

And the daisy will die, and the waning moon  
 Will fail in the sky, and the murmurous grove  
 Stand hushed, and my life will be o'er too soon,  
 For all my joy because of His love,  
 Who made the land, and the leaves, and the moon,  
 And all that is fair, with the light of His love.

### Kitty Howard's Journal.—No. XII.

EDITED BY MRS. ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH.

APRIL 30.—I am sure that mothers should avoid discomforts and discord as much as in them lies. I think they should not even indulge in exhausting studies, or intellectual pursuits at the expense of the nervous system. While they move in the sphere of wifedom and maternity they should be content therewith, and be calm and lovely, as was the blessed Virgin of Judea, even when an angel may salute them. They should be tranquil, and put off ambition, and tumult, and excitements of every kind. Byron's life was embittered and his respect for his mother lessened by the knowledge that his slight deformity was caused by her discordant life, and all the errors and miseries of this wonderful child of genius may be traced to the same source.

My last baby, my sweet, gentle Elizabeth, is nothing near so robust as my other children, and I begin to see that my first real grief is knocking at the door. Tom is more distressed than he ought to be, and says: "Dear Balm, I should have kept trouble away from you at such a time," and then I say, of course—what else should a wife say?—

"Dear heart, Kitty shares all your joys, and she must be noble enough to share your sorrows."

The trees are green and beautiful, and the birds give us a wilderness of song, beginning as early as 4 o'clock in the morning. It may be that the warm summer days and the fresh air will revive my pretty child, who has no disease—only lacks vitality. Her large eyes and waxen skin are lovely to look at, but they indicate clearly a brief existence, and so I try to resign it. I water my dear bud with my tears, and feel it will bloom only in Paradise.

MAY 2.—This morning I saw Tom (and, by the way, I am learning to call him Mr. Howard, as comporting better with the dignities of a household; and I say Tom only when we are

quite alone); well, I saw him, in reading the morning paper, compress his lips and look quite flushed in the face, whereat I put my hand on his shoulder and whispered: "What is it, dear? I hope nothing is there to vex you."

Tom tossed the paper aside and talked with me very pleasantly, and called David to hear his lesson, for the boy is studying his Latin and his father hears him recite every morning; but it is his mother's work to shorten the task by affording a little oral help now and then. No sooner was breakfast over and Tom gone to the office than I seized upon the paper, and the article therein made Kitty's blood boil; yes, it boiled till my ears rang and roared like a furnace. Oh the wicked, cruel people in the world! and editors have no heart nor soul in them!

My husband is a candidate for the Senate, and the opposition are calling him every thing but a good man. I could not stand it. I put on my hat and started at once for the printing office, paper in hand. Mr. Blank was sitting with his feet on the table, in his shirt sleeves, smoking a cigar. He opened his eyes wide at sight of me, and put his feet down. I took a chair without asking, for I found myself trembling from head to foot. I held up the paper, and said:

"Mr. Blank, don't you know that every word in that article is false?"

"No, Madam; how should I know it to be false?"

"Did you try to know whether it was true before you put it in print?"

"Well, we editors have a busy time of it, and we send our reporters round to pick up news, and facts, and intelligence, and that is all we have to do about it."

"Mr. Blank, that is the way the great black buzzards do down South; they go round like human scavengers and pick up every thing, and then disgorge it down the chimney, just as your reporters do into a newspaper."

Mr. Blank turned pale and bit his lips, and then Kitty saw she had not helped her cause. He took up a pen and began to write. I went on:

"Mr. Blank, Mr. Howard is the kindest, the best of men. He would not do a wrong for his right hand. Do you never think when you attack a man or a woman in your paper that you are wounding the hearts of others; that you not only inflict a wrong upon the individual, who may or may not be guilty, but you lacerate the feelings of the innocent?"

"Mine is a party paper, Madam, and as in war, all is fair in politics."

"No, indeed, sir; an editor should promote good morals and disseminate just ideas, or he vitiates the public mind and makes the people worse."

Mr. Blank has an odious laugh, like the rasping of a file; and he did not look engaging, I must say. At length he replied:

"We editors must live; we must promote the interests of the party; it never hurts a man to be abused."

"Oh, sir, if this is the principle that actuates an editor, he is the meanest and most contemptible man alive!"

"That may be, Madam; you are an aristocrat and have the notions of your class."

"Well, if truth and justice and manliness are to be exiled from the public press, they will soon be only fictions and traditions with the people. Let me beg you, sir, to let my good husband alone."

I found I was just ready to break down at the mention of my husband, and I rose to go. Mr. Blank opened the door and said very coldly:

"Your husband is an excellent subject for an article, Madam, and I can not forego the use of him. Good morning."

I went home to have a good cry, and see to household matters, but I was very nervous and began to fear I had better have staid at home. I kept up pretty well through the day, but when Tom came home to dinner he said:

"Kitty, Mr. Brown said he saw you go into the office of The Spread Eagle; what in the world could have called you there, darling?"

