

Our Story.

[Original.]

THE Lady Hermit.

BY GARNETTE.

I was walking alone, in an obscure retreat, remote from any buildings. I was an invalid and was walking early for exercise, and chose this lonely road as I would not be likely to be interrupted. I had walked considerably farther than usual, when in the distance, I observed a miserable hut. Curiosity led me to approach near, and finally to enter. There, on a miserable bed, lay a lady apparently some thirty-five years of age. She was poorly clad, but passing beautiful. As I entered, she opened her eyes and gazed upon me inquiringly for a few moments. I apologized for the intrusion, but her only reply was begging for water. I brought her some water from a huge gourd I saw, and she seemed somewhat revived. She drew from under her coarse pillow, a package, which she handed me saying "Read and publish when I am gone"; and immediately fell back, and was dead. After seeing her remains decently interred, I returned home and read as follows:

"I was a rich, and (they called me) a beautiful heiress. I was a native of a far-off country. My father died when I was very young, leaving an estate of two hundred thousand dollars to me, his only child and heiress. I, with my fortune, was left to the care of my Uncle, with whom I resided. I graduated in my sixteenth year, and returned to my Uncle's what is called a beautiful and accomplished heiress. I was very proud and haughty, and bowed continually at the shrine of fashion.—The realities of Eternity were never presented to my view. I lived for this world alone and engaged in all its fleeting pleasures, never dreaming that I must one day die, and that earth, with all its riches, could yield me no support in that awful hour. As I look back through the dark gloom of my life, I see nothing but wasted mercies, neglected opportunities, and perverted talents.

"My life has been one long act of sin and ingratitude; but blessed be God, since I have been led by penitence and faith to the

feet of a crucified Redeemer, I dare to believe my sins are all forgiven, and that my trembling spirit will soon find rest, in the bosom of him who died to redeem me. But I must hasten and give utterance to the feelings, with which my heart is breaking.

"Favored by nature and fortune, I was the belle of every party. I moved but to be admired, flattered and caressed. Compliments were continually breathed in my ears. I was compared to the sylphs, the graces and even to the angels. Yes, I, the vain, thoughtless daughter of fashion, who worshipped no god but vanity, was compared to those pure and glorified spirits, who surround the throne of God, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

"It was on one of these enchanting occasions, that I first met the innocent cause of my woe. Ah! why do I here throw aside my pen, and press my hand upon my temples to still its throbbing? What great events rise up in the records of my memory at this solemn hour! but I must proceed.

"He was a stranger and quite a distinguished one. He was a celebrated lawyer, from an adjoining town, whose all-conquering fame had previously reached the ears of myself, and others of my fair rivals, and all were waiting the hour of his arrival with eager expectation. My warm and undisciplined imagination had dwelt for some time previous on his image; and the picture of ideal beauty, by which I had been haunted, was dim compared to the reality. I would describe him, if I could find language in which to copy the picture of him engraven on my heart.

"In the awful gloom of midnight, when I feel that my life is gradually ceasing, and will soon be extinguished like the last glimmering ray of the burning taper, I can look back and see him as he appeared that night. Grand and glorious, he stood with folded arms, as remote as possible from the dancers, apparently disgusted with such insignificant amusement. He was warmly pressed to be introduced to a number of the fairest ladies of the land, but he declined the honor with a cold and haughty bow; declaring he had no taste for dancing. Once in the course of the evening, I passed so near him that the folds of my white satin dress fluttered against him, when for the first time I caught his eye. He started—he seemed involuntarily

fixed to the spot. Before stated that I was called beautiful.—Whether I was or not, there was something that attracted and riveted his attention during the remainder of the game, and induced him to take my homeward steps so as to ascertain my dwelling-place. He met him the next evening, and introduced me to him. He spoke without apology, for he saw that I was one who was not at all conventional. He set at defiance that day my destiny. He became almost a constant visitor at our home; the ever delightful companion of my walks. Amidst the grandeur and stately nature he wandered with me, and talked of nothing but love. He read me poems that breathed nothing but love with a voice so sweet. I listened—I hung upon his breath enraptured—enthralled. I can give the reader no idea of the fascinations of his manners, or the power of his mind. It is a power that must be felt not described.

"I had, without knowing it, one real sorrow, or meeting with one being among all the gay scenes, in which I delighted, that awakened in the least degree the affections of my heart. But here was one, glorious in all the charms of opening manhood, who awakened (as I thought) every capability my heart had of loving.

