

THE BRADFORD REPORTER.

ONE DOLLAR PER ANNUM, INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

"REGARDLESS OF DENUNCIATION FROM ANY QUARTER."

VOL. XVII.—NO. 52.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY AT TOWANDA, BRADFORD COUNTY, PA., BY E. O'MEARA GOODRICH.

TOWANDA:

Thursday Morning, June 3, 1857.

Selected Poetry.

[From Harper's Weekly.]
AN INVITATION TO THE COUNTRY.
BY WM. C. BRYANT.

All day, from shrubs by our summer dwelling,
The Easter-sparrow repeats his song;
A merry warbler, he chides the blossoms,
The idle blossoms, that sleep so long.
The blue-bird chants, from the elm's long branches,
A hymn to welcome the budding year,
The south wind wanders from field to forest,
And softly whispers, "The Spring is here!"
Come, daughter mine, from the gloomy city,
Before these days from the elm have ceased;
The violet breathes by our door as sweetly
As in the air of her native East.
Though many a flower in the wood is waking,
The daffodil is on our door-step green;
She pushes upward the sword already,
To spot with sunshine the early green.
No lays so joyous as these are warbled
From wry prison in maiden's bower;
No paupered bloom of the green-house chamber
Has half the charm of the lawn's first flower.
Yet these sweet lays of the early season
And these fair sights of its sunny days,
Are only sweet when we fondly listen,
And only fair when we fondly gaze.
There is no glory in star or blossom
Till looked upon by a loving eye;
There is no fragrance in April breezes
Till breathed with joy as they wander by.
Come, Julia dear, for the sprouting willows,
The opening flowers, and the gleaming brooks,
And hallow green in the sun are waiting
Their dower of beauty from thy glad looks.

Selected Tale.

THE TWO HOMES: A STORY FOR WIVES.

Our story begins—as most other stories terminate—with a wedding. And yet how often is marriage but the entrance-gate of life, when the romantic girl must inevitably merge into the thinking and acting woman, and she who has hitherto lived within herself and to herself, must learn to live for another. She steps from the altar into a new existence, requiring new energies and new feelings; she enters on a path as yet untried, in which there is much to be overcome, and in which she has need of all help from her own heart and from Heaven.
Mr. Stratford, the rich banker, gave away at the marriage altar, on the same day, his only daughter and his niece. The fortunate bridegroom who won the former was Sir Francis Lester, a baronet of ancient and honorable family. The husband of the latter was of a lower standing in society—plain Henry Wolferstan, Esq., a gentleman whose worldly wealth consisted in that often visionary income, a "small independence," a title to an office under Government which yielded a few hundreds per annum. These were the two who carried away in triumph the beautiful heiress and the graceful but portionless niece of Mr. Stratford.

With the usual April tears, the two young brides departed. A stately carriage-and-four conveyed Sir Francis and Lady Lester to the hall of a noble residence; while the humble railway whirled Henry and Ennice Wolferstan to the antique country mansion where a new mother and sisters awaited the orphan. And thus passed the honeymoon of both cousins, different, and yet the same, for in the lordly abode, and in the comfortable dwelling of an English squire, was alike the sunshine of first, young, happy love.

In a few weeks the two couples came home. How sweet the words sounding, "our home!" What a sunny vista of coming years does it open to the view of joys to be shared together, and cares divided—that seem when thus lightened, no burden at all. Sir Francis Lester forgot his dignity in his happiness as he lifted his young wife from her downy cushioned equipage, and led her through a lane of smiling, bowing, white ribboned domestics, up the noble staircase of his splendid home in—Square. Hand in hand the happy pair wandered through the magnificent rooms, in which taste refined and increased the luxuries of wealth. Ennice was never weary of admiring, and her husband only looked in her eyes for delight and reward. At last exhausted with her pleasure, Lady Lester threw herself on a damask couch. "I can do no more to-day; I am quite wearied."

"Wearied of home—of me—of what?" said Sir Francis, smiling.

"No, no," answered the bride looking proudly at her husband, and playing with his jeweled fingers; "only wearied with being so happy."

"I hope you may always have that excuse, dearest. But now we must give away to laziness; my mother is coming to-night, you know, and I want my Emily to be brilliant and beautiful—more than usual if possible."

