The Washerwoman's Song.

Wring out the old, wring out the new,
Wring out the black, wring out the gray,
Wring out the white, wring out the blue—
And thus I wring my life away.

An occupation strange is my mine;
At least it seems to people droll
That while I'm working at the line
I'm going, too, from pole to pole.

Where'er I go I strive to please,
From morn to night I rub and rub:
I'm something like Diogenes—
I almost live within a tub.

To acrobats who vault and spring
In circuses I take shine;
They make their living in the ring,
And by the wringer I make mine.

My calling's humble I'll agree,
But I am no cheap calico
As some folks are who sneer at me;
I'm something that will wash, you know.

I smile in calm, I strive in storm,
With life difficulties I cope,
My duties cheerfully perform,
My motto: While there's life there's soap.

Wring out the old, wring out the new,
Wring out the black, wring out the gray,
Wring out the white, wring out the blue—
And thus I wring my life away.

SHIRLEY ROSS:

A Story of Woman's Faithfulness.

CHAPTER XIV.

While Mrs. Home and the bar-maid were discussing with Latreille Shirley's chances of happiness, and admiring Sir Hugh's devotion to her, Shirley, in the little sitting-room upstairs, was suffering a martyrdom of anxiety and suspense, although she tried to conceal it from Sir Hugh, who was presiding over the coffee-equippage with as much awkwardness as it was possible for an essentially graceful man to exhibit. Shrirley had made a slight movement toward the tray when it had been placed before her, but she had seemed so languid and indifferent that Sir Hugh had laughingly told her to rest, and that he would pour out the coffee. Shirley had sunk back wearily into the depths of the old *fauteuil*, and tried to withdraw her thoughts from Jack and the delay, and to take in some idea of her surroundings.

The sitting-room—which was on the first story of the house—was just the kind of room which one would have been likely to expect from the outside appearance of the Half-Moon Inn. It was wide and low-ceiled, with two quaint latticed windows overlooking the market place, and a wide old-fashioned grate with an open chimney. It was furnished with more attention to comfort than the sitting-rooms of country inns generally exhibit. There was a thick carpet on the floor, and there were heavy red damask curtains at the windows. There was an old-fashioned bureau in one of the recesses on either side of the fireplace; in the other there was a what-not which was decorated with some antiquated pieces of china. Shirley's eyes wandered over them; and she remembered long afterward wondering vaguely what the books could be which were on the lower shelf of the what-not. She noticed, too, vaguely enough, that there were some pictures on the walls, engravings after Landseer, and a photograph of Millias's "Black Brunswicker." Her eyes rested on the latter for a few moments; something in the young officer's face reminded her of Guy. Guy was not so handsome perhaps, but he had that resolute yet tender look about the mouth. Then her eyes left the picture and came back to Sir Hugh, who was still busy with the coffee. How handsome he was—handsomer far than Guy, handsomer than the Black Brunswicker, the handsomest man she had ever seen she thought, as she watched him sitting there in his dark tweed suit; he had thrown off his driving-coat. As she looked at him, he raised his blue eyes, and as they met hers, he smiled.

"Are you thinking that I am a long time over this coffee?" he said lightly. "The fact is that it is made in a French coffee-pot, and it has not yet all run through some complicated business of a sieve-like nature at the top. But it is ready now," he added, "and I hope it will prove good enough to reward our patience."

He poured out a cup of coffee, added milk and sugar in careful proportions and brought it to her side.

"You are to drink it," he said, with imperative gentleness. "You are bound to obey me, you know. Wives always obey their lords and masters, don't they?"

"Dutiful wives," she answered, forcing a smile.

"And are not all wives dutiful?" he asked gayly.

"You do not expect me to abuse my own sex?" she returned, as lightly as she could. "No one need criminate themselves, Sir Hugh."

"I expect nothing from you but that you will drink this coffee," he said, smiling. "When you have done so, we will discuss the foibles of your sex. Well," he went on, as she put the cup to her lips, "is it good?"

"Excellent! I did not know that this was one of your accomplishments," she answered graciously.

"Never exercised but for you," he said quietly, as he went back to the table; and the tenderness of his voice brought the color to her cheeks, and she bent over the coffee-cup to hide the hot flush.

