

“OH, WHO AM I?”

“Only the singer of a little song—
But what a sinner! What a song she sings!
Yes, heaven to earth her music nearer
brings,
With subtle powers, that to her gift belong,
And lovely thoughts her rippling verses
through,
Their inspiration drawn from secret springs;
We rise and soar with her on angel wings,
As she in flights of fancy glides along.
She teaches us our dearest friends in pain,
And not, as we had deemed him once, our
foe:
And using things in nature, mean and low,
The highest truths her metaphors contain.
Cease not thy strain, thy melody prolong,
Sing on sweet singer, for we love thy song!”
—Henry B. Hunt.

WILKINSON'S WIFE

Nobody ever understood why he married her.

You expected calamity to pursue Wilkinson,—it always had pursued him,—but that Wilkinson should have gone out of his way to pursue calamity (as if he could never have enough of it) really seemed a most unnecessary thing.

For there had been no pursuit on the part of the lady. Wilkinson's wife had the quality of her defects, and revealed herself obdiently in a formidable reticence. It was understood that Wilkinson had prevailed only after an austere struggle. Her appearance sufficiently refuted any theory of unholiness or disastrous charms.

Wilkinson's wife was not at all nice to look at. She had an insignificant figure, a small, square face, colorless hair scraped with difficulty to the top of her head, eyes without lashes to protect you from their stare, a mouth that pulled at an invisible curb, a fallow skin stretched so tight over her cheek-bones that the red veins stood stagnant there; and with it all, poor lady, a dull, strained expression hostile to further intimacy.

Even in her youth she never could have looked young, and she was years older than Wilkinson. Not that the difference showed, for his marriage had made Wilkinson look years older than he was; at least, so it was said by people who had known him before that unfortunate event.

It was not even as if she had been intelligent. Wilkinson had a gentle passion for the things of intellect; his wife seemed to exist on purpose to frustrate it. In no department of his life was her influence so penetrating and malign. At forty he no longer counted; he had lost all his brilliance, and had replaced it by a shy, unworshipful charm. There was something in Wilkinson that dreamed or slept, with one eye, fixed upon his wife. Of course, he had his blessed hours of relief from the woman. Sometimes he would fly in her face and ask people to dine at his house in Hampstead, to discuss Roman remains, or the Troubadours, or Nietzsche. He never could understand why his wife couldn't “enter,” as he expected it, into these subjects. He smiled at you in the dimmest, saddest way when he referred to it. “It's extraordinary,” he would say, “the little interest she takes in Nietzsche.”

Mrs. Norman found him once wandering in the High Street, with his passion full on him. He was a little absent, a little flushed; his eyes shone behind his spectacles; and there were pleasant creases in his queer, clean-shaven face.

She inquired the cause of his delight. “I've got a man coming to dine this evening, who has a little talk with me. He knows all about the Troubadours.”

So Mrs. Norman went on drawing Wilkinson out more and more, till one Sunday afternoon, sitting beside her on the sofa, he emerged positively splendid. There were moments when he forgot about his wife.

They had been talking together about his blessed Troubadours. (It was wonderful, the interest Mrs. Norman took in them!) Suddenly his gentleness and sadness fell from him, a flame sprang up behind his spectacles, and the something that slept or dreamed in Wilkinson awoke. He was away with Mrs. Norman in a lovely land, in Provence of the thirteenth century. A strange chant broke from him; it startled Evey, where she sat at the other end of the room. He was reciting his own translation of a love-song of Provence.

At the first words of the refrain, his wife, who had never ceased staring at him, got up and came across the room. She touched his shoulder just as he was going to say “Ma mie.”

“Come, Peter,” she said, “it's time to be going home.”

Wilkinson rose on his long legs “Ma mie,” he said, looking down at her; and the flaming dream was still in his eyes behind his spectacles.

He took the little cloak she held out to him, a pitiful and rather vulgar thing. He raised it with the air of a courtier handling a royal robe; then he put it on her, smoothing it tenderly about her shoulders.

Mrs. Norman followed them to the porch. As he turned to her on the step, she saw that his eyes were sad, and that his face, as she put it, had gone to sleep again.

to approach a subject intimately and yet abstrusely painful.

“She finds the music—just at present—a little too much for her; the vibrations, you know. It's extraordinary how they affect her. She feels them—most unpleasantly—just here.” Wilkinson laid two delicate fingers on the middle buttons of his waistcoat.

