DAILY CRESCENT.

MONDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 25

Double Sheet.....Second Page.

A Pretty Story.

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread—
Stitch! stitch! stitch!
In poverty, hunger and dirt,
And still, with a voice of doleful pitch
She sang the "Song of the Shirt!" [Hood.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

STITCH! STITCH! STITCH!

Who has not wept over the "Song of the Shirt?" Who has not sympathized with the tenants of the garret—

"In poverty, hunger and dirt,
Sewing at once, with a double thread,
A shroud as well as a shirt!"—

until the very names, "needle-work" and "needle-woman," became associated with poor, half-starved creatures, doomed by their employers to sit in foul atmosphere, chained to their seam by the constantly-plied needle and thread, like galley-slaves to the oar? And yet this continual ringing the changes on

"Seam, and gusset, and band,
Band, and gusset, and seam,"

is not such a scarecrow to all; is not always so fatal in its consequences; and, though it may be the exception which proves the rule, in an instance we are about to mention, this stitch! stitch! stitch! was preferred, nay, as enthusiastically followed as any branch of high art; as absorbingly as a passion for music, or a love for painting.

Annie Linton was the best sewer in Mrs. Roy's school; and the mistress declared, on inspecting the first shirt she had made for her father, "that the Duke of Buccleugh himself might wear it!" This was high praise for little Annie, who was only eleven years of age, and she never forgot it. Her work was the neatest and the cleanest ever seen. Then she did it so quickly her mother could not keep pace with her daily demand for "something to sew."

"I wish Annie would take to her book," said Mrs. Linton to her husband.

But it was quite clear that Annie never would take to her book; she had little reading and less spelling; and yet she could "mark" (with cotton) all the letters of the alphabet, as if she was a very miracle of learning.

"Something to sew!" eagerly demanded Annie.

"Will any mowing come of this sewing?" asked her father, with a very natural attempt at a pun.

"Those who do not sew shall not reap," said little Annie, cleverly taking up her father's meaning and her work-bag at the same time, as she whisked past him in fear of being too late for school.

Three weeks after—

"Annie's learning to be a scholar," said Mrs. Linton, "no more demands for sewing."

That afternoon Annie came bounding into the house from school, sat upon her father's knee, opened her work-bag, which hung over her arm, and putting a screwed up paper into his hand, said: "There's the mowing."

Her father undid the paper, and found four half-crowns. "Annie," questioned her father, "where did this come from?"

"From the sewing," answered Annie, laughing delightedly at his surprise, as she escaped from his knee, and ran out of the room, but to delay a little longer the solution of the riddle.

"Wife," said John Linton, "it is impossible that Annie could earn all this by the sort of child's play girls call 'work;' and whom did she earn it from? I'm afraid there's something wrong."

And, to tell the truth, Annie Linton was practicing a little disguise; nor had she given her father all the money she had earned. The sum originally was twelve shillings. This was all designed for her father alone; but a prior claim had come in the way. It was cold winter weather, and the children of the school brought the forms, in a sort of square, round Mrs. Roy's fire. Annie, who was a favorite of the mistress, always accepted a warm corner close to her own big chair. On the day in question, Mrs. Roy happened to be out of the room.

"I'll change seats with you, Jessie Wilson, if you're cold," said Annie, addressing a little girl; a very book-worm, who, clad in a threadbare, printed cotton gown, sat shivering over her lesson.

Jessie, thus invited, came a little nearer.

"You should put on a woolen frock like mine, and warm yourself well at your mother's fire before you come to school these winter days," said Annie, scrutinizing the poverty-struck appearance of the girl.

"Mother says," replied Jessie, "that she'd rathr do without a fire than my schooling, and she can't pay for both."

"Has your mother no fire at home this cold weather?" asked Annie, in amazement.

"No," said Jessie; "I wish I dared bring her with me here; it's warmer than at home. And I know mother is ill, though she won't tell me."

"Sit there," said Annie, placing Jessie in her warm corner, "and don't go out of school without me."

That afternoon the two girls went hand in hand to Jessie's door.

"Have you plenty to eat, if you're no fire?" asked Annie.

"This is the first day that mother was forced to send me to school without any breakfast," said Jessie, hanging down her head as if ashamed of the confession.

"Here," said Annie, after a slight pause, untwisting the paper in which were deposited her first earnings; "I won't go in with you, for your mother might not like to take it from a little girl like me; but (and she put two shillings into Jessie's hand) that is to buy you some thing to eat, and a fire; and if your mother can sew as well as I can," said Annie, with pardonable vanity, "I can tell her how to get plenty of money to pay for both."

No wonder Annie's riches increased; the first investment was a good one. Nevertheless, the concealing it from her parents she knew to be wrong; she feared they would disapprove; and she added to her little prayer at night, after the usual ending of "God bless father and mother, *and forgive me for keeping secret* that I helped Jessie Wilson."

Could the Recording Angel carry up a purer prayer to Heaven?