It was an awkward and difficult position in which she found herself, and every minute as it went by made it more awkward and difficult. If she could have looked upon Sir Hugh merely as Guy's friend and willing to help her in her trouble for the sake of the friendship he bore her future husband, three parts of the difficulty would have disappeared; but he was not Guy's friend only—he professed a deep passionate love for Guy's *fiancee*, and, although he had promised to conquer that love, every tone of his voice, even when his words sounded indifferent, every glance of the tender blue eyes showed Shirley that the love was not yet subdued.

The young girl felt her position keenly, and it added considerably to her anxiety and uneasiness. Moreover, she was haunted by a terrible fear of her uncle and aunt discovering where she had spent the afternoon, and ascertaining by chance that she had not gone to the Manse to have a chat with the girls there, as she had said she was going. It was true that she had called at the Manse, but she had not stayed there five minutes, having hastened away to meet Sir Hugh at the cross-roads. What would become of her if they met Sir Gilbert or any of the family and household on the way back? How could she excuse herself without betraying Jack? And she could not do that if it cost her all the happiness of her life. She would tell Guy, of course, and Sir Hugh knew it already. But no one else should ever know how her brother had fallen under temptation and risked his disgrace and dishonor. And, if Sir Gilbert and her aunt even got a hint of that long drive with Sir Hugh, what would they think—what would they say? How could she bear their reproaches?

She drank the coffee, and Sir Hugh, who had been watching her furtively, rose and took the empty cup. As she tried to thank him, her lip quivered, and the beautiful hazel eyes looked up at him so piteously that for a moment he felt remorse and keen pain on his own part, not in her present suffering, but in that which this day's work would cost her. It was too late now to draw back, and, even had it not been so, the passion of his love and jealousy and the girl's great beauty were urging him on irresistibly down that swift path which leads to treachery and sin.

"You are getting very anxious," he said cheerfully; "but by and by how you will laugh at your fears! Your brother will be here very shortly now."

"Do you think so—do you really think so?" she asked unsteadily. "I have no courage left; such a terrible foreboding seems to have come over me. I am so afraid that something has happened to Jack."

"What could have happened to him?" Sir Hugh said lightly. "In all probability he has either missed the train at Glasgow, or he has had to wait ever so long for a train at Weldon."

"I think he would be careful not to miss the train at Glasgow," Shirley observed, "because he would guess how anxious I am. Indeed I do not think he has treated me kindly at all—although, poor boy, I suppose he was too unhappy to be thoughtful or considerate."

"He must be careful in future not to get into such scrapes," Sir Hugh said. "I must tell him that if he should get into trouble again, he must not trouble you, my child; he must write direct to me."

"But, Sir Hugh, that is impossible," Shirley rejoined quickly, looking up. "What claim has Jack upon you? I could not allow such a thing."

"Jack is my wife's brother, and therefore my brother-in-law," said Sir Hugh, smiling; and the color rose slightly in his face as he averted his blue eyes for a moment; "and I shall be only too happy to assist him in any possible way. By the bye, we must see if we cannot find him some better berth than the one he fills at present. Such a good linguist as he is ought not to be vegetating in a merchant's office. Tell me," he continued, leaning his elbow on the mantel-piece, and looking down into the red glow of the fire—"how came he to get himself into this trouble? He is rather steady usually—is he not?"

"He always used to be very steady," said Shirley eagerly, lifting her earnest deprecating eyes to Sir Hugh's face. "He was always most thoughtful and good; but since he has been all alone I dare say he has felt having no home, and perhaps he has been led away by some of his companions."

"Most likely," Sir Hugh agreed promptly. "It is very hard for young fellows who are alone in large towns to keep themselves quite straight."

"I am afraid it is," Shirley sighed. "And at Glasgow I dare say he could get no other amusement but going to the club where his friends meet and where they play cards and smoke, and drink too, I am afraid," she added mournfully. "Oh, I wish he was a little more determined, so that when they ask him to play he would have courage to refuse!"

"This is the first time he has applied to you for assistance?" asked Sir Hugh gently.