"Indeed, I do not care; all the mothers in the world would not induce me to rise and have the fatigue of dressing and dining in state to-night."

Sir Francis looked annoyed; but he had been married too short a time to do more than look. "As you will, Emily," he said, "but I wished—"

There was something in the tone that made the wife look up. She saw the expression and repented. "You wished—and I will do anything you wish now and always," whispered her beautiful lips in his ear, and the shadow was gone from between the two—swept away by the touch of love.

Half a mile from the abode of Sir Francis Lester was the house of Mr. and Mrs. Wolferstan. It was one of those pleasant homes that

a generation now passed into the suburbs of London. White modern built terraces and formal squares have risen up around, but the old houses still remain here and there with their barrier of trees, or low privet hedges against the dusty road; their little gardens and brown wall covered with ivy, or woodbine, or thick leaved vines. To one of those pretty dwellings Henry Wolferstan brought home his bride.

It was an evening in September, chilly enough to make a fire welcome, when Henry and Ennice sat for the first time by their own hearth together. The ruddy firelight gleamed on the young wife's face as she presided at the tea-table; while her husband, resting at his ease in an arm chair, watched with his affectionate eyes every movement of the delicate little hand that fitted about in matronly dignity. How happy they were! After all the trials of a love whose course had been often ruffled by worldly cares and hindrances, to find themselves at last in a still haven—a happy, wedded home. Ennice looked round the cheerful room; the books, the well-chosen prints, silent, beautiful companions, which they both loved so much; and the open piano forte—all seemed to speak of future comfort and happiness. And then she saw beside her that face that had been for years the sunshine of her life, and knew that he was her husband; that they would never be parted more, that the love between them would be as an ever-living fountain, daily springing up anew to freshen and brighten their united life. All this came upon the full heart of the young wife, and she fairly burst into tears. Happy, blessed tears they were, quickly kissed away, and changed into smiles.

Many and many a time in after years did the young couple call to mind that first happy evening in their own home—how they looked over their treasures, their household gods; and Ennice touched her new piano, and sang; but her voice trembled; so at last they came and sat by the fireside—like John Anderson and his spouse, as Henry laughingly said—and built castles in the air; the jests always ending in seriousness, for they were too happy to be very mirthful.

Time glides away fast enough with every one and most of all with those whose life is untroubled. Ennice had been married six months before she began to think how long it was since she had resigned her heart into Henry's loving keeping. Yet short as the time seemed, it was sufficient to make the former life of both appear like a dream. They had already settled down into a calm, sedate married pair. Sometimes people jest with them upon restricted freedom and marriage fetters; but Henry Wolferstan only laughed—he was ever of a merry mood—and asked if any man or woman, single or not, could ever truly say they had their liberty. And in good truth it is well it should be so; for such liberty would be a sore burden sometimes.

Mrs. Wolferstan still kept up her intercourse with her cousin, for Emily was of too generous a disposition to make the difference in station a bar to such old friendship. Still there was in the world's eyes a distinction between the wife of a rich baronet and of a gentleman of limited income; and, still more than this, there was the difference of habits, thoughts, feelings, which the positions of the two cousins naturally brought about; so that, if the intercourse of the two wives gradually narrowed, it was not very surprising. Ennice never returned from the square, which breathed the very atmosphere of gaiety and splendor, without feeling a sense of relief on entering the quiet precincts of her own home.

One day she came earlier than usual to visit Lady Lester, whom she found still in her dressing-room. Emily lay seemingly half-asleep; but when Ennice drew aside the rose-colored curtains, and let in the warm noon sunshine, she saw the pale face and swollen eyes that were beneath the rich lace cap. Before she had time to speak, Lady Lester observed:

"Well Ennice, my husband and I have had our first quarrel."

"I am sorry—truly sorry. And Sir Francis—"

"Do not speak of him; he is unkind, proud, obstinate."

"Hush!" said Ennice, laying her finger on Emily's lips; "you must not speak thus—not even to your cousin."

"I must tell you—I will not be contradicted," answered the young beauty resolutely.—And Mrs. Wolferstan thought that to listen would perhaps be the wisest course, though she knew the evil of such confidence in general.

