

purpose of attaching her to the family. Also, there is much to be thought of in marriage besides the inclination of the two people concerned. You like *petite*, and *petite* likes you, but that is no reason at all why it should be desirable for you to marry."

"The very best of all reasons, I should say, *ma mère*."

He could afford to humour his mother, even to jest with her upon her pet theories. He felt so secure of this wilful, charming *petite* since that one look he had had into her bright brave eyes. He could not be deceived; such an expression as he had seen there is never given to two persons by a woman such as she.

"You do not know, Etienne; you are foolish and ignorant; it is necessary that I should take the common sense view for you. I assure you that a *mésalliance* is the very saddest thing that could befall you, proud and honourable as you are. You would always feel it to be a degradation."

"If that is what you call a common sense view, it is precisely the one I hold, and shall endeavour to act in accordance with. But this is no *mésalliance*. *Petite* is well born. Remember how you stipulated for this with Madame Argent when you engaged her. I have your letter somewhere still, in which you assured me how thoroughly satisfied you were in this respect. I have such a high opinion of your judgment in a matter of this kind that I have never dreamed of questioning this fact. She is amiable, beautiful, accomplished—"

"But she has had to work for her living, to accept a kind of domestic servitude in order to be fed and clothed. You forget this, Etienne."

"I do not. To me it seems far more noble and honourable that she should have done this, than if she had been content to eat the bread of idleness."

"But *petite* will not, I am sure, be content to dispose of herself in this way. Nor do I think she will listen to you at all, Etienne, without my permission."

Monsieur St. Just had thought of this. He knew that should his mother withhold her consent and approval, a delicate and difficult task still lay before him. Ultimately, he must overrule even Damaris's proud scruples, but he had much rather win his mother over to his side than provoke her opposition.

He took her dainty little hands in his and raised them chivalrously to his lips.

"*Chère maman*, you will never have the heart to deny me the only thing which can in any way cancel the past. Have you not vowed to me many times that you would sacrifice all you have to procure for me forgetfulness? I only ask you now to set aside a few empty prejudices, and take the girl you love so dearly to your heart as a daughter. This is not much, *maman*, but to me it is life, and whatever makes life worth having."

La Marquise was vanquished for the time being. To hear Etienne plead in this way was more than she could possibly resist.

"*Méchant!*" she cried, returning his

caresses, "you know how to come round your silly old mother."

The effort to do so, however, had cost him much. He sank back panting on his pillows, mutely stretching out his hand towards the cordial that stood near.

"Etienne, this is all too much for you!"

She watched the effect of the medicine, saw him revive, and then said—

"*Mon fils*, for your own sake, I must attach to my full consent one condition."

"What is it?"

"That you promise me to abstain from all further excitement for the next twenty-four hours. That you do not even attempt to see or speak to *petite* during that time."

"But the Duchess! She must not depart to spread this silly slander."

"I will arrange all that. A little diplomacy is all that is required to induce her to remain until to-morrow evening. You can trust your old mother in a matter of that kind?"

He looked up into her pretty old face. "I know that when your heart and your head work together, success must follow, *chère maman*."

"*Eh bien!* You may safely leave the matter in my hands. I am as anxious now as ever you can be that justice should be done our brave little *petite*. I have no doubt Jerome will satisfactorily explain Jacqueline's portion of the story. Rest and grow strong, *mon pauvre* Etienne, and to-morrow evening you shall see *petite*."

Monsieur St. Just, upon whom the excitement of this interview was beginning to tell, could not but feel that this was a necessary precaution on his mother's part, and, anxious to concede all that he possibly could, all that his love and his fealty would admit, he gave the required promise.

(To be continued.)

SAMPLERS, PAST AND PRESENT.



THE origin of samplers, and, indeed, of all needlework, is lost in the mists of a great antiquity. But if we be guided by sacred and profane history, we shall not be too imaginative, perhaps, if we picture to ourselves Sarah and the young Rebekah as attentive learners in the art of needlework, and later on we may be quite sure that the women of Israel carried many a sampler with them in their exodus from Egypt, to remind them of the art they had learned there, and which they were so soon called on to make use of in the production of the marvelous embroidery for the service of the Almighty in the first tabernacle made with hands. The inner curtain embroidered with figures of cherubim, and the veil of the Holy of Holies embroidered with all the sorts of

flowers produced on the then known earth, display a knowledge of embroidery which would be great, even in the present day.

In passing from embroidery to plain sewing, we shall find the same high antiquity for the ordinary stitches we are practising and using to-day. Between 2,000 and 3,000 years ago, some thrifty, or it might be poor, Egyptian housekeeper gave the worn linen of her household to the embalmers, to be used instead of, or to partially save the great expense of, providing the quantities of new linen needful for the bandages of the dead. Nor shall we wonder at her thrift if we remember that 40lbs. weight of linen, measuring in some cases 300 yards, have been found on one mummy alone! One such household relic showed signs of having been darned and patched; and amongst other stitches found in the same way are seaming, or over-sewing, stitching, gathering, and hemming; in addition to which they knew the use of tapes, and they faced or bound the edges of their sails and linen cloths, to keep them from being torn.