"No, once before," she answered, coloring; "but he wanted only a small sum, and I was able to send it to him. But now I had spent all my allowance and—"

"Young ladies generally are in a state of impecuniosity, are they not?" he said, smiling. "I have often heard girls complain of being 'short of cash;' and my opinion is that their incomes are never large enough to cover their expenditure! However, I will tell your brother to look upon me as his banker in future. My dear child, don't attempt to dissuade me. I have heaps of money, as you know—but not enough to purchase happiness, though," he added mournfully.

"I hope Jack will have too much self-respect to need any more assistance," Shirley answered gravely. "And indeed you must not tell him so, Sir Hugh. It will only lead him into further temptation if he thinks that he can obtain money so easily. You see this time," she added, the hot color rising all over her fair pale face, from the chin to the soft rings of chestnut hair on her forehead, "he went on playing, hoping to win, and he lost and lost until he was almost mad, and then he took that money—Mr. Leeson's money—to pay his debt of honor; and—and but for your kindness what would have become of us both?" she finished brokenly, and there was a little embarrassed pause. "It is getting dark," Shirley said nervously then. "It will be very late by the time we get home, Sir Hugh."

He smiled a little; it was very pleasant to him to hear her say "we get home," and the blue eyes grew very tender as they went to her face.

"Tippoo shall do his best—and his best is a very good best, you know," he returned cheerily. "The days close in so early now, you know, that even when it is dark, it is still early in the afternoon. And I should think that even on a hot summer day it would be gloomy in this room."

Shirley rose restlessly and went across to the window. Sir Hugh followed and stood behind her, looking over her shoulder into the market-place. The market was over now, and the shops were beginning to light up; the lamps round the market-place were already lighted, and it looked quaint and curious and picturesque with its old-fashioned houses and the grotesque ugly fountain just facing them under the window.

"It reminds me of the *Place* of an old town in France where we spent a few days," Shirley said. "How the lamps are flickering, Sir Hugh! I am afraid the wind has risen very much."

"I am afraid it has," he answered regretfully. "I must wrap my little wife up well going home."

Again the hot blood rose in Shirley's face; but, before she could answer, Latreille threw open the room door, and announced, in rather an elevated tone of voice—

"The gentleman to see her ladyship, Sir Hugh."

A little cry of delight broke from Shirley as she turned from the window, and the next moment she was clasped in her brother's arms.

CHAPTER XV.

It was growing dark in the little sitting-room when Shirley lifted her head from her brother's shoulder with a long sigh of half pain, half relief. The fire was dying out, for they had both been too much absorbed to think of replenishing it; and Sir Hugh had left the room when Jack had entered it, hurrying over Shirley's nervous introduction with an awkward haste very foreign to his usual manner. And for nearly an hour the brother and sister had been alone.

They had had much to say to each other, and Shirley's sentences had often been interrupted by broken sobs which she could not repress, although she tried her utmost to check them in order not to add to Jack's already keen self-reproach. The young man had confessed all his folly. He had told her how he had suffered himself to be led away by his companions and lost the money—seventy pounds—a large sum to them—and how, rendered desperate by threats if the debt were not paid, he had taken the money from the cash-box intrusted to him, hoping that he might be able to refund it by degrees without detection; but some unforeseen circumstance had occurred which made it imperatively necessary that the money should be forthcoming on the morrow, and he had been in despair when he wrote to his sister.

"I thought you would manage to help me, Shirley," he said fondly; "you were always such a good little sister."

"But how could I have done so but for Sir Hugh?" she asked pitifully. "I could not even have sent to Guy—there was not time. Oh, Jack, you don't know what it has cost me!"

Poor child, she little guessed herself what it had cost her! She did not know until some weeks later when she paid the price.

"I am very sorry, dear," Jack said regretfully; but the load upon his heart had been relieved, and his elastic nature and naturally good spirits resumed their sway, even while he felt grieved at Shirley's sorrow. "You may be quite sure that I shall never give you such cause for unhappiness again. Sir Hugh must be an awfully generous fellow, Shirley."

"He is a friend of Guy," Shirley said, thankful for the darkness which hid her blushes.

"And how superbly handsome he is!" continued Jack, whose artistic eye had caught Sir Hugh's beauty at a glance. "Do you know that they all think you are his wife here, Shirley? How do you like being 'her ladyship?' Will you be vexed if I say I wish you were engaged to him instead of Major Stuart?"

