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Poetry.

TRUST.
THE RIGHT MUST WIN.
O it is hard to work for God,
To stand and take his part
Upon this battlefield of earth
And not sometimes lose heart!
He hides himself so wondrously,
As though there were no God;
He is least seen when all the powers
Of ill are most abroad:
Or he deceits us at the hour
The fight is almost lost,
And seems to lead us to ourselves
Just when we need him most.
O there is less to cry our faith
In our mysterious creed,
Than in the goddess look of earth
In these our hours of need.

Ill masters good; good seems to change
To ill with greatest ease;
And worst of all, the good which good
Is at cross purposes.

It is not so, but so it looks;
And we are loath to part;
And doubts will come if God hath kept
His promises to men.

Ah! God is other than we think;
His ways are far above;
Far beyond reason's insight, and reached
Only by childlike love.

Workmen of God! O lose not heart
But learn what God is like;
And in the darkest battle-field
Thou shalt know where to strike.

O lest he is to whom is given
The heaviest task to tell
That God is on the field, when He
Is most invisible.

God's justice is a bed where lay
Our anxious hearts may sleep
And with our own may sleep
Our discontent away.

For right is right, since God is God;
And right the day must win;
To fight would be to sin,
To falter would be sin.

BOOKS AND REFLECTION.
I love not libraries; yet there is a doubt,
If one be better than without.
Unless he use them wisely, and indeed,
Know the high art of when and how to read;
At learning's fountain it is sweet to drink,
But 'tis a nobler privilege to think.
And, out of books apart, the thirsting mind
May take the nectar which it cannot find;
'Tis well to borrow from the good and great;
'Tis wiser to learn; 'tis godlike to create.
John G. Saxe.

The Family Circle.

For the Morning Star.

PLAIN-HEARTED MRS. VINTON.

"I have got a letter from Aunt Vinton,"

said Mrs. Milroy, passing a cup of tea to her husband.

"I hope she is well," he said indifferently,

helping himself to the biscuit.

"Yes, and she proposes to give us the

pleasure of a visit."

"What!" and he nearly upset his tea.

"I said she proposes to visit us."

"The — she does — well, when does

she come, and how long will she stay?"

"She comes on Saturday, and she says if

she finds the house pleasant she will spend

the winter."

"Finds the house pleasant! What house

was ever pleasant which had held her five

minutes? I've a mind to burn our house

down and turn ourselves into the street to

escape this visitation."

"O don't speak so, dear, I think we shall

not find it so bad. The great difference be-

tween her and other people is, she thinks it is

right to speak what she thinks. She scorns

all dissimulation and reticence; so we are

sure to know the worst she has thought, and

her judgments are not, after all, so much

more uncharitable than other people's."

"This talk does infinite credit to your

patience, my love," said the husband, laughing,

"and if you endure to the end—to the end of

the winter I mean—you will deserve to have

your name recorded with Moses and Job.

For myself I had rather deal with the veriest

hypocrite on earth, than with the person who

sets himself up to be wiser and better than

the rest of the world, and not only judges me

and my actions by the standard which he sets

up, but insults me by telling me all he thinks

of me."

"Let us receive her pleasantly," said the

smiling wife. "She has sharp eyes, and a

sharp tongue to be sure, but she may help us

to correct our faults. Any way, I am re-

solved to have good and not evil out of this

visit."

"Mr. Milroy looked up with a glow of affec-

tionate admiration. "If you can endure her,

surely I can," he said. "You will be with

her twelve hours to any one—and then she is

my aunt, not yours."

"If she is your aunt she is mine," she

said. "I will have the best chamber ready

for her, and I think you had better meet her

at the station."

but Henry does love so well to see his family

comfortable, that he sometimes wrongs him-

self."

Mrs. Vinton glanced at the speaker's face,

reading it with her gray eyes, as if it were an

open book. Smiling quietly she said,

"You are a sensible woman. Your hus-

band does well when he takes your advice."

"Now Aunt," exclaimed Mr. Milroy, "if

you are going to dispense the oil of flattery, I

pray that I may come in for a share. It

would be very soothing to me."

"To his vanity," she said laughing, and

nodding to his wife. "However I think I am

not supposed to deal largely in the article.

But tell me, Henry, how did you succeed in

that speculation into which you were dip-

ping your fingers when I last saw you?"

He winced again. Another old wound was

touched.

"I did not go into it very deep," he said

with assumed carelessness. "Please pass the

butter, wife."

"You did not, fortunately. What pre-

vented you? I thought you saw gold in the

bottom of those oil wells."

"There ought to be gold there now," he

said bitterly. "Enough has been thrown in-

to them. However, I did not lose much."

"Henry got his eyes open in season," said

his wife, "and I think, Aunt, we may thank

you for it. Your advice, though he disagreed

with you at the time, set him to examine the

business more closely, and saved us from the

heavy losses which some of our friends in-

curved."

The gray eyes twinkled a little—a faint

smile creased the thin lips. She said,

"I am glad he was not swallowed up by

the innocents."

Mr. Milroy was glad that supper was over,

and business gave him an excuse for leaving

the house. He walked down the street with

excited steps, which gradually subsided into a

somber pace, as the cool air soothed and braced

his nerves, and he began to examine his

mental state. He was vexed without excuse

at a comfortable of a reasonable excuse. What did

this woman do to irritate him so? She made

the truth uncomfortably obvious. With a

cool, daring hand, she swept away all

subterfuges, and the gloss and glitter from

everything, coming to the cold naked real-

ities, however unpleasant they might be.