"I do not see half enough of my husband," continued Emily. "He is always going out—not with me, but alone, or with that disagreeable mother of his, whom I hate to see in my house; yet she makes it like her own, and I am thought nobody—I, the wife of Sir Francis! I entreated him this morning not to ask her so much, to let her leave us alone together, and that he would stay at home a little more. But he was very angry; no, passionate, for that he never is—I often wish he were—it would be better than his cold, formal manner when he is displeased."

"Was that all?" asked Ennice.

"Not quite. I told him he ought not to leave me so much—that I would not suffer it. And he answered in his quiet way, 'When Lady Lester makes her society not quite so dull, it will have more charms for her husband.' And so he went away. I will make him repent it though," said Emily, while the hot flush mounted on her brow. Ennice saw at once that it was no time for even gentle reproaches, and besides, Emily was not at all in the wrong; there was much to be laid to the charge of her husband also. Scarcely had Mrs. Wolferstan succeeded in calming her friend, and just as she was beginning to think how she might best frame salutary but tender advice, the mother-in-law of Lady Lester entered.

The hasty greeting between the wife and mother of Sir Francis showed mutual dislike. Ennice contrasted the tall, harsh-voiced, frigid lady before her with the gentle woman who was Henry's mother, and her own, too, in love, which made the formidable name of moth-

er-in-law but a name for a most sweet bond. Thinking of this, how much she pitied Emily! Had she not heard the confession of her cousin, in the one half hour during which she listened painfully to the abrupt, coldly polite or sarcastic speeches that passed between the lady and her son's wife, was enough to convince Ennice that she was in a house of strife. She rose to depart; for it was vain to hope for more conversation with Emily. As she bade her cousin adieu in the ante-room, Ennice could just find time to whisper, "Dearest Emily, when I married, a wise and true friend said to me, 'Take care of the first quarrel.' I did so; Henry and I have not had our first quarrel yet. Listen to me. At all risks, end yours; make any sacrifices to be friends; and never, never have another. God bless and help you! and good-bye."

The wise Solomon says, "the beginning of strife is like the letting out of water." Alas! if they who first open the fountain did but know into what a fearful river of woe it soon swells, sweeping away everything in its overwhelming tide. Emily Lester was wise enough to follow her cousin's advice; she did make up the quarrel, as a loving and still beloved wife almost always can, and no other tie was the same influence. But Sir Francis, though gifted with many high qualities, was a difficult temper to bear with and guide. His character and pursuits were fixed before he married; his wife must mould her nature to his, for he would never bend his to hers. He loved Emily fondly, but he regarded her, probably from the difference in their years, more as a plaything than an equal. After the sullen feters of the lover were broken, he would never brook the shadow of control. To give him an idea that he was ruled, was to lose that power forever. Emily had truly called him obstinate; for the same quality that made him firm in a good purpose, made him resolute in an error. To thwart him, was but to strengthen his iron will. Yet he was a man of high principle and feeling; but he required to be lured by smiles to a cheerful home, instead of being driven away by frowns and murmurs.

Let us pass over another year, and again visit the two homes. A mother's bliss had come to both; the heir of Sir Francis Lester was received with triumphant joy, and cradled in satin and down; while the first-born of Henry Wolferstan was laid in its mother's bosom with a tearful but not less happy welcome. Life had become very sweet to Henry and Ennice; their cup of joy was running over.—Too much bliss is a snare to the wisest; and therefore, perhaps, it was best that, before many months had passed over the babe whose advent had given so much happiness, a shadow gathered on the path of the young parents.

Ennice sat waiting for her husband's daily return from town. Sleep had closed the eyes of her little Lily—the child's name was Lavina, but they called her Lily, and very like she was to that sweet flower, especially now she lay asleep, like a lily, golden among its leaves. Ennice's fingers were busy in fabricating a christening robe for her darling; and the mother's heart kept pace with their quick movements, traveling over future years, until she smiled at herself to think how earnestly she had been considering the making of the bridal dress of the babe of three months old that lay unconsciously sleeping by her side.

A little later than his accustomed hour—for he was generally very punctual—Henry came in. He looked pale and his eye was troubled, but he kissed his wife with his usual affection, perhaps even more. Still, Ennice saw that all was not right. She waited for him to tell her; he always did; but this night he was silent. A few passing questions Ennice put, but they were answered so shortly that the wife saw that that plan would never do; so she tried to distract his attention by speaking of Lily and the christening.

