a wife or a mother should be her home; all things, no matter how important, are secondary to that. No matter how rampant may become certain public evils, let her see to it that she keeps the evil out of her home and she performs her greatest duty to her God, her family and mankind. When a woman tries to remedy an evil by striding the lecture platform, warning others, when that very evil is invading her home by her absence, she is mistaking her mission in life, and she cannot realize it too soon. The good that a woman can do toward the great world at large is as nothing compared to her possibilities in her own home if she be wife or mother.

And the first duty of man, as well as of woman, is to home, to his wife and his children. As a husband, a father, an example to his sons and daughters, their counselor and friend, he should be the light and joy of his household, their strength for duty, their encouragement to excellence, their comfort and help in all that prepares for usefulness and makes home attractive to all. When husband and wife, father and mother make home what it should be, the false temptations of the world will lose their power, and children will grow up to be the joy of parent and a blessing to themselves and to the world.

Breaking Through a Rule.

A gentleman while walking with two ladies through one of the principal streets of London saw a beggar approach. One of the ladies, who had evidently seen the mendicant before, said: "This is the most singular man I ever heard of. No matter how much money you give him he always returns the change and never keeps more than a penny."

"Why, what a fool he must be!" returned the gentleman. "But I'll try him, and put him to a little trouble."

So saying the gentleman drew from his pocket a sovereign, which he dropped into the beggar's hat.

The mendicant turned the coin over two or three times, examined it closely, and then, raising his eyes to the countenance of the benevolent man, said: "Well, I'll not adhere to my usual custom in this case. I'll keep it all this time. But don't do it again."

The doctor opened his eyes in astonishment and passed on, while the ladies smiled with delight.

They Spoke Right On.

"Now, boys, when I ask you a question you mustn't be afraid to speak right out and answer me. When you look around and see all these fine houses, farms and cattle, do you ever think who owns them all now? Your fathers own them, do they not?"

"Yes, sir," shouted a hundred voices.

"Well, where will your fathers be in twenty years from now?"

"Dead!" shouted the boys.

"That's right. And who will own all this property?"

"Us boys!" shouted the urchin.

"Right. Now tell me—did you ever, in going along the street, notice the drunkards lounging around the saloon door waiting for some one to treat them?"

"Yes, sir; lots of them."

"Well, where will they be twenty years from now?"

"Dead!" exclaimed the boys.

"And who will be the drunkards then?"

"Us boys!" shouted the unabashed youngsters.

Carefully Educated.

A popular official in Ottawa once went fishing with a clergyman. Bites were plentiful, but the official seemed to get them all. The clergyman waited patiently and at last was favored with a nibble. Then the line parted and his hopes and a part of his fishing tackle vanished simultaneously. He said nothing for almost a minute, and then turning to his friend remarked:

"John, if my early education had been neglected what do you suppose I should say now?"

A Duke's Titles.

As already announced by the cable, the Duke of Argyll has had conferred upon him the dignity of a Dukedom of the United Kingdom. The following are some of the titles and offices which he holds: Duke Marquis and Earl of Argyll, Marquis of Lorne and Kintyre, Earl of Campbell and Cowal, Viscount Lochow and Glenilla, Lord of Inverary, Mull, Morvern and Tiry, in Scotland; Baron Sundridge of Comb Bank, Kent; Lord Hamilton, in Great Britain; Knight of the Garter, Knight of the Thistle, Hereditary Master of the Queen's Household in Scotland, Keeper of the Great Seal of Scotland, Admiral of the Western Isles, Keeper of Dunoon Castle and of Dunstaffnage and Carrick, State Councillor for Scotland, Lord Lieutenant of Argyllshire and Hereditary Sheriff of County Argyll.