Of course, Mr. and Mrs. Linton very soon discovered that Mr. Seamwell, of the "Ready-Made Linen Warehouse," was the grand source of Annie's wealth. He said there was no one who could work like her, and that he would give her eighteen pence each for the finest discription of shirt-making. This was no great payment for Annie's exquisite stitching, and, thirty years ago, it would have brought her three-and-sixpence a shirt. But Annie is of the present, not of the past; and as she could complete a shirt a day, her fingers flying swifter than a weaver's shuttle, she earned nine shillings a week.

"Good wife," said Mr. Linton, "we are not so poor but that we can maintain our daughter till she's twenty, and by that time, at the present rate of her earnings, she will have a little fortune in the bank."

But this little fortune amassed but slowly, for Annie seldom had nine shillings to put by at the end of the week—there were other "Jessie Wilsons" who required food and fire.

Had Annie been a poet, she would assuredly have written, not *the* song, but a song of a shirt; for once when she was questioned as to the dull monotony of her work: "Dull? Delightful!" said Annie, in advocacy of her calling. "Why, with this rare linen and fine thread, my stitches seem like stringing little pearls along the wristbands and collar!"

What an anti-song of the shirt might not Annie have written!

Annie's eighteenth birthday was celebrated by a tea-party to all the seamstresses of Mr. Seamwell's establishment, where she was the forewoman; besides being a cheerful, kind-hearted little creature, beloved by every body; it was a compliment, Mr. Seamwell said, she well deserved—her admirable superintendence of the department allotted her having increased his business tenfold.

Some time after, there was a greater day of rejoicing in the firm of Seamwell & Co. The father had taken his son as a partner, and the son took a partner for life—the indefatigable little seamstress, Annie Linton. There never was a blither bridal. Annie—herself having risen from the ranks—had a present for every workwoman. Indeed, it was a day of presents; for, on that very morning, and in time to be worn at the wedding, a shawl arrived for Annie all the way from India—an Indian shawl that a duchess would have envied! Upon it was pinned a paper, on which was written:

Wear this for the sake of one who is now rich and happy; but who can never forget the service you rendered to the poor school-girl— JESSIE WILSON.

"Annie," said young Seamwell, after the marriage, "I fell in love with you when you were a child, and came to our shop for your first sewing. I also happened to be passing when you gave part of your first earnings to Jessie Wilson. I was a boy then; but I said to myself: 'If I were a man, I'd marry Annie Linton; not because she's so pretty'"—here Annie blushed most becomingly—"'not because she's so industrious; but because she's so kind-hearted,'"

The Quaker's Wife.

In 1776, the Society of Friends comparatively was a new one, and the strictures of its members in regard to dress and manners was quite unmodified, and remarkable even in that period of formality and decorous observances. Many, very many, good and noble hearts have lain hidden beneath the uncreased broadcloth and dove colored silk of Friends, and many singular things have come to my knowledge. What I am now going to tell, though it must be regarded as a deviation from the ordinary state of things in Quaker families, will, I trust be regarded in this light—that there is no rule or set state of things, but there is an exception. My exception to the usual frigidity and formality of young female Friend, was a young girl of that sect whom I came to know, named Martha Clifton. How I came into possession of some strange passages in her life it is not essential to tell, nor for my readers to know—suffice it that what I relate are facts, and having outlived the dear sweet lady who is the subject of my story, as I think it interesting, I mean to relate it. Among the many beautiful girls I have seen in my time, I never saw any one who surpassed Martha Clifton. Somehow the rigid Quaker dress only lent added charms to her noble simplicity of beauty. You might as soon have thought of decking out one of those young Roman women (whom "Little Mary" reads about sometimes in her history books,) in furbelows and ribbons, as to wish Martha's dress any thing but just what it was. Sooth to say, our young friend knew well enough how to attire herself, and to contrive that the tasteless form of her dress should be so disposed as to enhance her exquisite face and figure. Her parents occupied a large and sad-looking mansion opposite our house, so that I had frequent opportunities of studying the "Quaker Beauty," as our pert needlewoman would call her, and I observed that her thick silks and satins, nay, even sober camlets, were always of the most becoming colors—dove, silver gray, rich brown, or, on festive occasions, spotless maiden white. She was but eighteen when I first began to observe her, though she looked grave and sedate enough for forty—but the snows of Etna covered fire. Inclined by her natural taste to love intensely the ideal and beautiful, she was restrained from such indulgencies by the cold and frigid habits of her society; still her imagination was sometimes gratified by the composition of poems, which were of no mean order.

