HASZARD'S GAZETTE.

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Fern Leaves from Fanny's Portfolio.

EDITH MAY.

A lover's quarrel! A few hasty words, a formal parting between two hearts that neither time nor distance could ever disunite, then a lifetime of misery!

Edith May stood before me in her bridal-dress. The world was to be made to believe she was happy and heart-whole. I knew better. I knew that no woman who had once loved Gilbert Ainslie could ever forget him—least of all, such a heart as Edith's. She was pale as a snow-wreath, and bent her head gracefully as a water-lily in recognition of her numerous friends and admirers.

"What a sacrifice!" the latter murmured, between their set teeth! "What a sacrifice!" my heart echoed back.

Mr. Jefferson Jones was an ossified old bachelor. He had but one idea in his head, and that was to make money. There was only one thing he understood equally well, and that was to keep it. He was angular, prim, cold, and precise; mean grovelling, contemptible, and cunning.

And Edith! our peerless Edith, whose lovers were "legion"—Edith, with her passionate heart, her beauty, grace, taste, and refinement—Edith, to vow "love and honour" to such a soulless block! It made me shudder to think of it! I felt as though his very gaze were profanation.

Well, the wedding was over: and she was duly installed mistress of Jefferson House. She had fine dresses, fine furniture, a fine equipage, and the stupidest possible incumberance in the shape of a husband.

Mr. Jefferson Jones was very proud of his bride; firstly, because she added to his importance; secondly, because he plumed himself not a little in bearing off so dainty a prize. It gave him a malicious pleasure to meet her old admirers, with the graceful Edith upon his arm. Of course she preferred him to them all; else, why did she marry him?

It was a driving storm: Mr. Jones concluded to dine at a restaurant instead of returning home. He had just seated himself, and given his orders to the obsequious waiter, when his attention was attracted by the conversation of two gentlemen near him.

"Have you seen *la belle* Edith since her marriage Harry?"

"No; I feel too much vexed with her. Such a splendid specimen of flesh and blood to marry such an idiot! All for a foolish quarrel with Ainslie! You never saw such a wreck as it has made of him. However she is well punished; for, with all her consummate tact and effort to keep up appearances, it is very plain that she is the most miserable woman in existence; as Mr. Jefferson Jones, whom I have never seen, might perceive, if he wasn't, as all the world says, the very prince of donkeys."

Then how deferential she was in her manner since their marriage; how very polite, and how careful to perform her duty to the letter! Mr. Jones decided, with his usual acumen, that there was no room for a doubt on that point! He noticed, indeed, that her girlish gaiety was gone; but that was a decided improvement, according to his view. She was Mrs. Jones now, and meant to keep all whiskered popinjays at a respectful distance. He liked it!

And so, through those interminable evenings, Edith sat, playing long, stupid games of chess with him, or listening (!) to his gains or losses in the way of trade; or reading political articles, of which the words conveyed no ideas to her absent mind.

She walked through the busy streets, leaning on his arm, with an unseen form ever at her side: and slept—God forgive her!—next his heart, when hers was far away! But when she was alone, no human eye to read her sad secret, her small hands clasped in agony, and her fair head bent to the very dust, was he not avenged?

Jones seized his hat and rushed into the open air, tugging at his neck-tie as if he were choking. Six times he went, like a comet, round the square; then, settling his beaver down over his eyes in a very prophetic manner, he turned his footsteps deliberately homeward. It was but the deceitful calm before the whirlwind!

He found Edith, calm, pale, and self-possessed, as usual, He was quite as much so himself—even went so far as to compliment her on a coquettish little jacket that fitted her round figure very charmingly,

"I'm thinking of taking a short journey, Edith," said he, seating himself by her side, and playing with the silken cord and tassels about her waist. "As it is wholly a business trip, it would hamper me to take you with me; but you'll hear from me. Meanwhile, you know how to amuse yourself, eh, Edith?"

He looked searchingly in her face. There was no conscious blush, no change of expression, no tremor of the frame. He might as well have addressed a marble statue.