"See, Henry, how beautiful she will look in her robe—the darling!" said the mother, unfolding it, and displaying the delicate fabric.

Henry covered his face. "Take it away!" he said, in tones of deep pain. "I cannot think of such things. Ennice I ought to tell you, and yet I dare not."

"What is it you dare not tell me, my own Henry?" said Ennice sadly putting her arm around his neck, "nothing wrong, I am sure, and even if so you know I will forgive it."

"I have done wrong, Ennice; it might be foolish, but it was not wrong."

"What was it, Henry, love?" said a voice so low that it might have only been that of his own heart urging the confession.

"I will tell you. You know my brother George how wild he is, and always was. Well, he came to me a year ago; he had a good situation offered him, but they required a surety; and George implored me on his knees to save him, and give him a chance of reforming. I did so. I was bound for him to the extent of my little all—poor Lily's fortune—and he has just fled to America—a thief! defrauding his master and also me. Ennice, we have now only my salary to live upon. This is the trouble that weighs me down."

"Is that all?" said the wife; "then we will bear it together. It is nothing—nothing," and she smiled through her tears.

Her husband looked surprised. "Ennice, do you know that we shall be much poorer than we are now? that we must give up many comforts? and the poor babe growing up too. Oh, how foolish I have been!"

"Never mind the past now, dear Henry; I have only one thing to complain of—that you did not tell me sooner."

"You have indeed a right to do so," said Henry slowly, and painfully. "I know it; I have brought this upon you; I have made my wife poor."

Ennice looked at her husband with eyes overflowing with love. "Henry," she answered, "since you speak thus, I also must think of myself. I must remember that I brought you no fortune; that I owe all to you—home, food, raiment; that in making me your wife the gifts were all on your side, for I had nothing. When I consider this what right have I to

complain of reduced luxuries—nay, even of poverty?"

"You are my own noble minded wife," cried Henry, folding her in his arms. "The richest treasure I ever had was the woman's heart you brought me."

Thus even adverse fortune without could only throw a passing shadow on that blessed, united home.

The birth of their son drew a little nearer the hearts of Sir Francis Lester and his wife, but their life had been too long a troubled current to receive more than a temporary calm. When Sir Francis stooped from usual dignified reserve to fondle his child, with the pride of a new made father, these caresses, after the first pleasure was over, gave a jealous pang to Emily's heart. She was absolutely jealous of the babe, attributing her husband's more frequent society to his delight in his son and heir. She even doubted the increased fondness of manner that he evinced toward herself; until, repulsed by her coldness and vague hints, he again sought abroad the comfort that she denied him in his splendid but joyless home.

From that home Sir Francis became more and more estranged. His wife rarely saw him in the day and midnight often found him absent. If she complained, or questioned him whether he was going, or where he had been, his sole answer was silence or haughty reserve. In the early days of their marriage, Emily had often won her way, even against her husband's will, by tears or caresses. But the former were useless now; the latter she was too proud to try. Only the shadow of her olden love lingered in the wife's heart, and in its stead had come distrust, and jealousy, and wounded pride.

One morning daybreak saw Lady Lester returning from a ball alone, for her husband now seldom accompanied her. As she entered, her first inquiry of the heavy-eyed domestic was, if his master had returned. He had not; and this was only one of the many nights that Sir Francis had outsat the daylight. Lady Lester compressed her lips in anger, and retired; but she had scarcely gained her room ere Sir Francis entered.

"You are out late?" said Emily. He made no answer. "Where have you been?" she continued.

"Nowhere of consequence—at least not to you."

"Sir Francis Lester, you are mistaken," answered Emily, trying to speak calmly, though she trembled violently. "I have a right to know where you go and what you do—the right of a wife."

"Do not annoy yourself and me; I never interfere with your proceedings."

"Because you know there is no evil in them. I have nothing to hide which you have."

"How do you know that?"

"Because, if you were not doing wrong, why should you stay out night after night, as now. There must be a cause for this; and shall I tell you what I think—what the world thinks? That you gamble!"