The earliest mention of the word "Samplers" in England, or anything like it, is made by John Wicliffe (A.D. 1324-1384); in the Epistle to the Hebrews in his translation of the Scriptures, Hebrews ix. 23 and 24, the word "Saumplaris" being used.

The next mention that I remember is to be found in the "Crown of Lawrell," by John Skelton, poet-laureate at Oxford, 1489—

"With that the tappettes and carpettes were layde,
Wheren these ladies softly might rest,
The sampler to sowe on, the laces to embroyde."

This was in the reign of Henry VIII., and Skelton was a bitter hater of Cardinal Wolsey, and abused him roundly in verse.

A century later, we have another mention in poetry, by the hero and poet Sir Philip Sidney, in Book II. of his "Arcadia":—

"Alas, then, O Love,
Why dost thou in thy beautiful sampler
Set such a work for my desire to take out
Which is as much impossible."

Our next notice is more practical, and is contained in a wonderful old book, called the "Academy of Armory," written by Randal Holme, and printed at Chester in the year 1688. This book is intended to describe all the various arts, trades, and professions, and the different implements used in them. In Book III. we find "The Schoolmistress," "Terms of Art for all her Ways of Sewing;" beginning with "A Sam-cloth, vulgarly called a Sampler." I will give the list of the stitches taught in that day, less than 200 years ago, and I fear all our girls would be much at a loss to compete with a girl of that day in the amount of her learning in this way:—

"Plat stitch, or single plat stitch, which is good on one side; plat stitch, or double plat stitch, which is alike on both sides; Spanish stitch, which is true on both sides; tent stitch on the finger, tent stitch in the tent, Irish stitch, back stitch, fore stitch, Queen stitch, gold stitch, satin stitch, tent stitch upon satin, fern stitch, finney, new, chain, bread, fisher, rosemary, bow, whip, and cross stitches."

After this come the different kinds of work:—"Raised—Needlework, pearl, Geneva, virgins' device, cutwork, open cutwork, laid stitch and thorough stitch, lapwork, rock, frost, net, purl, tent, and finger-work; all of which are several sorts and manners of work wrought by the needle with silk of all natures, purls, wyres (wire) which cannot be described."

"Other work performed by schoolmistresses



COPY OF AN OLD SAMPLER WORKED MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

and their scholars.—Gum work, which is performed by gumming of several colours of sleeve silk together, which, being dry, they cut into the shapes of leaves and flowers, and so tie them up upon wyres. Frost, transparent, war, pull, quill, and paper-work, which are the making of leaves and flowers of all the afore-mentioned things, and binding them up in branches or poesies.”

Some of these stitches we may vaguely guess at, others are in use at present. The gum-work and the paper-work were evidently precursors of the artificial flowers of to-day. But our good old chronicler, who alas! never lived to finish his book, winds up with a sentence which has much excited my curiosity to learn what it means:—“Waft or finger bread (braid?) are kind of purse-strings, woven on the fingers, either round or broad; one side of one colour and one of another, or wrought in letters, flowers, chequy (checks), or losenge-ways.” What could this work have been?

On consulting the catalogue of the Exhibition of Ancient Needlework held last year at the Royal School of Art Needlework, I find that the earliest sampler mentioned there is one dated 1666. There are probably many anterior to this date. The one in question is worked on linen in various patterns with coloured silks. Another sampler, exhibited at the same place, dated 1695, has the following quaint inscription:—

“Young Isaac, who lift up their eyes,
And meditate in fields;
Young Jacob, who the blessing prizes,
This age but seldom yields.
Few Samuels leaving their plays,
Two temple work resigned;
Few do as these, in youth's days,
Their great Creator's mind.”

Mary Wilson.

The next set of interesting samplers here consisted of a collection of five, chiefly of drawn work, and of needle-point lace stitches. Then a framed example with the old legend:

“When this you see, remember me, Sarah Woodseate wrought this taught by Alice Underwood, Godliness with content, is great gain. 1745.”

The next one has the signature “Francis Inglis' Work,” done in eyelet-holes. This clever youth adds, “Finished October 11th, aged 8, 1786.” Then come three, all of the eighteenth century. No. 1, dated 1761, with the legend so well known—

“Sarah Bond is my name,
And England is my nation,
Bratby is my dwelling-place,
And Christ is my salvation.”

No. 2.—On finer canvas, with the legend—

“Elizabeth Hide is my name,
And with my needle I work the same,
That all the world may plainly see
How kind my parents have been to me.
In the year of our Lord 1780.”

No. 3.—“Eleanor Thistlewhaite, her work, in the year of our Lord God, 1768.”

Amongst the last of the samplers which were worthy of note at this exhibition were two of darning stitches, done in coloured silks, upon fine canvas.

