

"Why not!" he asked, trembling in spite of himself.

"I shall never go back to school and see the fellows again, nor play cricket, nor ride old Jack, nor help father, as he said I should, nor go to the seaside together and swim, or go for rows as we used to. Everything has ended for me." Herbert's voice choked.

"Why sha'n't you go, Herbert?" asked Leslie, still trembling. "What are you going to do?"

"I shall never make a name after all, as I promised mother I would! I have to die and go away alone, and be buried under ground and forgotten, and never see the sun, or hear the birds, or see you and father and Laura again." He turned his face to the pillow again.

Leslie, still more frightened, began to sob. "Why are you going away, Herbert? Don't go! I don't want you to go! Why must you?"

"Hush! Don't cry, old fellow, never mind, it's all right!" Herbert raised himself with an effort, and tried to speak soothingly; but Leslie had clambered on to the sofa, and for a minute or two the brothers, for all their difference in years, clung to each other convulsively. "There, never mind, old chap, I didn't mean to make you cry! It's all right, you know; everybody must die, I know, and I may as well face it bravely, only"—something swelled in his throat—"it does seem so hard, when I was getting on so well at school, and father was talking about college—"

"Are you very ill then, Herbert?" asked Leslie, wiping his eyes very hard, and trying to be brave like his brother.

Herbert nodded. "Dr. Westwood told me this afternoon that I can't get well again. Mother died of consumption, and so shall I. He said it was better I should know the truth, and I sha'n't mind soon, I daresay; it's only just at first—"

"Why can't he cure you?" Leslie asked.

"No one can cure consumption—it's deadly; they couldn't cure mother, you know!"

"I wish someone would hold up a brass

serpent on a pole somewhere, so that nurse could carry you out to look at it—don't you, Herbert?"

"A brass serpent on a pole?"

"Yes; like Moses cured the snake-bites with, you know; then you could look at it and get quite well again. Oh, I do wish one would come here!"

"I don't care about Moses and his brass pole; it's a cure for consumption I want. I wish there were that!" said Herbert, with a long, deep sigh. "It's so dreadful to think of being buried, being put into the ground, never to see anyone any more!" He shuddered.

"Nurse says people go to heaven," Leslie said eagerly. "She says mother's in heaven; she's said so often."

"Mother may be. She was older, and she was very good, and did a lot of things, I know; but I shall be down there in the dark and the cold, I know, whilst you will all be here, just the same, in the light, with plenty of people to talk to! You're so cold and still when you're dead. I saw Jim Cleaver who died at school, and I can never forget how he looked!"

"How did he look?" asked Leslie, deeply interested.

"Oh, white, and still and dreadful"—again Herbert shuddered. "I wish you were going with me, old man. I wish I hadn't to die alone." He threw his arm round Leslie, and laid his head on his little brother's curly one. "I wish I hadn't to die alone," he repeated, with a break in his voice that was a sob. "I feel afraid of it, somehow; it seems all so dark and awful and mysterious. I can't forget Jim Cleaver."

"Did he die alone too?" asked Leslie, in an awestruck voice. It seemed, somehow, very terrible!

"Yes; people always do, you know—mother did. I wonder if it hurts to die? And what happens then? I wonder if I shall live anywhere afterwards, and if I shall be able to see you all down here? I can't bear the thought of sleeping for ever and ever!"

"Perhaps they won't put you in the ground, Herbert, and then you wouldn't be in the dark and cold!" suggested poor little Leslie hopefully.

Herbert sighed and shook his head. "Clergymen always tell you that good people go to heaven and live again; people like mother, who go to church three times on Sundays, and give away their money, and visit sick people, and take them things and are always good; but I never did anything like that! I wonder if there is such a place as hell? I'd rather sleep for good than go there."

"Nurse says only wicked people go to hell," Leslie said; "and you're not wicked, you know, Herbert."

Again Herbert shook his head. "You're a good little chap, Leslie, but you don't understand. I wish I didn't think I should have to look like Jim Cleaver. I wonder where he is? If one could only know something for certain about it all! There, get down, dear; there's Jane with the tea, and I hear Laura coming; get down."