Mr. Jefferson Jones was posed! Well, he bade her one of his characteristic *adieux*; and when the door closed, Edith felt as if a mountain weight had been lifted off her heart. There was but one course for her to pursue. She knew it—she had already marked it out. She would deny herself to all visitors——she would not go abroad till her husband's return. She was strong in her purpose. There should be no door left open for busy scandal to enter. Of Ainslie she knew nothing, save that a letter reached her from him after her marriage, which she had returned unopened.

And so she wandered restlessly through those splendid rooms, and tried, by this self-inflicted penance, to atone for the defection of her heart. Did she take her guitar, old songs they had sung together come unbidden to her lips; that book, too they had read. Oh, it was all misery, turn where she would!

Day after day passed by—no letter from Mr. Jones! The time had already passed that was fixed upon for his return; and Edith, nervous from close confinement and the weary inward struggle, started like a frightened bird at every footfall.

It came at last—the letter—sealed with black! "He had been accidently drowned. His hat was found; all search for the body had been unavailing."

Edith was no hypocrite. She could not mourn for him, save in the outward garb of woe; but now that he was dead conscience did its office. She had not, in the eye of the world, been untrue; but there is an Eye that searches deeper—that scans thoughts as well as actions.

Ainslie was just starting for the continent, by order of a physician, when the news reached him. A brief time he gave to decorum, and then they met. It is needless to say what that meeting was. Days and months of wretchedness were forgotten, like some dreadful dream. She was again his own Edith, sorrowing, repentant, and happy.

They were sitting together one evening. Edith's head was upon his shoulder, and her face radient as a seraph's. They were speaking of their future home.

"Any spot on the wide earth but this, dear Ainslie. Take me away from these painful associations."

"Say you so, pretty Edith?" said a well-known voice. "I but tried that faithful heart of yours, to prove it! Pity to turn such a pretty comedy into a tragedy; but I happen to be manager here, young man!" said Mr. Jones, turning fiercely toward the horror-struck Ainslie.

The revulsion was too dreadful. Edith survived but a week. Ainslie became hopelessly insane.

MABEL'S SOLILOQUY.

"This is a heartless life to lead," said Mabel Gray, as she unbanded her long hair, and laid aside her rich robe. "It is a life one might lead were there no life beyond. When I left the heated ball-room to-night, the holy stars, keeping their tireless watch, sent a thrill through me; and the little prayer I used to say at my dead mother's knee came unbidden to my lip. There's Letty, now; she's happier than her mistress. Come here, child; unbraid my hair, and sing me that little Methodist hymn of yours, 'Jesus, I my cross have taken.'

"That will do—thank you, child; now you may go. What a sweet voice she has! Either that or my tears have eased my heart. I'm too restless to sleep. How softly the moonlight falls to-night—and years hence, when these myriad sleepers shall have sunk to their dreamless rest, earth will still be as fair, the silver moon will ride on as triumphantly! How many sad hearts she looks down upon to-night; and never a thanksgiving has gone up from my lips for countless blessings! Soft sleep with balmy touch has closed these thankless eyes; the warm, fresh blood of youth and health has flowed on, unchecked by disease. I have sat at the table of Dives, while Lazarus has starved at the gate. The gold and purple robe of sunset has been woven for me; the blue vault of heaven arched over my head; the ever-changing, fleecy cloud has gone drifting by; the warm sunlight has kissed open the flowers I love; the green moss has spread a carpet for my careless foot; and I have revelled in all this beauty and luxury—God forgive me!—unmindful of the Giver!"

Dear reader, shall it be only at "Bethesda's pool" that you seek your Benefactor? While your life cup overflows with blessings, when the warm blood courses swiftly, shall there come no generons response to that still, small voice, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by?"

HOW HUSBANDS MAY RULE.

"Dear Mary," said Harry———to his little wife, "I have a favour to ask of you. You have a friend whom I dislike very much, and who, I am quite sure, will make trouble between us. Will you give up Mrs. May for my sake, Mary!"

A slight shade of vexation crossed Mary's pretty face, as she said, "You are unreasonable, Harry. She is ladylike, refined, intellectual, and fascinating; is she not!"