"You do not know Guy," Shirley said simply. "Sir Hugh has been very good and kind, but he is not Guy."

"No, but he is a much richer and grander and handsomer personage," rejoined Jack smiling. "And I should be better pleased to see my beautiful sister Lady Glynn than Mrs. Stuart."

"You would not if you cared for your sister's happiness, Jack," Shirley said earnestly. "I love Guy with all my heart."

"I cannot imagine how you fell in love with him when Sir Hugh was to the fore," Jack observed rather discontentedly.

"Perhaps Alice has marked Sir Hugh for her own," Shirley said lightly. "Jack, you are going back to-night?"

"Yes; my train leaves in an hour."

"I wish I dare stay," Shirley said wistfully, "but I am afraid I shall get into trouble as it is. We shall have to drive home fast."

"Will you, Lady Glynn?" interrogated Jack. "Shirley, dear, you have not given me the money," he added in a shamed hurried manner; and Shirley started almost guiltily.

"How stupid of me!" she said. "Sir Hugh has it. I wonder where he is. I had better go and ask him," she added, shrinking a little at the thought.

"No, don't go," Jack advised, interpreting the little gesture rightly. "Write a few lines and send it to him. You must not be seen down there now, Shirley. The passage and bar are full of men."

"But there are no writing materials here," she said; "and I could not see to write, Jack."

"We will remedy that," Jack returned, carelessly, striking a match and lighting the candles on the mantel-piece. "And here are pens and ink," he added, crossing to the what-not and bringing to the table a heavy leaden inkstand adorned with two or three quill pens. "Here you are, Shirley," he said, lightly. "These are the pens you most delight in; and here is a sheet of paper," he concluded, tearing off the blank page of a letter which he took from his pocket.

"You are quite a man of resource, Jack," Shirley remarked, smiling. Her spirits had risen now, and she was full of joy at the thought of her brother's deliverance and his promises of amendment. "What am I to say?"

Jack laughed.

"I don't quite know how wives address their husbands," he said; "but you had better write in that manner, in case the person who takes the note is inquisitive enough to look at its contents. You see I am a man of precaution, Shirley, as well as a man of resource."

"Do you think I ought to put 'Dear Sir Hugh?'" asked Shirley, dubiously, kneeling by the table, pen in hand, as with puzzled eyes she looked up at her brother.

"I am sure you ought not," he said, laughing. "Do you think that the future Lady Glynn would call her husband 'Sir Hugh' during the honeymoon?"

"I don't know," Shirley answered, coloring. "But I cannot say 'Dear Hugh,'" she added, smiling a little.

"Then say 'Dear husband,'" Jack suggested, lightly. "Sir Hugh will appreciate the joke."

Shirley hesitated a moment and then wrote in her pretty half-foreign handwriting the words he had suggested. They looked very strange and startling, she thought, as she looked at them gravely.

"Well, dear," Jack said, "can't you continue?"

"Yes," she replied, hesitatingly. "Shall I say that he has forgotten the object of our visit here, and that I am waiting?"

"Something to that effect," Jack said. "Put it as prettily as you can, Shirley. He has been so good to us."

"I need send only a few lines," she remarked, writing rapidly for a minute, with a little smile on her lips; and when she had finished the note she passed it to her brother.

"Will that do?" she asked, smiling; and Jack read, smiling, also the few light words that she had written, every one of which told so terribly against the writer a few weeks later.

"That will do capitally," Jack said, approvingly, and, after he had rung the bell, they stood together before the dying fire, waiting in silence.

A smart knock at the door was followed almost immediately by the entrance of the neat-looking maid-servant who had already waited upon Shirley and Sir Hugh.

"Did you ring, my lady?" she asked.

Jack glanced at his sister with a little smile which brought the color into her face.

"Yes," she said, quietly. "Will you take this note to—to my husband?" she added, with a little effort.

"Yes, my lady," the maid answered, looking somewhat surprised as she took the note and left the room.

Shirley waited with her hand on her brother's arm until the girl came back with a little twisted note and a pocket-book from Sir Hugh. Coloring crimson, Shirley handed the pocket-book to her brother and glanced over the little note. It ran—

"DEAR LITTLE WIFE—I do not like to hurry you; but as we want to keep our little escapade a secret for the present, it will be safer to start at once.