Such a mind, you may be sure, stagnated amid the formal and joyless life of Quakerism. She knew herself to be fair; she could scarcely help it when every passer-by confirmed the knowledge with his admiration, and even the cool and sober "Friends" vied with each other in the endeavor to gain her love; but Martha Clifton was hard to please where love was concerned, and believed her heart to be insensible to the passion; yet the fire was but smouldering, to burst forth with increased intensity when fairly kindled. She believed it could not be possible for her to love one of her own sect. Quakers, she used to remark, were so fond of personal comfort, that she feared their selfishness was too great ever to allow them to love any but themselves. She was mistaken, though, as many of us are when we attempt to decide on our future course. Scarcely had she known Everard Wilson one week, when she knew that her destiny had arrived. He was a young and very handsome Quaker, who had gone in his boyhood to Philadelphia, from whence he had not long returned. Like Martha, his eager and intelligent mind soared far beyond the narrow limits of the society, but he dared to go further than the rule "Friend," and had read worldly books extensively. It was only necessary for Martha and himself to have an opportunity of conversing, unheard by their elders, to discover that they were indeed kindred souls. That discovery soon led to another, namely, that their hearts also were indissolubly united; and the course of their love, the depth of which was known truly but to themselves, ran smooth enough.

Martha was the only child of a very wealthy house; Everard of a family high in the commercial world. When they were united, nothing that luxury, though clothed in the forms of the severest simplicity, could give, was wanting, and Martha was radiant with happiness; and in her plain garb of pure white silk, with no trimming or ornament, which she wore on her wedding day, I think a lovelier creature could not have been found in Queen Charlotte's own court.

Yes! the fair Quakeress married, went to her new home, and for a long time I neither saw nor heard any thing of her, save such old scraps as Christian Marcourt gleaned now and then from Ruth Clifton, Martha's grave and quiet mother, (my forewoman went there now and then with some of the Brussels net, which the female Friends of the wealthier classes used as kerchiefs and aprons,) and that were little enough. Whenever I thought of my former beautiful neighbor, it was to imagine her in the enjoyment of cloudless happiness—but I reckoned too fast. Five months after Martha's wedding-day, as I sat at the window one day at work, a plain coach drew up to Friend Clifton's door, and from it, received by her mother, came forth Mrs. Martha Wilson, oh, so changed, so wan—thin even to meagerness, so it was with difficulty I satisfied myself that this was the beautiful girl whom I had seen go from her father's house, even as a bride. Still her altered appearance and her quantity of luggage convinced me that there was something wrong in that Quaker *menage*; for allowing Martha a plentitude of filial affection, still, from all I heard, I knew the formality and want of genial feeling in her paternal home to be ill-suited to her taste.

It was a long time after that I found out the truth of my surmises, and the events which, having, after a few months of married life, caused a separation and return of the young wife to her parent's roof, made some commotion among the Friends, connections of both parties. Martha Wilson had scarcely been settled in her own handsome and comfortable residence than she discovered that her husband was absent many hours from his home, when business she well knew had no claims on his time. Great absence of manner, too, marked his conduct—still Martha was long ere she suspected that her husband's affections were no longer hers. There was not on his part less kindness, when present; but this grew a thing of such rare occurrence, that not merely her days but her evenings were solitary. Still her mind was unawakened to jealousy, till an anonymous letter—one of those deadly firebrands in domestic estrangements—arrived one day, and informed Martha that her husband was daily in the habit of visiting a young female in an obscure street; that he was even in the habit of accompanying this woman to places of public entertainment, and more especially the Opera House, where he might be seen in a certain box, dressed in the garb of the world, and listening to the divine strains of Bellereni and Staffenini.

It was Martha's misfortune that instead of taking this precious epistle to her husband, she chose rather to muse and brood over the information it contained, till her brain became fermented and her reason warped. She unhesitatingly believed the calumny. This belief was confirmed by finding in her husband's linen-drawer a pair of soiled white gloves—things certainly not worn by any of the Society of Friends. To her jaundiced eye this was sufficient proof. The young wife assumed a coldness equal to what she felt to be her injuries. A wild thought took possession of her brain; she pondered on it; it became more and more tangible; what was it? Why, that she, too, would don gay clothes, visit the house of sin, and with her own eyes behold if the husband of her choice was there partaking with her favored rival these worldly snares and vanities. And Martha truly thought them thus, for though latitudinarian as a Quaker, still she went not to the extreme of longing after stage plays, and such like vanities and temptations. Her inner life was still pure and intellectual. If this presumed slander proved to be a truth, her fate was decided. This resolution formed, she felt impatient till it was acted on. As her maid Rachel could by no means be trusted, Martha had to undertake the difficult arrangements of this matter herself. She availed herself of the excuse that she required choice nets, to visit the house of a fashionable *modiste*, and, requesting to speak with the principal, she ordered, (not without much confusion, as she marked the smile of the dressmaker, a French woman,) a suit of clothes proper to appear in at the scene of gayety which she was now quite determined to invade. She requested that the dress and a large gray mantle, with which she meant to hide it from the eyes of her staid household, should be sent by a messenger to her house. She took good care to be in the way when it arrived, and conveyed the strange habiliments to her own apartment.