"Yes, all of that; and, for that very reason, her influence over one so yielding and impulsive as yourself is more to be dreaded, if unfavourable. I'm quite in earnest, Mary. I could wish never to see you together again."

"Pshaw! dear Harry, that's going too far. Don't be disagreeable; let us talk of something else. As old Uncle Jeff says, 'How's trade?'" and she looked archly in his face.

Harry didn't smile.

"Well," said the little wife, turning away, and patting her foot nervously, "I don't see how I can break with her, Harry, for a whim of yours; besides, I've promised to go there this very evening."

Harry made no reply, and in a few moments was on his way to his office.

Mary stood behind the curtain, and looked after him as he went down the street. There was an uncomfortable, stifling sensation in her throat, and something very like a tear glittering in her eye. Harry was vexed—she was sure of that. He had gone off, for the first time since their marriage, without the affectionate good-bye that was usual with him, even when they parted but for an hour or two. And so she wandered, restless and unhappy, into her little sleeping-room.

It was quite a little gem. There were statuettes, and pictures, and vases, all gifts from him either before or since their marriage; each one had a history of its own—some tender association connected with Henry. There was a bouquet, still fresh and fragrant, that he had purchased on his way home the day before, to gratify her passion for flowers. There was a choice edition of poems they were reading together the night before, with Mary's name written on the leaf, in Harry's bold, handsome hand. Turn where she would, some proof of his devotion met her eye. But Mrs. May! She was so smart and satirical! She would make so much sport of her, for being "ruled" so by Harry! Hadn't she told him "all the men were tyrants," and this was Harry's first attempt to govern her. No, no, it wouldn't do for her to yield.

So the pretty evening-dress was taken out, the trimmings re-adjusted, and re-modelled, and all the little et-ceteras of her toilette decided. Yes, she would go; she had quite made up her mind to that. Then she opened her jewel-case; a little note fell at her feet. She knew the contents very well. It was from Harry—slipped slily into her hand on her birthday, with that pretty bracelet. It couldn't do any harm to read it again. It was very lover-like for a year-old husband; but she liked it! Dear Harry! and she folded it back, and sat down, more unhappy than ever, with her hands crossed in her lap, and her mind in a most pitiable state of irresolution.

Perhaps, after all, Harry was right about Mrs. May; and, if he wasn't, one hair of his head was worth more to her than all the women in the world. He had never said one unkind word to her—never! He had anticipated every wish. He had been so attentive and solicitous when she was ill. How could she grieve him?

Love conquered! The pretty robe was folded away, the jewels returned to their case, and, with a light heart, Mary sat down to await her husband's return.

The lamps were not lit in the drawing-room when Harry came up the street. She had gone, then after all he had said! He passed slowly through the hall, entered the dark and deserted room, and threw himself on the sofa with a heavy sigh. He was not angry, but he was grieved and disappointed. The first doubt that creeps over the mind of the affection of one we love is so very painful.

"Dear Harry!" said a welcome voice at his side.

"God bless you, Mary!" said the happy husband; "you've saved me from a keen sorrow!"

Dear reader, won't you tell! there are some husbands worth all the sacrifices a loving heart can make!

LITTLE CHARLEY.

It is hard to lie upon a bed of sickness, even though that bed be of down. Nauseous, too, is the healing draught, though sipped from a silver cup, held by a loving hand. Wearisome are the days and nights, even with the speaking eye of love over your pillow. But what if the hand of disease lie heavily on the poor? What if the "barrel of meal and cruse of oil" fail? What if emaciated limbs shiver under a tattered blanket? What if lips parched with fever mutely beg for a permitted but unattainable luxury? What if the tones of the voice be never modulated to the delicately sensitive ear! What if at every inlet of the soul come sights and sounds harsh and dissonant? Ah! who shall measure the sufferings of the sick poor?

Dear little Charley! you were as much out of place in that low, dark, wretched room, as an angel could well be on earth. Meekly, in the footsteps of Him who loveth little children, were those tiny feet treading. Patiently, unmurmuringly, uncomplainingly, were those racking pains endured. A tear, a contraction of the brow, a slight, involuntary clasping of the attenuated fingers, were the only visible signs of agony. What a joy to sit beside him—to take that little feverish hand in mine—to smooth that rumpled pillow—to part the tangled locks on that transparent forehead—to learn of one of whom the Saviour says, "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven!"