Your devoted husband,

HUGH GLYNN."

"What a brick he is!" Jack said, warmly, as he glanced at the contents of the pocket-book. "I can never be grateful enough. I will begin to save at once, Shirley; you may be sure of that."

"Now, we had better go," Shirley said, nervously, crushing Sir Hugh's little missive in her hand and throwing it carelessly upon the table. "It is getting very late. Oh, I am afraid—" She broke off suddenly, unwilling to grieve her brother with the thought that he might have got her into trouble at home.

"Yes, I must not keep you," answered Jack, huskily. "My darling, how can I ever thank you enough?"

"You will not—" she began, wistfully, her sweet eyes looking up into his through a mist of tears; and, although the sentence remaned unfinished, Jack finished it rightly in his own mind.

"Never, again, my dear little sister," he said, fondly; and the kiss which ratified the promise had something solemn in its tenderness.

"I ought to thank Sir Hugh," Jack remarked presently; and then, while Shirley began putting on her heavy sealskin jacket, he added, hastily, "I will go down to him, dear."

He left the room, returning after a few moments with Sir Hugh, who was already equipped for the drive home.

Jack's face was pale and earnest, while Sir Hugh locked a little nervous and agitated, Shirley thought. She fancied that Jack's gratitude had distressed him.

"The dog cart is quite ready, Shirley," he said, quietly. "Are you well wrapped up? Latreille was thoughtful enough to put a shawl in the dog-cart. It is too soon to take your brother to the station, I think."

"Yes, he has three quarters of an hour yet," Shirley answered. "You had better get something to eat, Jack."

"Yes. Don't linger, Shirley dear," he counseled quickly. "I had no idea it was so late."

They went down-stairs together, and the landlady and the barmaid and two or three stragglers hurried out curiously to have a look at the distinguished company who had caused no little excitement at the Half-Moon Inn that afternoon. Not that there was anything wonderful to see—simply a tall handsome man in a fur-lined coat, a slender, shrinking, closely-veiled girl leaning on his arm, and a young man at her other side who bade them farewell at the door, leaving Sir Hugh to lift his companion into the dog-cart.

"Good-by, Jack—dear Jack!" Shirley whispered, stooping down to her brother.

Sir Hugh said a word or two in a quick undertone to Latreille, who left the horse's head and re-entered the inn for a minute, returning almost immediately with the same impenetrable impassive countenance, and taking up his position at Tippoo's head without a trace of discomposure.

Sir Hugh climbed to his place and took the reins, Jack stood back upon the pavement with a very self-satisfied look, while Mrs. Home's beribboned cap rose and fell in a succession of courtesies which at any other time would have excited Shirley's merriment.

"Take care of her, Sir Hugh," Jack said, earnestly.

"Trust me, Ross. I can and will take care of my own," he answered, smiling as he drew the thick soft shawl around her carefully. "All right, Latreille."

They drove off quickly across the lighted market-place; and Jack Ross stood watching the dog-cart as it disappeared in the darkness, then he turned back into the inn, with a look of anxiety and care upon his face.

He ordered a cup of coffee, and returned to the sitting-room, where the fire had died out, but where the candles were still burning. The pens and ink remained upon the table, but the little twisted note which Shirley had thrown there was no longer lying on the red cloth table-cover. But Jack Ross had no thought for it; saying to himself, sorrowfully, what pity it was that Shirley did not care Sir Hugh, and hoping that something w occur that would make her change mind.

Months afterward the thoughts which had occupied his mind as he sat before the empty grate in the sitting-room at the Half Moon Inn came back to him with a keen sting of remorse and pain, and a thrill of almost horror at the part he had unwittingly played in his sister's betrayal.

Meanwhile, through the cold east wind and over the dark country roads, Sir Hugh Glynn drove rapidly and in almost unbroken silence; while Shirley was in an agony of dread lest her absence should have occasioned remark at Fairholme Court.

Once or twice Sir Hugh bent down with a tender little inquiry as to whether she was tired or cold, but Shirley felt more grateful to him for the consideration which left her quiet.