That very evening she had ascertained there was to be an opera, at which their majesties were to be present, and she had, through the means of the foreign woman, the dressmaker, obtained a ticket, which was enclosed with the dress. She had, in her own phraseology, "determined to go forth to the house of Belial" that very night. Now, in a Quaker household, such a resolution was not easy of accomplishment; but Martha had seriously resolved, and she determined to brave all. After the three o'clock dinner, which, as usual now, passed in silence, Edward Wilson retired to his room, and soon after went out; stung to the quick, she also went to her own apartment, locked the door, lit the candles herself, and unfolding her finery, surveyed it with any feelings but pleasurable ones. In another hour's time she looked at the time-piece, and perceived it was six o'clock. The opera began, she was told, at eight. She reluctantly proceeded to clothe herself in the costly garments, in which for the first time, the only time, she would enter the world of fashion. The pale blue satin sacque, over a petticoat of the color of a "maiden's blush," the costly Mechlin lace which adorned the robe, the gipsy-looking cloak and hood of Murrey velvet, which served to adorn, not conceal, this exquisite toilet, enhanced Martha's perfect beauty so greatly, that for a moment she forgot the cause of this strange metamorphosis, and gazed, enchanted. The gray Cashmere went over all, and a black silk whalebone hood, and then she rang the bell, and desired her maid to bid them call a hired chair. Rachel obeyed, not without a look of surprise.

Telling her woman that she should be late home, she stepped into the sedan, and the Irish chairmen bore her away. The adventure was fairly commenced, it must be finished, and in a short time she would enter the temple of Apollo alone. Yes, alone; she had forgotten till now that even the daughters of the world usually went into public with a cavalier to attend them; she felt the color rush into her face, as she was ushered to a seat in the pit, which then, as now, was the resort of the Macaroni, and such of the citizens' wives as affected, in spite of not comprehending Italian music, a taste for this fashionable amusement. Martha could not fail, in spite of her extreme perturbation, to perceive that she was an object of the general gaze, and murmurs reached her which made her sink into the nearest seat she could find. Not daring to look up, she bent her eyes on her fan, wishing devoutly for the Cashmere cloak which she had left behind in the sedan chair. Her great beauty and unprotected appearance led the gentlemen around to regard her with an impertinent curiosity, and the ladies with an affected shrinking—the universal opinion being, I am sorry to say, in spite of her modesty, youth, and timidity, that she was any thing but a woman of reputation. Such was the predicament into which the pure, retired young Quakeress had involved herself. The opera had commenced, but she attended to nothing on the stage. Her eyes, when, indeed, she mustered sufficient courage to raise them, were busily employed in making a survey of that brilliant assemblage. Suddenly her eyes dwelt on a box on the second tier, in which a young girl of exquisite beauty sat prominently forward. Further back, dressed *a-la-mode*, sat Martha's husband. "Yes, it was truth, then; she was glad she was there to confront him; glad that she sat there a living witness of his shame." She gazed forsome minutes on the pair. The young girl cast her brilliant eyes about the house—she seemed as if seeking some one amidst the splendid throng.

Everard, on his part, appeared to be absorbed in constantly watching her, though apparently he seldom spoke. At length, Martha, who had gazed at this sight till, her woman's heart burning with excitement, she could bear it no longer, rose up, and abrubtly quitted her seat. Some of the beaux who were lounging about rose up also, and, to her extreme vexation, she was surrounded by offers of assistance; she hardly knew what impulse caused her to take the arm of the least obtrusive, but she did so, saying in her formal phraseology (to which being accustomed, she could not, under excitement and irritation, alter to more conventional forms),

"Friend, I except thy proffered assistance; be respectful, I entreat thee, and convey me to yonder small compartment—that one hung with scarlet, wherein thou seest that fair but shameless woman."

You may guess the amazement of the votaries of Fop's Alley at hearing the Quaker language; but though conceited and a fashionable lounger, the young man addressed had still the feelings of a gentleman; so quietly clearing the way from his contemptuously smiling companions, he said, with some respect,

"Depend on me, madam; you honor me by trusting me," and in a very short time they arrived at the box-door.

Calling the box-keeper, the young nobleman, for such he was, signed to him to open the door; he was obeyed, and on Martha thanking him he bowed and rejoined his friends below, who were engaged in an animated discussion as to the pretty Quakeress in disguise.

As the box-door opened, Everard Wilson turned, and I will not attempt to depict the expression on his face as he, with some difficulty, recognized his wife.

"Thou!" said he, knitting his brows; then taking her by the wrist, he led her toward the door. "Martha!" he exclaimed, "dost thou understand thine actions? Art thou departed from reason? This dress! Oh, shame! that thy husband should blush for thee."

"Shame on thyself," said the exasperated wife. "Darest thou to confront me, thou and thy shameless paramour?"

The young female, who had hastily drawn the curtains, and had sat apparently much amazed at this scene, and who, with her eye-glass directed toward the excited Martha, seemed likewise considerably amused, burst at this crisis into a loud laugh. She was about to address Martha, when Everard laid his hand on her arm.