And at that moment tea did make its appearance, and Laura bustled in, very brisk and cheerful, but with very red eyes. "Why, you're all in the dark!" she exclaimed, lighting the lamp quickly. "There, that's better! Why, how hot and uncomfortable you look, Herbert! Let me shake up that pillow." Her voice sounded odd, Leslie thought; and as she bent over the sofa, deftly replacing the pillow under Herbert's head, she whispered passionately, "I don't believe Dr. Westwood knows anything about it! I shall make father send for someone else! You'll get well again in time, I'm sure you will! Don't think you are going to die, for we won't let you! And now we'll have a nice tea, and I sha'n't let you mope alone any more! We'll have a game at Halmar after, and then I'll read a nice story-book to you; it'll cheer you up."

(To be continued.)

## "THE PATTERN WIFE."

By THE REV. C. H. GRUNDY, M.A.



our last monthly part the qualities in the ideal daughter were discussed, the conduct of such a daughter in relation to her father, mother, and brothers and sisters, was described, and the value of the interval between school life and marriage was urged.

Let us now suppose the case of a girl who has employed that interval well, and who, after some bright, useful, dutiful years in her father's house, has given her hand to some honest noble-minded man, and is installed in her new home, where everything possible to secure her happiness has been provided, so far as her husband's means and thoughtfulness can ensure it.

Consider now the gain to her by the past experiences in the father's home. The mistakes of the past can now be avoided. For every girl is sure to make mistakes. Still, in the father's house there are others ready to point them out and to rectify them, whereas no one with sense dares to interfere in the married life of a young couple, whatever errors they commit. But the very closeness of the relationship between husband and wife renders mistakes all the more disastrous, therefore the

need of proper training before marriage cannot be overrated. Half the misery of early married life is the result of either ignorance or narrow-mindedness; but indeed narrow-mindedness is merely ignorance in another guise. The following quotation from a sermon by a well-known clergyman will illustrate my meaning. Speaking of the young wife, he says:—

"She does not know this and that and the other, because she has never been told. She knows next to nothing about men. She is surprised to find her husband's mind on nearer acquaintance so unlike her own. She thinks he ought never to be pre-occupied. He comes home tired, she thinks he is cross. His mind is still full of business details; although he has not seen her all day, he can hardly speak to her; he must go to his study and make a few notes. She thinks he is concealing something from her, and so, when he comes out of his study with a clear brow and wants her society, she is affronted: it is now his turn to wonder. Or again, she cannot estimate the value of his time; she cannot see the necessity for his glancing through the *Times* in the morning instead of talking to her, although the whole work of the day may turn on something seen in the morning paper. She has no idea of the relative importance of different things—a bit of ribbon and a political speech are equally important in her eyes, or rather the first is more important than the second. Why any exertion should be made for anything out-

side the family, or for anything which does not bear upon the narrow home circle, is unintelligible to her."

This plain speaking is of a kind to make us thoughtful, and among a large audience like this, such language may hit home in more than one instance.

Then also there is the frequent mistake arising from pretentious extravagance in the size of the house selected, the style of food, or the display of dress, or the money spent on amusements. People with limited incomes cannot, as the phrase is, "go everywhere and do everything," and the attempt to behave with a small income as though you had a large one, not only makes you ridiculous, but brings, and quickly too, dreadful money anxieties into the home. It is quite refreshing now and then to meet with a married couple courageous enough to give the real reason why they do not do certain things, why, for example, they keep clear of an expensive seaside place when seeking a holiday. When a man and woman honestly say "we can't afford it," their words command the respect of sensible people, and help to render society a little less hollow. A genuine reason of the right kind, firmly given, for not following a fashion, always does good, and strengthens the "weaker brethren" who hear it. Another mistake is that of self-indulgence on the part of the wife, owing to the fact that her husband is in town all day. There are homes where, by degrees, the entire



establishment is in disorder until far into the afternoon, while the wife gradually gets into the way of thinking that want of method matters little in the earlier part of the day, so long as things are got into fairly good order by the time the husband arrives from town. Lazy, self-indulgent habits grow very easily.

Happy is that young wife whose training in her father's house has firmly fixed in her character, activity, order, and tidiness.