As they drew near Fairholme, he said, smiling—

"I think I had better drive you up to the house, Shirley. I am sure you would be terrified to death to walk up that ghostly avenue alone.

"Oh, no—oh, no—indeed, I can go!" she said, eagerly. "They would hear the wheels."

"But I could say that I had picked you up on the way," answered the baronet

"Nevertheless Uncle Gilbert would be seriously angry," she declared. "Indeed, Sir Hugh, it will be kindest to leave me."

"I certainly did not intend to let you walk up the avenue alone, Shirley," he said, decidedly. "They won't hear my footsteps, you foolish child!"

(To be continued.)

CARRYING A "LUCKY PIECE."

How the Custom is Maintained by All Classes.

Two ladies met on Woodward avenue. As they stopped to speak one of them dropped her pocketbook and the money in it rolled out on the sidewalk.

"Too bad," said the other, as she assisted her friend to restore the contents. "It's such bad luck to drop money unless it belongs to some one else."

"I don't mind," answered the owner of the pocketbook, "because, you see, I carry a lucky piece."

This habit of carrying a piece of money for luck has become something more than a superstition, since it is a practice common among all classes.

"I wouldn't take $100 for that sixpence," said a staid business man recently. "I found it in my mother's purse when she died and I have always kept it as a souvenir."

He did not say that it brought him luck or that he had any superstition connected with it, but he unconsciously valued it as a charm. There is a piece of bone that is taken from a fish, called a sheep's head, which shows plainly the imprint of the letter "L." Theatrical people value this very highly as a lucky piece.

The Scotch have a fashion of handing back a trifling bit of coin when a payment is made. This is called a lucky penny and is always carefully treasured.

It is impossible to find a pocketbook that does not have some trifling charm in it to bring luck to its owner. It may be a coin, a stone, a chicken's wishbone, a child's first tooth or a smooth sixpence, but it is expected to accomplish some or all of these missions: Keep off disease; avert the evil eye; protect the person carrying it from bodily harm; bring prosperity in business, love, courtship and marriage; thwart the evil designs of enemies; insure a safe journey and perform many other apparent miracles.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Bill Nye Discourses on Capital Punishmen

Too many people are now committing capital crimes for the purpose of getting into the papers. Some day the gentleman who kills his parents because they will not pass the molasses will not be permitted to make a speech on the gallows, but he will step into a seventy-five-dollar scarlet plush chair, and while he is reading the morning paper the Governor will touch a small collar-button in his office, which connects by wire with the plush chair, and a brief autopsy is all that will be necessary. That element in our natures which seems to demand dying speeches, long black funerals, harrowing details, blood, horror, wails of anguish, dull thuds, cold creepy crape, and the sickening smell of coffin varnish in a close room, is a relic of the times when we used to live in hollow trees and eat acorns.

A Useful Dog.

Lady of the house to new servant—What do you mean by giving that dog that good meat?"

"I do it to encourage the poor animal."

"Encourage him to do what?"

"To keep on helping me to wash the dinner dishes clean. I don't have to wash them hardly at all, he licks them so clean."

Lady faints.

Court Item.

Hugo Stanly (a young dude who is very attentive to the fair sex in general, and to Miss Hummel in particular, who detests him)—Is Miss Hummel in?

Servant—Yes, Hugo, she's in.

Hugo—Perhaps you had better tell her who it is.

Servant—No; if I do that she will say that she is not in.

The Longed-for Letter.

As the last note of that touching little ballad "The Letter That He Longed for Never Came" vibrated on the evening air, she turned to find a tear trickling slowly down his cheek. "Ah, Mr. Sampson," she said sympathetically, "you, too, have 'longed.'" "Yes," he replied huskily, "two years ago a very dear friend of mine went west on $25 which I loaned him, and for aught I know he may be dead."—*The Epoch.*

Two-year-old Dorothy has had a severe case of chicken-pox. She came down with it the very day that the family had chicken for dinner. No one imagined that Dorothy thought that there was any connection between the dinner and the disease until, a few days afterward, just as the baby was getting better, a turkey was brought on for dinner. Dorothy refused to eat it, saying: "The chicken made me have chicken-pox, mamma, and I don't want to eat turkey and have turkey-pox."—*Woman's Tribune.*