"Silence," said he, "I will not have her addressed by thee; dost thou understand? Not one sentence." Then, turning to the disgusted and alienated wife, "Woman," said he, "I am thy husband; on thy duty I command thee to depart home. This is no time or place to explain, even if I chose to do so; but I do not. Come, I will assist thee to thy conveyance. Edith," to the strange female, "do thou remain here—alone—mark me. I trust thee for a few short moments; let me not on my return find myself deceived;" so saying, he took his wife's hand, led her out, resistless, powerless, stupefied with combined anger, terror and apprehension. As one in a dream, she suffered him to lead her; then as Everard dispatched a messenger for a chair, she demanded if he meant to leave the "woman of Belial," and depart with her.

"I do not," said Everard; "my duty leads me to remain here: ask no questions, for I shall answer none. Thou hast much transgressed this night, and it will need all my love to accord thee pardon."

"Thou," said Martha, "pardon me! I thank thee; thou hast said well; henceforth join with whom thou wilt. —— street," said she to the chairmen, as, repulsing Everard's assistance, she entered the sedan; the bearers went on, and Martha, in the midst of her indignation, was reminded by her chillness that she had lost the wrapping in which she came, so that she would have to enter her own house in her assumed dress was very evident. When the chair stopped at her own home, she gave orders to the men that her women should bring a cloak, and her order being obeyed, she enveloped her person in it before she quitted the sedan. But truth to say, the quiet Quaker household were sufficiently scandalized at their mistress's proceedings without beholding with their own eyes her strange and unseemly transformation. Martha's first step, after destroying her opera costume, and securely hiding the remains from the prying eyes of Rachel, was to abandon her own apartment, and lodge herself in a remoter one; she had succeeded in discovering the source of her unhappiness; she felt degraded in her own estimation; her husband had all but avowed that she had forfeited his, and a more thoroughly miserable woman perhaps did not at that moment exist.

The next morning, having spent the night in tears and lamentations, she dispatched a letter to Everard, requesting that if he could not satisfactorily account for his conduct, he would prepare measures for an immediate separation. Everard turned pale when he read this letter, so haughty and uncompromising in its tone—as he thought, so unwifelike. He had been all that night preparing for a humiliating confession, but one which would have restored him Martha's unbounded love and confidence. Now, the demon pride stepped in and whispered: "To act thus, I will not wound my own feelings to save hers." He, therefore, returned an answer, avowing it impossible to explain at present, the matter involving another person's honor. He also requested his wife to summon her parents and provide her own man of business. Martha, heart-stricken, and firmly convinced of his guilt, did as he desired, and the result of these proceedings was, that she returned to her own family in a state of health which afforded the most serious grounds for apprehensions of the worst kind.

Thus did twelve months pass away, mournfully enough to Martha. Her appearance was so altered that, save for elegance of demeanor, few would have recognized the beautiful Quakeress. Her own fortune had been returned, and all allowance for Everard declined.

She never heard of him, for all communication between the families was interdicted. Quakers are silently vindictive, and Friend Clifton, loving their daughter fondly, resented strongly her wrongs. One day she received a note written in a small female hand requesting Mrs. Wilson to visit a house in a street named in the neighborhood of Bloomsbury, where there was a dying woman who had injured her. Such an invitation Martha would scarcely have refused at any time, but perhaps a foreboding of who this enemy might be induced her still more urgently on this occasion to go. She desired Christiana Marcourt to attend her thither, and Christiana, who possessed her confidence and was respected by her, consenting, they departed together to the locality indicated in the note, and arrived at the door of a mean looking house. A woman servant ushered them to a room on the first floor; there, stretched on a couch, arranged as a bed, lay a girl evidently in the last stage of rapid decline. The invalid beckoned her visitors to take chairs close to the couch, for a cough distressing even to hear, interrupted the poor girl every minute. Martha, who had recognized her open rival, turned pale, and the tears came into her fine dark eyes; she evidently anticipated a heartrending confession of wrongs and injuries done to herself. Judge then, how great was her surprise, when, after a paroxysm of coughing was over, and the sick girl able to speak, she addressed Mistress Wilson, by saying, "I sent to tell you—for I could not die till I had done so—that your husband is innocent of all guilt as regards myself, for I am—his sister."

An exclamation burst from the lips of Martha. She continued: "Hear what I have to say while breath is yet given me. It was shame first sealed Everard's lips, and pride seals them now, and the fear that false shame and wounded pride together will seal them when I am gone, has induced me to send for you to-day." A pause ensued; the unhappy young creature was breathless and nearly fainting; when a little recovered, she related such circumstances as I shall narrate precisely as heard them.

At sixteen years of age Edith Wilson, notwithstanding the strictness of her education and the sobriety of her fathers household, possessed an incorrigible levity of heart and mind. Gifted with great beauty, her gayety was not the pardonable effervescence of youth, but the frivolity and natural vicious tendency of an idle disposition joined to strong passions. She formed, secretly, acquaintances out of the society; and many a night when her parents deemed her retired to rest, had she quitted her paternal roof, and been a partaker of all the secret, and not over reputable diversions which, even in the strict and Puritanical city of Philadelphia, found votaries among the young and viciously-inclined. Some natures are so warped, so gnarled and knotted by secret vice, that not all the pious training in the world could bend them straight.