The great thought a young wife should have in her mind ought to be this—I must let my influence be a helpful one to my husband. Helpfulness is the keynote to harmonious married life. Hear the words of Rousseau: "Men will always be what women make them; if, therefore, you would have men great and virtuous, impress upon the minds of women what greatness and virtue are." Hear also the words of Ruskin: "No man ever lived a right life who had not been chastened by a woman's love, strengthened by her courage, and guided by her discretion." Help your husband to do right. Women do not understand how hard it is for men to do right. Public opinion is not as potent for virtue among men as among women. The wife's duty is to maintain the high standard of uprightness in her husband's heart, which he acknowledges to be the best one in his highest moments; uprightness in business; uprightness in social life; uprightness on all moral questions. Men look to good women to save them from their lower selves and keep them out of the mire and clay. Rousseau and Ruskin do not at all exaggerate the marvellous influence of women. If you are wise you will also help your husband forward in an honourable career of usefulness and success. Identify yourself with his prospects; talk them over with him, consult together as to plans, and ways and means. Join your interests to his interests beyond the sphere of home. Let him feel that no department of his life lies outside your life. Urge him to a right ambition, and, if needful, undertake some self-sacrifice to further his desires and aims. Many a man has been chilled into inertia by the frigid reception his wife has given to the exposition of the schemes and wishes he has for the future. Many a life of intended public usefulness has been dwarfed and stunted by the withering process of constant disapproval and disparagement on the part of a narrow-minded wife; while, on the other hand, signal instances could be given where the man owed a large portion of his success in life to the talent, tact and advice of his wife. For example, Lord Beaconsfield, Tom Hood, Anthony Trollope, Augustus Sala. Many others might be named. But of this be sure, that your powers of making home happy, of assisting your husband, comforting him in sorrow, nursing him in illness, encouraging him in those moments when business trials weigh heavy on him, when disappointments and losses almost overwhelm him, will depend greatly on the use you have made in the old home of the countless opportunities afforded you there of qualifying yourself for becoming a pattern wife. Let us now note some of the characteristics of the virtuous wife, as sketched in the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs, verse 13—"She worketh willingly with her hands." In her eyes nothing is menial, nothing degrading if it is helpful and useful. She is not afraid to soil her hands, or to perform acts of service some might consider beneath them. She is not the kind of hostess who would be ashamed to open the door herself if she saw you coming, and the servant were busy. She has no false ideas of what a lady may not do. She is on the alert to help; "she worketh willingly with her hands." She is also an early riser (verse 15), and plans out the day for her dependents that there may be no confusion. There is no excuse for healthy girls to come down late to breakfast, and so to

waste some of the most precious hours of the day. A brisk mistress makes a brisk household. In the same verse you will see that she also arranges the meals, and apportion the food. In verse 16 it is mentioned that, as we should say, out of her own money, she was able to buy an estate. No doubt that money was partly saved from her allowance and partly earned by her skilful weaving of clothing, some for the household, and some for sale. It is always a great satisfaction to a thrifty wife to be able, directly or indirectly, to contribute towards the increase of the family property, and to thus improve the position of her husband and children. The ideal wife is also very careful when speaking about other people and their affairs; she knows when it is well to keep silent. She does not go about a neighbourhood chattering from house to house and repeating rumours. Many a man has been obliged to remove from a locality because of the mischief done by a wife, who says out at once whatever she has heard, or whatever comes into her head, but we are especially told (verse 26) that among the "properties of a good wife" (see heading to the chapter) prudence in conversation is included; "she openeth her mouth with wisdom." And further, "in her tongue is the law of kindness;" she makes it a rule to be gentle and courteous to all, not excepting the poor. She has a sweet, winning, irresistible manner and deportment. She never says bitter things to people. Charity is the law of her life and conversation. This picture of a good wife is as true and complete as ever. When we read it we recognise the portrait of a busy, sensible, well-educated, kind-hearted gentlewoman, beloved by all, and at a value above rubies.