"We were married in one short month from the night I first met him. I married, with the most romantic views of wedded felicity, and for a short time my dreams were a blissful reality. But soon, alas! I discovered I had acted too hastily. I had married from the impulse of passion, and not from true love. Accustomed as I had been to self-indulgence; living on excitement, and the adulation of the world as I had lived; when the deep monotony of domestic life stole upon me, I was miserable beyond description. My husband, though possessed of qualities capable of inspiring the strongest attachment, became an object of detestation to me. I shrank continually from his caresses and presence. He, however, had married with very different views.—His was love approved by reason and sanctified by religion, and he spared no means to enliven me. Every indulgence was showered upon me that wealth could purchase or conjugal affection devise, but all to no avail. I shut up my heart and resolved to be miserable, and became more and more the victim of folly and vice.

"One dark and stormy night, my husband was absent from home, and I resolved to avail myself of this opportunity to leave my home of affluence and indulgence and wander forth I knew not where. I wandered on for days, for weeks, perhaps, until one cold night, overcome by fatigue and hunger, I was compelled to rest. By the light of the moon, which was partially shining, I observed this humble, lonely hut. Here, I thought, reside some who will sympathize with suffering humanity.

"As I came I found it unoccupied. A kind of deathly sickness and superstition horror, came over me as I entered; and I prostrate on the cold, damp floor, and I know not how long. When I recovered consciousness returned, I discovered I had been very near the presence of the great King of kings.—Then, for the first time in my life, was Eternity, with all its mysterious reality, presented to my view. Here, in this (apparent) abode of misery, I found the pardoning love of Jesus, and dedicated my life to his service. The miserable hut, I found, had been unoccupied for some time. It contained a few old and time-worn pieces of furniture, and with them and the amount of money and jewelry which I had, I thought I could sustain life for some time. Here, in this lonely retreat I resolved to spend my remaining days, remote from any human being, patiently waiting the summons from on high.

"Years have flown since I have had any communion with mankind, I have cautiously avoided all intercourse with the world, lest I should be discovered, and bring further disgrace on my own and my husband's family. I have seen but very few human beings, as I have never been abroad, except when necessity compelled me to go to a town, some miles distant, to obtain the necessaries of life; and for some cause, unknown to me, no one ever passes this road.

"Now my story is told, and my race is run. A few more hours and I will stand in the presence of my Maker, to test the solemn realities of another world. I know that—'Soon, from me, the light of day Must forever fade away.'

I feel a kind of solemn loneliness, now, when I feel that I am dying, without any human being near to speak one word of comfort to my departing soul.

"Yet I prefer to die without any one knowing my degradation. As I have long lived without the friendship, I can die without the sympathy of mortals."

Courtship.

Courtship is the last brilliant scene in the maiden life of a woman. It is, to her, a garden where no weeds mingle with the flowers, but all is lovely and beautiful to the senses. It is a dish of nightingales served up by moonlight to the mingled music of many tendernesses and gentle whisperings—and eagerness that does not outstep the bounds of delicacy, and a series of flatterings, throbbings, high pulses, burning cheeks, and drooping lashes. But however delightful it may be, courtship is, nevertheless, a serious business; it is the first turning point in the life of a woman, crowded with perils and temptations. There is as much danger in the strength of love as its weakness. The kindled hope requires watching. The rose tints of affection dazzle and bewilder the imagination, and while always bearing in mind that life without love is a wilderness; it should not be overlooked that true affection requires solid supports. Discretion is the passion, and it is tender than any other, which is to be absent in courtship, and found in ladies in love, they should be wise counsellors, to the impulses of the heart, not be too easily captivated by a winning exterior. In the selection of a husband, character should be considered more than appearance. Young men inclined to intemperate habits even but slightly so—rarely make good husbands to the end; they have not sufficient moral stamina to enable them to resist temptation even in its incipient stages and, being thus deficient in self respect, they can not possess that pure, uncontaminated feeling which alone capacitates a man for rightly appreciating the tender and loving nature of a true woman. The irreligious man is like a ship without a rudder, and he never can make a good husband, for a house darkened by cold skepticism or an indifference to religion and its duties is never at home—it is merely a shelter; but there is a little warmth in the atmosphere of the rooms, and every object in them looks chill and chilling. The indolent man, likewise, cannot be expected to make a good husband, for he neglects his time and wastes his estate, allowing it to be overrun with thistles and brambles, and subsists on the industry of others. Every precaution, then, is necessary in the selection of a husband.

Dogs beat dentists—They insert natural teeth.

The girl of the period never allows her spirits to be stirred by a "spoon".

Why is fashion like a blank cartridge?—Because it's all powder and puff.

Why is it that Mount Vesuvius never sleeps?—Because it is always yawning.

Why is a lady's bustle like a historical tale?—Because its fiction founded on fact.