I owned up to the whole, and repeated the exact words of Mr. Blank, and feeling a renewal of my indignation as I did so. Gracious! it is something to hear Tom laugh! I thought he would never be done laughing. He took me on his knee and tried to talk, but could not say a word, only laugh, laugh; whereat I laughed, and boxed his ears and told him he ought to be ashamed of himself.

"And so my Kitty went out to teach the editor morals! A pretty singing thrush in the midst of screaming vultures!"

"No, Tom, I do not think Mr. Blank understands us. He thinks we are proud, bad people, when we are only too good, all of us!"

"To be sure we are, Balm; and they know it, or where would be the fun of abusing us?"

MAY 3.—This morning The Spread Eagle is out with an article which has cut me to the quick—all about "petticoat government, female influence," and touches of sarcasm aimed indirectly at poor little Kitty—cruel, cutting irony, which was as mean and unmanly as it was ungenerous; for at the worst I have done a foolish, green thing, but not an evil one. Tom kissed away my tears and only said:

"Dear Balm, let matters take their course—do not try to help them again; hearts clear of all guile and evil in any shape may bear abuse and be calm under it. We will grow wise; and be patient, Kitty."

And so I shall let editors "severely alone" from this day forth, even if they break my heart.

MAY 4.—Every Friday I say to the children, "who will keep fast to-day, and eat only dry bread with a glass of water?" For several months David and Paul have joined me in this, in a very bright, manly way; and I observe that Hannah is really heroic in her observance of our little fast. I do this not in the way of penance, but to aid my children in a manful government of the appetites and passions.

To-day I had a pleasant testimony to the singleness and religious honesty of the boys in this matter. They had been invited by Mrs. Prince, a good friend and neighbor, to a little party of the small folks. Of course, there was a plentiful and wholesome table for young appetites, but Mrs. Prince observed that my two boys declined all luxuries, and when questioned about it David whispered, "It is our fast day." The lovely hostess was deeply impressed, and told me with tears in her eyes, that she never saw such noble children in her life. I think they have noble qualities, and they make no parade of them.

MAY 5.—Such a pickle as my two boys came home in to-day! torn, dusty, and covered with blood. I was terribly frightened, but nothing very serious had happened—only a "big boy had pitched into David," and Paul had come to the rescue, and both had been well beaten. They

did not snivel nor cry about it, and I simply told them that a brave boy would avoid quarrels, but if attacked he must take care of himself.

Our good clergyman, the Rev. Mr. Goodwin, hearing my lesson, thought I ought to teach them to turn the other cheek when smitten on one, but I told him I believed in the manly art of self-defense, and that a boy must meet all battles bravely; if he showed the white-feather in his teens he would be recreant to principle—a sneak and a coward in his manhood; whereat Mr. Goodwin thought I might be right, but being a soft, timid man, was not quite sure.

MAY 17.—I do not believe that women realize how unheroic they may make their souls by perpetually dwelling upon petty details. I find my interest in my books begins to flag, from the incessant preoccupation of my mind in household matters; after every thing is looked after, from garret to cellar, I have still a vast amount of energy left, and I must look about and see in what way I may best use it. Whenever a woman has a surplus power she had better try to find a use therefor, or it grows sour in the mind. I do not think men cooperate with women quite enough; all their cooperation is apt to center in their own sex, and women having, from whatever cause, less executive ability, waste themselves upon trifles or grow bitter and discontented.

MEM.—I will consult with Mr. Howard and perhaps visit the workhouse and prisons, get up a reading class or something of the kind.

MAY 18.—Harriet is quite uneasy, and neglects her work. She goes often to Mrs. Brown's, and slyly washes and does up articles for Jane. I think I am not mean in these little things, but I do not like the deception which it involves. I do think the great troubles of life can be better borne than these petty, rasping ills, which spring out of the malice and falsehood of people of low aims and unscrupulous habits. I begin to think that the moral perceptions of the majorities of women are terribly blind.

MAY 20.—Harriet has gone to live with Mrs. Brown. I miss her good service greatly, and much fear that she will decline to her old habits. Mrs. Brown offers her higher wages and more privileges than would be consistent with the order of my household, and more than I think is well for the girl herself; for where a living is to be earned a habit of diligence is all important. It is well for the comfort of my family that I do not fret at trifles, nor get bewildered over the pressure of what looks like a burden to a merely fine lady. It is a serious

loss, a good cook; and I had need of some patience and expertness in getting up our dinner to-day. I sat David and Paul to dust the parlor and library and look after the baby, while Hannah and I made the dinner; Rachel watered the plants and "picked up things" in general, so that really we got along nicely. I was a little flushed and had a dab of smut on my hand, which I did not see till Tom kissed it, with a smile, and rubbed it off with his pocket handkerchief.

Women are mean and dishonorable in the matter of servants, and if I were an author I would write a book about this, and show that a fine moral sense must be carried out in every aspect of life. One says to my good, capable girl, whom I have been at great pains to train and teach: "Harriet, if you should leave Mrs. John Howard I should be glad to employ you, but I would by no means take you from Mrs. Howard, only if you are going to leave, I mean;" and so the girl grows discontented and neglects her duty, thinking herself in demand at any time; when ten to one, if removed into a less orderly and conscientious household she would not do as well, nor be the most desirable of help. Another will inquire: "What wages do you receive at your place, Harriet?"