That was all, but then he demanded, what

right had she to be always thrusting the

truth in his face, always uncovering his weak

spots?—always looking at him as if she were

about to attack some pitiable foible? It was

very provoking—kept him constantly in a belliger-

ent attitude, without any hope of successful

resistance. But then, why should he be an-

gry at the truth? Why with this friend, who

unquestionably meant well to him, because

she would not join the rest of the world in

helping him to deceive himself?

Ah, he was not entirely without excuse—

that comforted him. She had a dogmatic

manner which was irritating—which stirred

the blood and provoked resistance; and then

she was not always right more than other

people. This was the truth; and if we look

into the world we shall see that Mrs. Vinton

is the type of a class—a small class to be

sure—of people, who are endowed with clear

heads and large consciences, who, looking

straight through the mists of folly and sin,

see the truth, and speak it a thousand times,

when others are blind of dumb, and yet

whose influence is not what it might be, but

for the ill which they sometimes unex-

pectedly produce. Generally right, they learn

to rest on their own judgment, and when they

fall into error, which the wisest sometimes do,

they assert it with as much confidence as the

plunge extreme of plunging themselves and us

into the war, they curse you who promised so

much and do so little for them."

Mr. Mason's face reddened with anger.

Rising to his feet, he said, "You forget,

madam, to whom you speak," and walked in-

dependently away.

Did the truth spoken to that man do him

good or evil? It is, and must needs be, a

savior of life unto life, or of death unto death.

Mrs. Vance, the doctor's wife, soon dropped

into the chair left vacant by the Parson.

"Mrs. Vinton," she said, "I hope you

will join our benevolent society. We shall

be glad of your help and your company."

"Permit me to inquire what is the object

of your society, and what is your manner of

conducting it?"

"The object of our society is to reform the

church. It looks pretty well now, but we

think that new carpets and pew-pins would

improve it. We meet once a week from

house to house, and pay three cents each—

the sums are small, but then you see they

accumulate; and we have a good time, as

we have tea."

"And you call this a benevolent society,

Mrs. Vance? I do not see any more benevo-

lence in furnishing our own churches than in

furnishing our houses. And then, as to your

manner of conducting it, I should think that

three persons who buy meals would join it.

Every cent is cheap for a good supper. I see

no objection to the object of the society, nor

to the manner of conducting it. It is right to

furnish your church, and right to have a good

time when we can afford it, but do not call it

benevolence."

Mrs. Vance got up and walked away, de-

claring to the first person she met that she

had never been treated so rudely before in

her life.

Supper was announced and Mrs. Vinton

was seated at the table between Mr. Porter

and Mr. Manning—middle-aged men—highly

respectable men, and very influential mem-

bers of the church. The conversation turned

on the wine plant. Mr. Porter said,

"I bought a hundred dollars worth in the

fall and am sorry I did not make a more lib-

eral investment. There is money in the

business, I tell you. I expect to realize three

or four hundred per cent on my capital this

year."

"Ah?" said Mr. Manning with wonder.

"Yes, I know men who have done better

than that the past year. You see it is easy

enough to get back your money two or three

times over by the sale of the young plants,

they increase so fast, and there is a great de-

mand for them; and then you will have a gal-

lon or two of wine for every plant besides."

"But is there no danger that the thing will

be overdone?"

"Not in the least. The supply will create

a demand. I think you came from Bingham-

ton, Mrs. Vinton," he said, turning to her.

"All our plants come from that direction.

Perhaps you will tell us what you have heard

and seen of the business in the region where

it was first started."

"I have heard much and seen something of

this business, sir," she replied. "I have

seen men who have made money by the cul-

tivation and sale of these plants, but they tell

me the price is falling so rapidly that tem-

ptation to enter the business for the profit in

that direction is removed. There has been a

good deal of their acid juice put into cellars

the past year or two. Some of it I am told

has fortunately turned to vinegar and is not

likely to do any harm, but the owners feel

that their golden dreams have faded. Others

have something which they call wine and

which they pronounce a delicious beverage.

The children drink it instead of milk, the

women instead of tea, and the men instead

of cider and beer, and the demon alcohol

which is in it laughs while he twists the cords

and weaves the meshes with which he binds

their body and soul; and they laugh with

him, thinking they are threads of gossamer

instead of steel. But we shall see—he will

drag them down to perdition."

Mr. Porter looked at her with astonishment,

mingled with anger. He said,

"You take a very wrong view of this sub-

ject, madam. I have no doubt, the free use

of wine will lessen the amount of drunken-

ness by lessening the temptation to the use

of distilled liquors."

"Sir," she said, her eyes fixed on his face,

"God has said, 'Wine is a mocker,' and he has

warned us, saying, 'Look not on the wine

when it is red. At last! bleth like a serpent,

and stings like an adder.' But you say it is

good, and will prevent drunkenness. You

know better, sir. You are tempted by the

love of gain to enter this business. If you

do, you will be a drunkard, and you will be

as guilty as he who makes and sells

other kinds of intoxicating liquors."

Mr. Porter was growing pale with sup-

pressed rage.

"Madam," he exclaimed, "you mean to

insult me."

"Without regarding the interruption she

went on,

"Have you a family, sir? and do you

care to lay this temptation in the way of your

children? Beware, sir! You may lay the

foundation of the fortune you build in this

business, in the blood of your first-born, and

complete it in the ruin of your youngest son."

Mr. Porter sprang to his feet. "Madam,"

he said, shaking with passion, "you are in-

superable, and he walked away from the

table.

Mrs. Vinton looked at him with a smile.

"Mr. Manning," she said, "does it al-

ways insult a man to speak the truth to

him?"

Generation after generation have felt as