Mrs. Norman was very kind to him. He was not exact, poor fellow, in the fabrication of excuses. His look seemed to implore her pardon for the shifts he had been driven to; it appealed to her to help him out, to stand by him in his unpeppable situation.

“I see,” she said.

“I smiled, in charming gratitude to her for seeing it.

That smile raised the devil in her. Why, after all, should she help him out?

“And are you susceptible to music—in the same unpleasant way?”

“I assure you,” he insisted, “she felt it very much. I thought you would like to know that.”

“Oh, yes,” Mrs. Norman's voice went very low with the sinking of her heart.

“She used to say you did more for her— you and your sister, with her beautiful music—than all the doctors. You found the thing that eased her. I suppose you knew how ill she was—all the time? I mean before her last illness.”

“I don't think,” said she, “I did know.”

His face, which had grown grave, brightened.

“No? Well, you see, she was so plucky. Nobody could have known; I didn't always realize it myself.”

Then he told her that for five years his wife had suffered from a nervous malady that made her subject to strange excitations and depressions.

Portugal's New King

Manuel, proclaimed by the council of state as the new king of Portugal, is the second son of the assassinated monarch. He is but little more than 18 years old, having been born in the royal palace at Lisbon on November 15th, 1889.

While not in the direct line of succession to the throne, as long as his elder brother, who was also assassinated, was alive, nevertheless Manuel received an extremely careful and painstaking education. In study he proved he has brains, and he is described as being distinctly a young man of parts, promise of developing into an able monarch.

It is probable that he will have opportunity to prove his abilities as a ruler if the alliance between Portugal and England means—as many observers declare it does—that British power will be ready to keep the young man on his throne.

England, according to those familiar with the treaty with Portugal made in 1888, is bound, not merely to protect Portugal from foreign invasion, but also to safeguard the throne from any danger arising from internal revolution. Not only is England declared bound to sustain the new king by that treaty, but it is further pointed out that it would be against her policy to leave Portugal to her own devices should it appear that a state of anarchy is to result or that the country is to be thrown into chaos by three parties fighting for the power.

The reason for England's desire to maintain the Portuguese throne on a firm basis lies in the scattered lands of Portugal in many parts of the world, in which England is anxious to retain her coaling stations. It is pointed out that were a chaotic condition to arise in Portugal, the country being left by England to do what she likes, Germany or another power might seize the Portuguese islands, should it become necessary to make reprisals for injuries done by the Portuguese nob to German property in Portugal.

Proprietors familiar with international affairs, therefore, argue that England will sustain the new king that he will have all opportunity to show what kind of a ruler he has the ability to make. Thus far Manuel has been best known as a yachtman, yachting being a sport of which he is exceedingly fond. He has been a prominent figure in many of the regattas held on the Mediterranean, in frequent instances handling his yacht himself.

It was the favorite son of the dead ruler, being much closer to King Carlos than was the crown prince, and being often confided in by the king.

The new king has had something of a naval education, in addition to the usual schooling and tutoring of a prince. In his early teens he was sent to the naval school at Lisbon, where he showed great aptitude for a naval career. In personal appearance he is described as being fair, well formed and handsome.

The title held by the new king, while merely the second son of Carlos, was that of the Duke of Beja. He bears 14 Christian names in addition to his title, his full name being Manuel Maria Philippe Charles Antonio Louis Michael Gabriel Gonçalves Xavier Francisco D'Assise Eugene.

—Pittsburg Sun

The story of the milk bottle and its equipment reveals an interesting situation, says the Boston Herald.

Each milk bottle is filled on an average once in four days. Thus each one of the 100,000,000 bottles in use receives a fresh cap every time it is used, which will average seven times a month.

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

DAILY THOUGHT.

Be noble! And the nobleness that lies in other men, sleeping but never dead, will rise in majesty to meet thee own.
—James Russell Lowell.

The question of eyestrain, which is receiving a good deal of attention at the present moment, is a matter which cannot be too strongly considered where children are concerned. If the fatigue which is due to straining the nerve of sight is the cause of irritability in the case of adults, it must also be doubly true of the nursery folk.

Nothing is worse for a tiny baby than to allow it to lie on its back in a perambulator, staring at a bright light, and if the day is clear or sunny a covering of some kind should always be interposed to modify the glare.