But never did I bless God so fully, so gratefully, for the gift of song, as when, with that little sensitive heart held close to mine, I made him forget his pain by some simple strain. I had sung for my own amusement; I had sung when dazzling lights, and fairy forms, and festal hours, were inspiration: but never with such a zest, and with such a thrill of happiness, as when, in that wretched room, I soothed the sufferings of "little Charley." The garland-crowned *prima donna*, with half the world at her feet, might have envied me the tightened clasp of that little hand, the suffused, earnest gaze of that speaking eye, and that half-whispered, plaintive, "One more! Charley is so happy now!"

Ay! Charley is happy now! Music such as only the blessed hear fills his soul with rapture. Never a discordant note comes from the harp swept by that cherub hand, while for ever that majestic anthem rolls on, in which his infant voice is joining, "Worthy the Lamb!"

THE LOST AND THE LIVING.

But a fleeting twelvemonth had passed since the heart that for years had beat against his own was for ever stilled, when Walter Lee brought again a fair young creature to share his widowed home. Nor father nor mother, brother nor sister, claimed any part of the orphan heart that he had coveted and won. No expense or pains had he spared to decorate the mansion for her reception. Old familiar objects, fraught with tenderest associations, had been removed to make way for the upholsterer's choicest fancies. There was no picture left upon the wall, with sweet, sad, mournful eyes, to follow him with silent reproach. Everything was fresh and delightful as the new-born joy that filled his heart.

"My dear Edith," said he, fondly pushing back the hair from her forehead, "there should be no shadow in your path, but I have tried in vain to induce Nelly to give you the welcome you deserve; however, she shall not annoy you. I shall compel her to stay in the nursery till she yields to my wishes."

"Oh, no! don't do that," said the young stepmother anxiously, "I think I understand her. Let me go to her, dear Walter;" and she tripped lightly out of the room.

Walter Lee looked after her retreating figure with a lover-like fondness. The room seemed to him to grow suddenly darker when the door closed after her. Reaching out his hand, he almost unconsciously took up a book that lay near him. A slip of paper fluttered out from between the leaves, like a white-winged messenger. The joyous expression of his face faded into one of deep sorrow as he read it. The handwriting was his child's mother's. It ran thus:—

"Oh, to die and be forgotten! This warm heart cold—these active limbs still—these lips dust! Suns to rise and set, flowers to bloom, the moon to silver leaf and tree around my own dear home—the merry laugh, the pleasant circle, and I not there! The weeds choking the flowers at my head-stone; the severed tress of sunny hair forgotten in its envelope; the sun of happiness so soon absorbing the dewdrop of sorrow! The cypress changed for the orange-wreath! Oh, no, no; don't quite forget! Close your eyes sometimes, and bring before you the face that once made sunshine in your home! feel again the twining clasp of loving arms—the lips that told you, not in words, how dear you were. Oh, Walter, don't quite forget! From Nelly's clear eyes let her mother's soul still speak to you. Mary Lee."

Warm tears fell upon the paper as Walter Lee folded it back. He gave himself time to rally, and then glided gently up to the nursery door. It was partially open. A little fairy creature of some five summers stood in the middle of the floor. Her tiny face was half hidden in sunny curls. Her little pinafore was full of toys, which she grasped tightly in either hand.

"No, you are not my mamma," said the child. "I want my own, dead mamma; and I'm sorry papa brought you here."

"Oh, don't say that!" said the young stepmother; "don't call me 'mamma,' if it gives you pain, dear. I am quite willing you should love your own mamma best."

Nelly looked up with a pleased surprise.

"I had a dear mamma and papa once," she continued; "and brothers and sisters so many, and so merry; but they are all dead, and sometimes my heart is very sad. I have no one now to love me, but your papa and you."