One bad female acquaintance, many vile books, had so perverted Edith Wilson, that at sixteen she secretly laughed at all moral or religious notions. I do not wish, however, to dilate on the errors of this guilty young creature; suffice it, that when she was by her parents formally betrothed to a staid and somewhat elderly merchant of the Quaker persuasion, she eloped from her father's house, robbed his bureau of a large sum of money, and sailed from New York undiscovered, though her distracted brother and father lost no time in pursuit. She made her voyage alone and unprotected. On arriving in England, though to continue so formed no part of her plan, gifted with the rarest beauty and immense vivacity, destruction, seeking for him she did, was inevitable. When her brother Everard, (whose chief object in coming to England was to discover and reclaim her if possible,) some short time after his marriage, did recognize her to his unfeigned horror and subsequent torment, she was dressed in splendor, loling in the carriage of a well-known profligate nobleman. Everard, though burning with shame and confusion, stopped the carriage, and addressing his sister by name, insisted on her alighting and entering a private hotel close at hand. The shameless girl defied him, till, he threatening to pursue her for robbery, she found herself obliged to succumb, and dismissing her gaudy equipage, accompanied her brother in silent rage to the house he pointed out.

A long and most unsatisfactory conversation ensued. Edith persisting in her right to pursue any course of life she pleased; her brother, equally determined to force her into decorum and submission, asserted his resolution never to leave her unwatched or unguarded. At first the wretched girl laughed the idea to scorn, but soon found Everard was perfectly in earnest. He dispatched a messenger with a note to an old servant of his, now retired from service, and to whom he resolved to entrust the charge of his sister when he was forced to be absent. When the old man arrived, obedient to his master's summons, he desired him to call a hackney-coach, and to look for lodgings in a certain part of the town he named and leading the indignant Edith to the coach, placed her in it, and drove slowly thither. She had then recourse to tears and entreaties, but they had as little effect as her passion.

"Lost as she was," he told her, "irretrievably for earth, he would try to save her for heaven." She asked with scorn and baffled rage flashing from her beautiful eyes, if he intended to take her to his house. He indignantly asked if she thought such a thing possible. What! pollute his pure and beautiful Martha's eyes with the sight of such a sister!

Thus they reached the apartments which Andrew, who was waiting in a street previously agreed on, had hired; and here, in these plainly furnished rooms, was Edith Wilson told she must consider her home for the present. She raved, stormed, and threatened, but to no purpose. She was never left unguarded by her brother or his servant; and being without money, she had no means to break her chains. This life continued some time, till one day reading the Gazette she discovered that a rich and childless relative, ignorant of course of her misconduct, had left her a large sum of money. Not being able to claim it without Everard's assistance, she formed a new plan; she affected extreme penitence and humility, and so perfectly deceived her brother, that having claimed the legacy for her, he was induced to place the power of disposing of it in her own hands, and hoped that she might be now trusted. She pursued this new conduct for some time, till Andrew and her brother off their guard, she gave unbounded license to her love of expense. Her object being to see her former admirer, she engaged a box at the Opera; and Everard found to his horror that opposition was in vain; nothing seemed effectual but his constant surveillance.

A billet from Lord —— having been intercepted by Andrew, and Edith persisting that she would frequent her opera-box, Everard announced his determination to go with her. It was received with the wildest shouts of laughter. "In that dress?" "No," said her brother, "I shall wear the dress of the world; to save my sister from further sin it will be admissible." And assuredly his presence did preserve her from the interviews she so much desired, when Martha's inopportune appearance surprised them. Edith was about to tell the truth; it was then that Everard, by an expressive gesture, forbid her communicativeness. During his absence that night she contrived to see Lord ——; and two months after her brother's formal separation from his wife, she eloped in the dead of night to her profligate lover.

The rest of her history, I dare not dwell upon; it was such as Hogarth has described in some of his matchless pictures. Cards and extravagance soon dissipated her own money; and he whose protection she had sought became wearisome of her expensive whims.

A short time before her interview with Martha, her brother had discovered her perishing from hunger, illness, and misery, in a low and wretched dwelling—into such an extreme of misery had her vice plunged her. He would have taken the wanderer to his own home, for he perceived the end was at hand; but she so ardently begged to be alone, that he permitted her to choose the humble refuge in which Martha found her. She entreated that she might effect a reconciliation between her brother and his wife ere she died; but to this proposition he would not listen. "He thought," said she to Martha, "that you should have trusted him better."

"And so I should," said the weeping Martha, tenderly wiping the dying girl's brow, damp with the exertion of her narrative.

Martha Wilson had many subsequent interviews with her fallen sister, and it was at the very last that, hastily summoned to the death-scene, husband and wife met again. It was by the side of that death-bed that they felt how slight had been their cause of dissension, and the only feeling which prevented a reconciliation—pride—in that awful hour of human suffering and expiation was crushed in the dust.