One or two more features of her behaviour to her husband may now be indicated. She will be honest and firm, but very quiet, in the statement of her opinions and convictions. She will not sink her own individuality because of her love. Her judgment must be founded on reason. She will be ready to be convinced by argument, but the sincerity of her character will not permit her to pretend to be convinced, merely for the sake of peace. It is very hard to be obliged to differ from those we love, but at times it is our duty. A wife who dare not state her firm conviction is not doing her duty to her husband. Numberless homes, now gone to pieces, might have been saved, had the advice of the wife been asked and acted upon by the husband, or, if the wife, no matter how much it pained her, had refused to give way, or to move from what she knew to be the best course. The wife often approaches a question from a more unbiased direction than the husband does. My advice to young wives is to remember to be ready to prevent their husbands from forming hasty plans or action, or from accepting the suggestions of men, whom the husband believes, but whose insincerity and duplicity the wife perceives by a kind of instinct. Pray for a right judgment in all things, and for the moral courage to stand firm where firmness is needed. Your husband, in looking back, will thank you for your timely aid and for the strength you supplied him in moments when he was weak.

Next, be companionable in every sense of the term. To be companionable is not as easy as it appears. People may live together and yet not be truly companionable; they may share the same pursuits and recreations, and to the world may seem what is called very suitable to one another, without being completely in harmony. To win love is one thing, to retain it is another. The companionable wife will try to be really responsive to the thoughts and ideas of her husband. She will endeavour to cultivate a quick comprehension of what is in his mind, of what he leaves unsaid as well as of what he expresses, of his view of difficulties, of pleasure, his way

of viewing literary questions, scientific matters and the great subject of religion. Many a man, while loving his wife truly and deeply, has gradually, though with regret, given up attempting to speak about things very precious to him, or problems fascinating to him. He knows it would be a waste of time to go again the weary round of conversation, which has, in the past, caused him to feel what a gulf there was between them; not in their love, but in their companionship. Similarity of thought, taste, feeling, aims, is a thing which can be cultivated. Cultivate companionship. Again, may I remind you of the advantage of what is termed "keeping up your accomplishments after you are married." Why should the easel, or the piano, or the voice, be neglected now that you are married? Surely they were not merely means to an end now attained! One often hears married women say—"Oh! I've given all that up now," "I have not touched the piano for months," and "in singing I am quite out of practice." Why should this be? Homes need all the sunshine that accomplishments can give them. She is but a foolish woman who thinks lightly of her talents, when they were given her for the purpose of dispensing pleasure and mental refreshment to those around her. Accomplishments assist that air of refinement which renders the home a salutary antidote to the coarseness of the world, and which is in itself one of the most attractive parts of a proper hospitality. Among the characteristics of the new home allow those mentioned in the marriage service to be prominent, "quietness, sobriety, and peace," not a round of excitement, but a climate of restfulness, not a tendency to excess, but a reasonable self-restraint; not a dual warfare of argument and contention, but a peaceful sense of perfect trustfulness in one another. To these add, "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely." Month by month, year by year, new ways of pleasing one another by a growing unselfishness will suggest themselves. All that is pure and lovely will expand in the congenial surroundings of your refined and well-regulated home.

Let me close these remarks to young married women by three things, which Bishop Thorold once mentioned in an address to wives. They were sympathy, truthfulness, and intercession. And by sympathy I mean more than mere sorrow at the sight of suffering. A wife's sympathy will render her tender-hearted, quick to forgive, ready to excuse, willing to concede in trifles, able to view things from another's standpoint and so to make allowances. Sympathy nurses the sick, comforts the sorrowful, pours oil on the troubled waters of disagreement, smooths over difficulties, prevents collisions, restores self-respect, encourages the down-hearted, shares all successes, is partner in all disappointments. Sympathy is the chief ingredient in that "charity which never faileth."

Truthfulness, without which there can be no true confidence in married life. The slightest mistrust of one another's intentions, words, and deeds, is fraught with grave danger to the home life.

Then last of all, intercession. The wife pleads for her husband at the Throne of Grace, as he pleads for her. She presents him by name, with all his love, and all his faults before the God who has given them their happy home, before the Saviour, who always, when on earth, blessed and sanctified home life, and as she prays for him, she asks for that heavenly wisdom which may enable her to help him, guide him, and to use her wonderful influence over him, for the advancement of his highest happiness and holiness. She knows he values her above rubies, but her prayerful hope is that the experience of their married life may be that "her husband may safely trust in her."