Nelly's eyes began to moisten; and, taking out one after another of the little souvenirs and toys from her pinafore, she said, "And you won't take away this, and this, and this, that my dead mamma gave me?"

"No, indeed, dear Nelly!"

"And you will let me climb in my papa's lap as I used; and put my cheek to his, and kiss him! and love him as much as ever I can, won't you?"

"Yes, yes, my darling."

Walter Lee could hear no more—his heart was full.

What! Mary's child pleading with a stranger for room in a father's heart! In the sudden gush of this new fount of tenderness had he forgotten or overlooked the claims of that helpless little one? God forbid! "From Nelly's clear eyes let her mother's soul still speak to you." Ay, it did!

When next Walter Lee met his young bride, it was with a chastened tenderness. Nelly's loving little heart was pressed closely against his own. He was again "her papa!" No, he did not "quite forget!"

ON A LITTLE CHILD,

WHO HAD CREPT BEFORE A LOOKING-GLASS THAT WAS LEFT UPON THE SIDEWALK.

What do you see, pretty one? Large, wondering blue eyes; a tangled mass of sunny curls; small, pearly teeth; plump, white shoulders, that the ragged dress has failed to hide! Saw you never that little face before? A smile of innocent pleasure curls your lip—ah! you have found out, that little face is fair! Poor and beautiful—holy angels shield you, little one! I look at you with a tear and a smile. Shall sin cast its dark shadow over those clear, pure eyes? Shall the hollow-hearted sensualist find you out? Shall you turn from homely, but honest toil, to honeyed words and liveried shame? Shall you curse the day you first crept to that mirror, and saw your sunny face?

Oh, heard you never of Him who biddeth "little children come?" In your dark and noisome home, heard you never the name of "Jesus," save from blasphemous lips? Closed those blue eyes never with a murmured "Our Father?" Have the rough grasp and brutal blow descended on that fair young head? Has daily bread come sparingly to those cherry lips? Crept you out into the warm sunlight, under the bright blue sky, with a bird's longing to soar?

Soar you may, pretty one. There's a "song," and a "harp," and a "white robe" for you! Just such as you were "blessed" with holy hands; sacred lips have said, "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven." God keep you undefiled, little earth pilgrim!

KITTY'S RESOLVE.

It would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to tell why Kitty Grey looks so serious as she sits by her latticed window this bright summer morning. Is she not the undisputed belle of———? adored by the young men, envied by the girls, who try in vain to find out the spell by which she monopolises all hearts. Has she, at last, found one insensible mortal, cold-hearted enough to resist all love's artillery? That would be a novelty for Kitty! Has she detected a grey hair stealing in among her tresses, or an incipient crow's-foot at the corner of her eye? Banish the thought, at sweet eighteen!

Mirror never reflected back lovelier tresses, brighter eyes, a fairer brow, or more symmetrical form. The hand her cheek rests on is faultless, and her foot is as perfect as a model. Ah, Miss Kitty, you were cut out for a coquette, but spoilt in the making. Nature gave you a heart. You are neither making a female Alexander of yourself by sighing for fresh hearts to conquer, nor considering profoundly the fashion of your next ball-dress. You have lived eighteen years in this blessed world, and your life has been all sunshine. Why not?

Beauty and wealth have made you omnipotent; but you are weary of your crown. My little queen has on her "thinking cap," and it becomes that sweet brow passing well. She wonders "Is this all of life?" Has a pretty woman nothing to do but smile and look captivating, and admire herself? She might as well be the marble Venus in her dressing-room! And then she casts her mental eye over the circle of her acquaintance. For aught she sees, they are quite satisfied with the same butterfly existence. Woman frivolus; men or the coxcomb order—all but Harvey Fay. He is talented; owns a soul; is not dependent on a moustache or French boots for happiness; is refined in all his tastes, and a gentleman in the highest sense of the word; can sing the soul out of you, and make time fly faster than any man you ever saw. Alas that there must be a "but!" Harvey, the peerless Harvey Fay, had one sad foible, and it was that which had clouded Kitty's brow and heart. True, it had not as yet become a fixed habit, but where was the security for the future?