In the nursery the greatest care should be exercised in determining the relative positions of the children's beds and cribs. They should never under any conditions be allowed to face the window, but if this is difficult to avoid a movable rail should be affixed to the bedstead, which can be adjusted so as to screen light from the window, the lamp, gas or fire, as the case may be.

The newest touch on the early spring frocks is the attractive girdles and scarfs that adorn many of them.

The making of these girdles or scarfs is comparatively a simple matter. No great amount of sewing experience is required and the making of one is an excellent investment of time and money.

They are so very new and smart that they work wonders for the style of the gown, be it new or old.

Three widths were required to cover the broad fitted and boned foundation that forms the belt part. This will be found much more satisfactory than covering with a single band of wide ribbon.

Of the most attractive girdles shown was made of softest liberty satin ribbon six inches wide.

Most of these girdles fasten on the left side of the front under a huge rosette or flat bow.

Very often two long ends fall from this, almost reaching the knees, where they are finished with large silk tassels.

The effect is most graceful and artistic. As the girdles attached to the spring gowns are varied in their nature as the sands of the sea; wide, crushed, fitted affairs made of the material of the gown are the standard thing, and the most elegant with a handsome cloth, owing to their absolute simplicity.

Most of these girdles fasten in the back under a little heading which folds over to one side; sometimes three flat buttons made of the cloth, hand embroidered, are tacked on, forming a pretty little decoration.

The lace girdles are extremely new, as well as are the lace scarfs. Both are exquisitely pretty.

They are made of the lace stretched tightly over a boned belt fashioned from the lining.

Openwork embroidery and trimmings, passementeries and braids are used in the same way.

In lingerie gowns narrow bands of stuks alternate with the lace inserting, and make up most effectively.

These belts are worn straight around the waist, as shown in the en-tête figure, and they give a neat, trim effect that is very much sought after at present, although laconic or any pulled-in appearance is religiously avoided, rather straight lines being the thing.

To have a clear complexion and bright eyes is impossible unless one sleeps in a well ventilated room for pure air acts injuriously upon the system—it clogs the lungs, prevents the blood from being properly purified and finally stains the skin and colors the eyes.

Too often ventilation is confounded with draughtiness, though the two are decidedly different. For instance, to sleep in a draught is quite as bad, though in a different way, as to have no fresh air. The happy medium can usually be accomplished by placing a bed so that air will not strike directly upon it when window and door are open.

When possible, door as well as window should be open, admitting and carrying off air, or else there should be two windows to do this. Every one who is so situated, however, and some substitute must be arranged.

This is best done by opening the window at the bottom as well as at the top when there is but one from which to ventilate. When there are two, both may be done from the top, or one from the upper part and the other from the lower. To a person who understands the action of heat and cold the reason for this is quite obvious. Hot air, which is a rare that which has been used, and is vitiated or impure, rises. Cold air descends. If a window is open at the bottom the fresh cold air coming in will hasten the ascension of the old warm atmosphere, and the same should be done from the top to permit of the stale being expelled.

Ventilation for a bedroom. Such an arrangement is ideal for a bedroom, no matter how many windows there may be. It is practically impossible to have a room too cold to sleep in, if there is sufficient bedding, and the danger of contracting lung trouble is greatly decreased. Should the temperature be such as to make the head feel cold, the hair will not be harmed by wearing a worsted flannel cap.

Unless, however, the bedding is warm enough, serious cold may be contracted by sleeping in a low temperature. Should a person be lacking in vitality so that the natural condition is cold, it will be necessary to sleep in a light blanket. This is far more comfortable than a flannel bedgown, and if of a soft quality the woolen sheet, as it may be called, is not rough.

Usually with this warmth attending the body the temperature will be normal. All blankets and comforters should be as light in weight as one can afford to buy, for when heavy they are a load on the body.

Quilts stuffed with cotton batting are preferable to a cheap quality of blankets, for the former are less expensive, warmer and weigh practically nothing.

To air such bedding thoroughly every morning is most necessary to hygiene.

Should one dislike the feeling of woolen next to the body sufficient warmth is sometimes given by wearing soft shoes, or more strictly speaking, worsted socks.

In the temperature that is ideal for health one is conscious of breathing cold fresh air through the nostrils, while all parts of the body are entirely warm. Were this done more often there would be fewer cases of ill health.