"The world lies!" cried Sir Francis—the words hissing through his white lips; but he became calm in a moment. "I beg your pardon, Lady Lester; I will say good night."

"Answer me, Francis!" said his wife, much agitated. "Where do you go, and why?"

"Oh! tell me."

"I will not," replied he. "The curiosity of a wife who doubts her husband is not worth gratifying. Good night."

Emily pressed her throbbing forehead against the cushions of a sofa, and wept long in silence and solitude. Ere morning dawned upon her sleepless eyes she had resolved what to do.—"I will know," muttered the unhappy wife, as she thought over the plan on which she had determined. "Come what may, I will know where he goes. He shall find I am equal to him yet."

Two days after, Sir Francis Lester, his wife and mother, were seated at the well lighted dinner table. There was no other guest—a rare circumstance, for a visitor was ever welcome to break the dull tedium of a family *table-d'hôte*. Alas for those homes in which such is the case! Silently and formally sat Lady Lester at the head of her husband's table. How cheerless it was in its cold grandeur! with the servants gliding stealthily about, and the three who owned this solemn state exchanging a few words of freezing civility, and then relapsing into silence. When the servants had retired, Sir Francis uttered a few words in his usual tone—perhaps a little kinder than ordinary—to his wife; but she made no effort to reply, and he turned to his mother. They talked awhile, and then the elder Lady Lester rose to retire.

Emily's pale cheek grew a shade whiter as she said, "Before we leave, I have a word to say to my husband."

Sir Francis lifted his eyes, and his mother observed sharply, "Perhaps I had better retire?"

"As you will," Lady Lester replied, with a sneering emphasis. Oh, how different from sweet Emily Stratford of old! "But it might be an unpleasant novelty to Sir Francis to hear his wife without his mother's presence."

"What is all this?" coldly said the husband.

"Merely, Sir Francis, that what you refused to tell me, I have learned. I know where and how you pass the evenings in which your wife is not worthy to share your society; I know also where you spent last night. A noble thing, a very noble thing, for Sir Francis Lester to be squandering his own—ay, and his wife's—fortune—in a gaming-house!"

Sir Francis started from the table. "It is false!" he said, while the blue veins rose like knots on his forehead.

"It is true," Emily answered. "I know it."

"May I ask how?"

"By the evidence of one who saw you enter the house."

"And shall I tell you, Francis, how the evidence was gained?" said his mother, in the calm, biting tone, she well knew how to use.

"I now see why Lady Lester gave yesterday and to-day two such long audiences to her father's old servant, and why she needed his assistance so much—to be a spy upon her husband."

Sir Francis clenched his hands involuntarily, and, looking fixedly at his wife, said, in a tone so low and suppressed that it became almost a whisper, "Emily Lester, is this true?"

Much as Lady Lester had erred, she was not yet so far advanced in the ways of wrong as to veil that error by a falsehood; she answered steadily, though a deep blush spread itself over her face and neck, "Yes, it is."

Her husband, to Emily's great surprise, did not answer a syllable. His head was bent, and his features immovable. He offered no justification, uttered no reproaches, and his silence irritated her beyond all bounds. Amidst violent bursts of sobbing, she poured out a torrent of recriminations; all her forced calmness had departed, and she upbraided Sir Francis with the bitterest of an injured wife.

"I have endured too long—I will endure no more," she cried. "You trust me not, and therefore you cannot love me. I will go to one who does both—my kind, dear father. I will leave you—we must part."

"We will part," said Sir Francis, in a tone of freezing coldness, that went like an ice-bolt to Emily's heart. Her husband rose up, walked slowly and firmly to the door, but when he reached it, he staggered, and felt about for the handle, like one who was blind. In another minute the hall door closed, and he was gone.

Emily sat as he had left her, but her tears flowed no longer; she was as still and white as a marble statue. The mother-in-law stormed, sneered, reviled, but she might as well have talked to the dead. At last she went away. When the servants entered with the desert they found their mistress still in her seat, half leaning on the table, but perfectly insensible.