Edith Wilson died calmly and even happily, trusting that the tears with which, like the sinner of old times, she had washed her Savior's feet, might in his eye wash away her many sins, and trusting, with a childlike devotion, that Faith in His mercy would save her.

Curious Eastern Tale.

There lived in Bagdad a young man of such extreme beauty that he was surnamed "The Brilliant." He had also the gift of poesy. Omen-el-Benine, the wife of the Caliph, El-Ouliden-Abd-el-Melik, was so much in love with this young man that she fell sick. She introduced him into her apartment every day, and, when she feared to be disturbed by the approach of any one, she concealed her lover in a coffer. Such was their daily course.

One day the Caliph received a present of a collar of gold garnished with precious stones, with which he was greatly pleased. "I will reserve this for my wife," said he, and immediately he ordered one of his eunuchs to carry the collar to the Sultana.

The slave, in going to execute his commission, found the house door open. "What does this mean?" inquired he of himself. So saying, he advanced stealthily along toward the chamber, whence proceeded sounds of laughter, and he met the eyes of the young man, who started and became as pale as death.

With a bound, the Sultana pushed him into the coffer; but the slave had seen all.

He presented the collar, and said: "Madam, I must demand of you a stone from this jewel."

Indignant at such boldness, she exclaimed: "Rude creature, depart from my presence!"

The enraged slave went straight to his master and said: "My Lord, to-day I found a man in conversation with your wife in such a chamber. At my approach the Sultana hid him in the coffer."

When the execution was over, the Caliph rose, put on his slippers, and went to his wife's apartments. She was occupied in arranging a head-dress. He entered and sat facing her upon the coffer indicated by the slave. He said to her in the course of conversation: "How happens it that you have such a liking for this chamber?"

"Because my apparel is here," she replied.

"May I dare to hope that you will favor me with one of the coffers with which the chamber is furnished?"

"Take, my lord, whichever you please, with the exception of the one you are seated upon."

"This is precisely the one I prefer," replied the Caliph; "you must let me have it."

After a moment's stupor, the Sultana said to him: "Very well, it is yours."

At a signal from the Caliph, the blacks appeared. "Take this coffer into the Hall of Council, and wait for me."

While the slaves were bearing away the coffer, the countenance of the Sultana bore traces of confusion.

"Why dost thou change countenance?" inquired El-Ouliid; "Perhaps this coffer may contain thy heart."

"Pardon me, my lord, it contains nothing such. If I appear a little moved, it is because I have been taken suddenly ill."

"God will cure thee," observed the Caliph, retiring.

When he reached the Hall of Audience, he found the coffer upon the floor. "Raise the carpet," he said to his slaves, "and dig a hole the size of a man."

The pit being dug, he made a sign to place the coffer on the brink. Then planting his foot upon the piece of furniture, he pronounced the following words: "News has come to me; if it is true, thy vestment shall be thy shroud, this box shall be thy bier, and it is God that immolates thee. If this news is false, I inter a coffer, and lose only a few planks." He then pushed the box, which descended rapidly to the bottom of the pit. The blacks filled up the grave and replaced the carpet.

The Caliph then returned to his spouse, and both deported themselves as if nothing had happened between them. Peace united their existence until the day of death. [London Court Journal.

A Story of the Maine Woods.

One of the oldest inhabitants of Northern Maine thus relates a race he once had with a catamount:

"Young man," said he, "when I first visited this town, there was only three families living in it. You who now live at ease can never know the hardships and perilous scenes through which the early settlers passed. Come with me," he continued, "and I will show you the spot on which the first hut ever erected in this town was located."

I followed silently, until the old man reached the bottom of the west side of Paris Hill.

"There," said he, "on this spot was erected the hut. I shall never forget the first time I visited it, and the story I was told."

"What was it?" I asked.

"I will tell you. When the first settler moved here, his nearest neighbor lived twenty miles distant, in the present town of Rumford, and the only road between the two neighbors was a path that he had cut through the woods himself, so that in case of want or sickness he might get assistance. One spring, I think it was the third season after he had settled here, he was obliged to go to Rumford for provisions. He arose early one morning, and started for his nearest neighbor. People of the present day would think it hard to make a journey of twenty miles for a bag of potatoes, and on foot too, but such was the errand of the first settler. He arrived before noon, and was successful in getting his potatoes, got some refreshment, and started for home. But it was not easy to travel with a load of potatoes; and, finally, at sundown, he threw off his load, and resolved to make a shelter and spend the night. I have been taken with him to the exact locality of it; it was situated just on the other side of the stream, on which are mills, in the village of Pinhook, in Woodstock.

"He built a shelter, struck a fire, and took out of his sack a piece of meat to roast. Ah! young man," continued the narrator, "you little know with what relish a man eats his food in the wood; but, as I was saying, he commenced roasting his meat, when he was startled by a cry so shrill that he knew at once that it could come from nothing else than a catamount. I will now relate it to you as near as I can in the language of the old settler himself.