"Ten dollars, ma'am."

"Ten dollars! you are worth a great deal more. I give fifteen, and am in want of a girl."

In this way women undermine each other, and teach servants unfaithfulness and greed. Ten dollars in one family, where the girl is sure of her wages and of kind, considerate supervision is worth more than twenty would be in one less carefully ordered. I always see that my servants do not squander their money; I teach them to mend their clothing, and inculcate habits of neatness and forecast.

MAY 29.—Often and often have I thought of the pearl which turned black in my dream, and of the filmy mist which dear Tom complains as coming between him and me in our mutual night visions. Our sympathy is so entire, our companionship so complete, that I daily regret I had not been perfectly candid about the death of poor, dear George. It is better to meet the exigencies of life bravely and frankly than resort to any subterfuges. To-day I have confessed all, in a poor, womanish way, to be sure, but all is told.

In looking over the papers of his deceased brother, it seems Tom found a life insurance policy in favor of himself, and a letter most tender, yet sad, begging us to be kind to poor Jane,

and saying the insurance money would remunerate Tom for the large sums he had drawn from him in what he called his "useless, defeated, melancholy life."

Mr. Howard had called at the insurance office and he told me he had been closely questioned as to the cause of George's death: "And what did you tell them, dear," I asked.

"I told them he undoubtedly died of disease of the heart; and, Kitty dear, I think we will appropriate half the amount to the use of Jane, which will render her quite independent."

"Certainly, Tom. But why did they inquire so closely? I do not understand."

I felt a deathly sickness stealing over me; I felt my heart jump spasmodically, and could not see, though I heard Tom's voice distinctly.

"They object to pay life policies, dear, where there is reason to believe the cause of death to be suicide."

I heard no more—I knew no more. On my return to consciousness Tom was holding me in his arms and applying cold water. He looked into my eyes in a questioning but kind manner. I knew he had penetrated my secret.

"It is true, dear Tom."

He was very pale and even stern, as I had not often seen him. "Tell me all, Kitty; tell me why you kept this dreadful truth from me."

I confessed all, and the mistaken kindness which had prompted my concealment. He was not pleased with me—how could he be? True friends, true lovers, true partners on the thoroughfare of life should have no concealments from each other, unless it involve a secret belonging exclusively to third parties.

Mr. Howard held me firmly by the arm and read my face; at length he said:

"Now I understand why your pearl turned black, Kitty, and that something had dimmed the white luster of your soul, as it had once looked to me. My precious child has been unwise—do not ever seek to walk any path, dear Balm, which we can not walk together. I have but one duty to perform, which is to leave the life policy unclaimed; and we will be kind to poor Jane, just as George desired us to be."

Thus was I relieved from my weight of mind and thus I went on singingly, with a heart all open to the man, not "who owns me," as Mrs. Jameson used to say, but who loves me and who is so wise and manful that I feel nothing but peace and joy in his presence.

MAY 22.—A warm, lovely day. Our toad has come out from his winter quarters under the stone steps, and for several hours sunned him-

self in the warm, dark earth. He seems to have grown wondrously; is nearly black, and has a heavy aldermanic movement that is quite grotesque. The children hailed his advent with shouts of delight. "Jewel," as we call him, has eyes that are very bright, and I wonder what it is he keeps swallowing all the time. Once, a man was observed watching Jewel very intently, while waiting an answer to the front door bell and making good aim he spirted a quantity of tobacco juice into the face and eyes of toady. I was very indignant and rated him somewhat upon the filthy, cruel act, whereat he gave a stupid grunt and chuckle, and went away whistling. Jewel at once beat a retreat into his domicil and did not reappear for several days, and when he did so his skin hung upon him like rags, and he was weak and dispirited. We fed him with bits of meat, and he slowly recovered his flesh and the brightness of his spots. It is evident tobacco does not agree with toads.

MAY 23.—Worked several hours in my garden. I can handle rake and spade and hoe with considerable dexterity, and the change from in to out-of-door work is pleasant and refreshing. My example is beginning to be followed by several of our neighbors, who a few years ago were unwilling to be seen doing even the ordinary and necessary work of the household. Poor pale-faced Emma Lott, who takes in needle-work of several kinds to eke out a scanty wardrobe, resorted to all kinds of subterfuges to conceal it, and always pretended to be doing some pretty work for a dear friend, but I talked so candidly about the propriety of every woman's doing something to relieve the toil of a hard-working husband or father, brother or son, as the case may be, and that no woman had a right to be a drone in the human hive, consuming and never producing, that I have created quite an enthusiasm for work in the neighborhood, and I think there is much less of discontent, and much less of idle gossip now that women are learning that it is healthful, dignified, and harmonizing for them to work.

I have laid out a plat of ground for each of the children and have helped them to plant it. They are delighted with their flowers and very impatient for the seeds to come up. Paul takes his small fingers and digs around his corn at least once a day to see if it is sprouting, and I fear his harvest will be but small. Rachel makes a barricade of little sticks around each of her plants, and has buried a dead chicken in the center of her garden with a suitable mound and head and foot stones.