Ennice Wolferstan was roused from the contemplation of her own reverses to soothe the unfortunate Emily. For two days, during which her delirium lasted, no news of Sir Francis came to his wife. His supposed guilt became as nothing compared to the fear that he should take her wild words in earnest, and that they should part. But this fear became an agonizing certainty. In a letter to Emily's father, Sir Francis declared his intention to return no more to the home his wife occupied; that all her own fortune, and a portion of his, should be settled upon her, but that henceforth they must be separated. In vain the poor old father, his natural anger subdued by witnessing the agony of his child, pleaded for her. Sir Francis was resolute. That his wife should have dared to discover what he chose to conceal, was a deep offense in his eyes; but that she should have sent a servant to watch him—no power on earth would have made the haughty Sir Francis Lester forgive that.

The desolate wife prayed her cousin to try her power to soften his obstinate will; for Sir Francis had ever respected the high but gentle spirit of Ennice. She went, strong in her woman's influence; her words touched even him, as she could see by the changing of his countenance. He bore more from her than from any one; for man will sometimes bow to the sway of a high souled, pure-minded woman, when he will not listen to his brother man.—Ennice pleaded Emily's sorrow—her love; but all failed to move Sir Francis. Then she spoke of the child, and at the mention of his boy, she saw the very lips of Sir Francis quiver.

"You will take him away from her? Poor Emily's heart will break to lose both husband and child."

"Mrs. Wolferstan, I wish to be just to myself—not cruel to her. I would not take the child from his mother, though it is hard to part with my boy." And the father's voice trembled, until, erring as she thought him, Ennice felt compassion for the stern, unyielding, yet broken hearted man.

"Oh," she thought, "had poor Emily but known how to guide this lofty spirit."

Sir Francis continued, "When Lady Lester and I are parted, I could wish the world to know as little about the fact as possible.—You can say incompatibility of temper was the cause, or anything you will; but let there be no shadow cast on her fair fame—or mine."

"Emily need fear none," answered Ennice.

"And you—"

Sir Francis drew up his tall figure proudly.—"Nor I neither, Mrs. Wolferstan. To a wife who insults her husband by mean suspicions, no explanations are due. But I owe it to myself to say, and I wish you to know also, that Emily was deceived; that I never stooped to a vice so detestable as gambling; and that the nights I spent in torture amidst scenes I loathe, were devoted to the attempt to save from ruin a friend whom I love as a brother. Now judge me as you will."

Ennice could only mourn that the little cloud which had arisen between the husband and wife, had so darkened the vision of both. But it was passed now; no peace making could restore the alienated love. Once only did Sir Francis and his wife meet: it was on the signing of the deed of settlement. A cold bend of salutation was all that passed between the two who had once loved so fondly. Sir Francis preserved his old reserve and calmness of manner; Emily strove to maintain equal composure, and the excitement of her mind gave her strength. Sir Francis placed his signature on the fatal parchment, and then her father led Emily to the table. She gave one wild imploring look at her husband—but his face seemed passionless; there was no hope. She took the pen, wrote her name—her fingers, her whole frame, grew rigid—and, without a sigh or moan, she fainted at his feet.

It was over; Sir Francis went abroad; and the young wife, widowed by her own deed, was left alone. But for the babe who remained to cling round her neck, and look at her with eyes like those of the husband whom she had lost, Emily's reason would have left her. The magnificent house was closed; and she took up her abode in the home from which she had been taken a beautiful and happy bride.—Thither the loving care of Ennice followed her still; and Emily gradually became calmer, and wiser, and better, under the guidance of

her cousin. Ennice's own path was far from smooth. In her first high-hearted fearlessness of poverty, her very ignorance had made her courageous. Now she came to experience how bitter are those trifling but gnawing cares, that those who have known the comfort of easy circumstances feel so keenly; how wearying is the constant struggle to spin a sovereign into the longest thread of gold-wire possible.—The grim ogre, poverty, whom the brave heart of Ennice had at first repulsed so cheerfully and boldly, had his revenge by all sorts of sly assaults. But in time she bore them better, and felt them less; and it was a balm to all sorrow to know how much she was loved, and, and revered too, as a good and virtuous wife, "whose price is above rubies," or ought to be to her husband. And day by day were their hearts knitted together. She, in loving obedience, yielded willingly, and therefore most sweetly, bending her mind to his in all good things; and he guiding and protecting her, as the stronger should the weaker, in a union in which neither ought to strive for the pre-eminence, unless it be the pre-eminence of love.