"I listened every moment," said he, "and it was repeated even louder, and it seemed nearer than before. My first thought was for my own safety. But what was I to do? It was at least ten miles from home, and there was not a single human being nearer than that to me. I next thought of self defense, but I had nothing to defend myself with. In a moment I concluded to start for home, for I knew the nature of the catamount too well to think I should stand the least chance of escape if I remained in the camp. I knew, too, that he would ransack my camp, and I hoped the meat which I left behind might satisfy his appetite, so that he might not follow me after eating it.

"I had not proceeded more than half a mile before I knew by the shrieks of the animal that he was within sight of the camp. I doubled my speed, content that the beast should have my supper; although I declared I would not have run if I had my trusty rifle with me. But there could be no cowardice in my running from an infuriated catamount, doubly furious, probably, by being hungry, and with nothing that could be called a weapon, save a pocket knife.

"I had proceeded, probably, about two-thirds of the distance home, and hearing nothing more of the fearful enemy, began to slacken my pace, and thought I had nothing to fear. I had left behind about two pounds of meat, beef and pork, which I hoped had satisfied the monster. Just as I had come to the conclusion that I would run no more, and was looking back, astonished almost at the distance I had traveled in so short a space of time, I was electrified with horror to hear the animal shriek again!

"I knew then that my fears were realized. The beast had undoubtedly entered the camp, and ate, and followed after me. It was about three miles to my log cabin, and it had already become dark. I redoubled my speed, but thought I must die. And such a death! The recollection of that feeling comes to my mind as vividly as though I knew the animal was now pursuing me. But I am no coward, though to be torn to pieces and almost eaten alive by a wild beast was horrible.

"I calmly unbuttoned my frock, with the determination to throw it off before the beast should approach me, hoping thereby to gain advantages of him by the time he would lose in tearing it to pieces.

"Another shriek, and I tossed the garment behind me in the path. Not more than five minutes elapsed before I heard a shrill cry as he came to it. How that shriek electrified me! I bounded like a deer. But in a moment the animal made another cry, which told me plainly that my garment had only exasperated him to a fiercer chase.

"O God!" said I, "and must I die thus? I cannot; I must live for my wife and children;" and I ran even faster than I had done before, and unbuttoning my waistcoat, I dropped it in the path as I proceeded. The thoughts of my wife and children urged me to the most desperate speed, for I thought more of their unprotected state than the death I was threatened with, for should I die, what would become of them?

"In a moment the whole events of my life crowded through my brain. The catamount shrieked louder, and fast as I was running, he rapidly approached me. Nearer and nearer he came, until I fancied I could hear his bounds. At last I came to the brook which you see yonder, which was double its present size, being swollen by recent freshets, and I longed to cool my fevered brain in it; but I knew that would begas certain death as to die by the claws of the beast. With three bounds I gained the opposite bank, and then I could clearly see a light in my log cabin, which was not more than a hundred yards distant.

"I had proceeded but a short distance when I heard the plunge of the catamount behind me. I leaped with more than human energy, for it was life or death. In a moment the catamount gave another wild shriek, as though he was afraid he should lose his prey. At that instant I yelled at the top of my lungs to my wife, and in a moment I saw her approach the door with a light.

"With what vividness that moment comes to my mind! The catamount was not so far from me as I was from the house. I dropped my hat, the only thing I could leave to stay the progress of the beast. The next moment I fell prostrate in my own cabin."

Here the old settler paused, and wiped the big drops from his brow, ere he continued:

"How long I laid after I fell I know not; but when I was roused to consciousness I was lying on my rude couch, and my wife was bathing my head with cold water, and my children were gazing anxiously at me. My wife told me that as soon as I fell she immediately shut the door and barred it, for she knew that I was pursued, but by whom or what she knew not; and as soon as I had fallen and the door closed, a fearful spring was made upon it, but the door was strongly and well barred, and withstood the spring of the beast.

"As soon as I recovered, I knelt down and offered the most fervent prayer to the Almighty that ever crossed my lips, or ever will again. My family and myself shortly retired, but no sleep visited me that night. In the morning, when my little son, six years old, told me that he saw the eyes of the colt in the window in the night, I knew the catamount had been watching to gain admittance; but our windows, you will perceive, are not large enough to permit a catamount to enter.

"When I looked into the glass the next morning, I was horror-struck at my altered appearance. My hair, which was the day before dark as midnight, was changed to the snowy whiteness you now see; and, although I have enjoyed very good health since, I shall never recover from the effects of the fright I experienced on being chased by a catamount."

The Vampire and Her Lovers.

"You have heard of Hester Amaury?" he said.

"Never," answered Lovell.

"What! Not of Hester Amaury, the belle of Paris? the toast of Paris?"

"Upon my honor, never," said Lovell.

"Of Maud Lovett, then, the beauty of London?"

"Nor of her either," said Lovell.

"Hush!" said Arthur, impressively. "Listen, Lovell. They were one and the same. She had other names in other places. I shall tell you about her as Hester Amaury. She was a lovely girl; wondrously lovely all day. The most