Linen appears to have been the usual material for samplers up to the beginning of the last century, when a material called “bolting,” which was a fine description of woollen canvas, principally manufactured in England, began to be used. An inferior kind, of a yellow colour, called “Sampler Canvas,” was also manufactured for the same purpose. Bolting was originally made for the sifting or “bolting” of meal or flour, from whence

comes its name. It is the material on which the sampler illustrated is worked in coloured silks.

In the opinion of the learned, the designs and patterns on these samplers are of the highest antiquity. They are generally of a religious character, and we find the Fall of Man, the Sacrifice of Isaac, the Dove of Noah, the Tree of Life, as well as representations of the Peacock, the Rose, the Lily, and the Celestial Crown commemorated upon them. The verses are always religious in character, and nothing is more touchingly sweet than the simple and constant recognition of the value of God's blessing, even in the smallest actions of life.

Only a few days ago, when standing in an ancient and celebrated library, I took out my old sampler from its cover to show it to one deeply learned in all things, ancient and wise. He took it from my hands with a tender and reverent touch, as of one who suddenly sees a well-remembered object. “Ah!” said he, “my mother had just such a one, which she treasured as an achievement of her girlhood.” And he turned from me suddenly with moistened eyes to the great window, where he stood looking sadly down at the poor relic in his hand.

The memory of a tender mother-love—of an angel presence—of one whose hands were long since folded to their quiet rest, had floated up to him from the folds of my faded sampler.

DORA DE BLAQUIERE.

THE WORKHOUSE GIRL.



THE truth of the following romantic story is vouched for by the Rev. Mr. Warner in his literary recollections. A lady named Hackman, residing at Lynton, was in want, in the spring, of a little girl to weed her garden; so she despatched her footman to the workhouse to select a little pauper girl from that establishment for the performance of that necessary

labour. John accordingly brought back with him a diminutive child of about eight or nine years of age, and pointed out the humble task in which she was to be employed. The child set herself to work among the flower beds, and in doing so began to warble her “native woodnotes wild” in tones of more than common sweetness. Mrs. Hackman's chamber window happened to be thrown up; she heard the little weeder's solitary song; was much struck with the rich melody of her voice, and inquired from whence it proceeded. “Nancy Bere, the child from the workhouse,” was the answer. By Mrs. Hackman's order, the little songstress was immediately brought to the lady's apartment, and she was so much pleased with the naïveté, intelligence, and apparently amiable disposition of the child, that she determined to remove the warbling little Nancy from the workhouse, and attach her to her own kitchen. The little maiden, however, was too good and attractive to be permitted to remain long an inmate

of the kitchen. So Mrs. Hackman soon preferred Nancy to the office of lady's maid, and had her carefully instructed in all the elementary branches of education. The intimate intercourse that now subsisted between the patroness and her protégée quickly ripened into the warmest affection on the one part, and the most grateful attachment on the other. Nancy Bere was attractively lovely, and still more irresistible from an uncommon sweetness of temper, gentleness of disposition, and feminine softness of character; and Mrs. Hackman, whose regard for her daily increased, proposed at length to her complying husband that they should adopt the orphan—for such she was—as their own daughter. Every possible attention was henceforth paid to the education of Miss Bere; and doubtless, with the best success, as she became a highly accomplished young lady. Her humility and modesty, however, never forsook her, and her exaltation to Mrs. Hackman's family seemed only to strengthen her gratitude to her partial and generous benefactress. Shortly after this alteration in Miss Bere's position, a clergyman of respectable appearance had taken lodgings in Lynton, for the purpose of amusing himself with partridge-shooting. The hospitable Mr. Hackman called upon the stranger—agreed to shoot with him, and invited him to his house. The invitation was repeated, and accepted, as long as the shooting days lasted; nor had the repetition taken place often, ere the natural effect on the young unmarried clergyman was produced. He became very fond of Miss Bere, and offered her his hand. She, perhaps, might have been nothing loth to change the condition of a recluse for the more active condition of a clergyman's wife; but as the gentleman had nothing more to offer her than to share, it might be, his small living, and as Mr. Hackman could not, out of a life estate, supply Miss Bere with a fortune, it was judged prudent, under these circumstances, that she should decline the honour of the alliance. A year elapsed without the parties having again met, and it was generally imagined that absence had obliterated from their minds the remembrance of each other. But such was not the case. At the ensuing partridge-shooting season, the gentleman returned to Lynton, and with the title of “very reverend” prefixed to his name (for he had been fortunate enough to have been presented to a deanery in the interim) once more repeated his solicitations and offer to Miss Bere. These, as there was no obstacle now to the marriage, were accepted. The amiable pair were in due time united, and lived many years, sincerely attached to each other, respected, esteemed, and beloved by all around them. The decease of the husband, who had previously been elected to a bishopric, dissolved at length the happy connection. The lady survived her loss for some years, and at last the little warbling Nancy Bere, the orphan of Lynton Workhouse, now the universally lamented widow of the Right Rev. Thomas Thurloe, Palatine Bishop of Durham, quitted this life to rejoin her beloved partner in a better and more enduring world.