For two years only was Ennice fated to know the soreness of altered fortunes. Conscience overtook the brother whose sin had caused so much pain; he died, and restored all to the master whom he had defrauded.—The master was a just man, and dealt equally well with Henry Wolferstan; so that fortune again smiled upon him. He left the small house where Ennice had learned the hard lesson of poverty, and returned to the same pleasant home where had brought his bride.

There, after four years had passed over her head, let us look at Ennice, now in the summer of womanhood, wifehood, motherhood.—It was high summer too on the earth; and through the French windows of the room where Ennice sat, came the perfume of roses from the garden. Bees hummed among the leaves of the mulberry tree, luring sweet Lily from her A B C to her favorite seat under its boughs. The child looked wistfully toward her little cousin, Sidney Lester, who was sporting among the flowers, and all her mother's words failed to attract her attention, until the lesson was happily broken in upon by a visitor. Lily scampered away—the unannounced guest entered—and Ennice looked upon the face of Sir Francis Lester.

She had never seen him since the day of the signing of the deed; and time, travel, it might be suffering, had changed him much.—He looked now like a man whose prime was past; his hair was turning grey, and he had lost much of his stately carriage. When he spoke, too, there was a softness in his voice that it had not before; perhaps it was at the gentleness, even to tears, which Ennice evinced at seeing him so unexpectedly.

He said he had come on urgent business to England; he should soon return to Italy, and would not go without seeing Mrs. Wolferstan. After a while he asked after his boy; and then Emily's name was on her husband's lips. As he spoke, he turned his head away, and looked out of the window, but immediately started back, saying, "I understood—I heard—that Lady Lester was in the country?"

"She and Sidney returned to-day, but I feared to tell you they were here," answered Ennice, softly.

"Is that my boy? I must see him," and the father's eyes eagerly returned to where Sidney stood on the garden seat, supporting himself by one rosy arm thrown round his mother's neck, as he pulled the mulberry leaves within his reach. Emily sat still—not the brilliant Emily of yore, but calm, thoughtful, subdued—even the light of a mother's love could not altogether remove the soft sadness from her face. How little she knew whose eyes were gazing upon her now! "I must speak to my Sidney," said Sir Francis, at last, in changed and broken accents. "Will you bring him to me?"

"They are coming now," Ennice answered. "Then I will retire to the other room; I cannot, I will not see her." And Sir Francis with his freezing manner of old, walked away just before Emily entered with her child.

"Sidney, come with me," said Ennice, stooping over the boy to hide her agitation; "some one wants to see you."

"Who is it?" asked Emily.

"An old acquaintance; that is, a stranger," hurriedly said Mrs. Wolferstan, so new in the art of stratagem that Emily at once guessed the fact. She trembled violently, and sat down; but when Ennice took Sidney's hand to lead him away, the mother interposed.

"Not so, Ennice; you cannot deceive me," she said firmly. "I see it all; and no one but myself shall take Sidney to his father, and my husband." She lifted the boy in her arms, suffered Ennice to open the door, went in and closed it after her.

For a whole half hour, which seemed a day in length, did Ennice sit without, waiting for the result of that interview on which joy or misery, life or death, seemed to hang. She heard no sound, all was still. She hardly dared to hope; she could not even think, only her affectionate heart lifted up a wordless aspiration, too indistinct to be even a prayer.

At last a child's voice within called loudly and fearfully. "Aunt Ennice—Aunt Ennice—come!" Ennice went trembling. Emily had fainted; but she lay in her husband's arms; her colorless face resting on his shoulder, and heavy tears were falling on that poor pale face from the stern eye of Sir Francis Lester.

They were reconciled! Love had triumphed over pride, wrath, obstinacy; and the husband and wife, were united with an affection passing that even of bridegroom and bride, for it had been tried in the furnace of suffering, and had come out the pure gold of love.

In the home to which Sir Francis once more brought his loving and now worthy beloved wife there was no more cold, no dull, weariness, no estrangement. Perhaps it was a fortunate thing for the married pair that the mother of Sir Francis could no longer disserve; she slept beneath a marble monument, as frigid, and stately, and hollow as she herself in life had been.