And so Kitty sat leaning her cheek upon her hand, and wondering if a woman's power, if her nice tact and delicacy, were not bestowed upon her for something better than to further her own selfish purposes? Harvey was sensitive proud and high-spirited—it must be a very gentle hand that would turn him back from that dizzy precipice. Could she not save him? She resolved to try; she would exert her power—for once—for some noble purpose.

It was a gay scene—that ball-room! The fairy forms that floated down the dance, with flowing tresses, and sparkling eyes, and snowy necks, might have bewildered the sober head of age. Soft, entrancing music, brilliant lights, and the overpowering perfume of myriad sweet flowers, all lent their aid to complete the spell. Kitty shone, as usual, the brightest star of the evening. One cannot gaze long at a "star" without being dazzled; so how can I describe it? I can only say Kitty was irresistible. One minute you'd think it was her eyes; then the little dimpled hand that rested on your arm; then her golden ringlets, or the tiny feet that supported that swaying, graceful figure. As to her eyes, whether black, or blue, or hazel, you could not tell. You only knew it was very dangerous looking at them long at a time, unless you had made up your mind to surrender.

Well, Kitty had received her usual share of homage, with her usual sweet nonchalance, and now accepted the arm of a gentleman to the supper-table, where wit flew like champagne-corks, and hearts were lost and won with a celerity worthy this progressive age. Harvey was as handsome as he well could be, and be mortal; in high good-humour, and felicitous as only he knew how to be, in saying a thousand brilliant nothings.

Kitty followed him with her eyes, and saw him, ere long, retire to a side-table, and, turning out a glass of wine, hold it to his lips. In an instant she was by his side.

"It is mine!" said she playfully, extending her little hand to grasp it; but there was a deep glow upon her cheek, and an earnest, imploring look in her eye, that said more than her words, and deepened the flush on Harvey's temples.

"As you will, fair lady," said he, with a slight shade of embarrassment; "but wherefore?"

"Oh, only a woman's whim!" said Kitty. "You are no true knight, if you cannot serve a lady without a reason."

"I'd serve you for ever!" said Harvey, as he looked admiringly upon her changing countenance.

"Then drink no wine to-night, unless I fill the glass for you," said she, smiling, as she joined the dancers.

"Only a womans's whim!" Harvey didn't believe it. "How very lovely she looked! What could she mean? Could it be she thought him in danger? Had he gone so far, almost imperceptibly to himself? Could Kitty think that of him? Pshaw! it couldn't be;" and he drew himself proudly up. It must be some girlish nonsense—a wager, or a bet of some kind. But that imploring, timid look! Oh, there was something in it, after all! He wouldn't be so tortured; he would know before he slept that night.

There's an end to all things, and balls are no exception Happy cavaliers were performing the agreeable duty of settling refractory shawls upon round, white shoulders. "Rigolettes" were to be tied under pretty chins, and lace kerchiefs around swan-like throats.

These interminable matters being concluded, Kitty accepted Harvey as her escort home. They talked about a thousand little nothings, about which neither cared, when Harry cut it all short very suddenly with—

"Miss Gray, will you tell me frankly why you 'tabooed' that glass of wine?"

All Kitty's practised self-possession forsook her. She hesitated a moment—she feared to wound his feelings. No, she would not falter! So she said, in a clear, low voice, while her long lashes swept her cheek. "Because I knew that to you it was a poisoned draught, Mr. Fay; and I were no true friend did I fail to warn you. You will not be vexed with me?" said she, with winning sweetness, as she extended her hand to him.

Harvey's answer is not recorded; but it is sufficient to say that the secret of his high legal eminence is known only to the belle of———.

Alas that woman, gifted with an angel's powers, sent on an angel's mission, should so often be content with the butterfly life of a pleasure-seeking fashionist!

One day, as Judge Parsons was jogging along on horseback, over a desolate road, he came to a log house, dirty smoky and miserable. He stopped to contemplate the too evident poverty of the scene. A poor, half-starved fellow, with uncombed hair and unshaved beard, thrust his head through a square, which served for a window, with—"I say, Judge, I aint as poor as you take me to be; for I don't own this 'ere land!"