

WHEN THE CLOCK TICKS LOUD.

There are times when life is something more than meat and drink and sleep; When the surface shows no ripple though the stream is swift and deep; When the good that's in the worst of us has taken us in tow And has fanned love's fading embers till they flash again and glow; When we feel there's something in us has escaped the madding crowd— When it's quiet in the evening and the clock ticks loud.

When the grate fire's crimson afterglow is graying into gloom, When there's none but she and you within that cozy little room, When the cat upon the hearth rug yawns and drifts again to dream— Then how very like the heaven we have learned to long for seems That delightful little chamber with the magic charm endowed— When it's quiet in the evening and the clock ticks loud.

Not a word to break the stillness, yet there's music in the air — Music born of softest silence, music sweet and low and rare; For the one who sits beside you is your sweetheart, and you know — That she loves you, for she wed you many patient years ago; And her love songs, born of silence, make you brave and great and proud, When it's quiet in the evening and the clock ticks loud. —New York Times.

A Converted Clergyman

THE Reverend Boswell Holland sat alone in his study. The room which, though small, had been signified with the name of study, was the best and pleasantest room in the house, and in it were drawn together all the best that the house afforded—here was the prettiest paper and the best carpet, the only lounge, the easiest rocking chair, the gayest table-cover, the best lamp, and the prettiest ornaments, all gathered here by his young wife's unselfish devotion, and her husband's devoted selfishness.

A tall, stout, well-made, florid young man, never intended by nature for any sedentary life; one whose broad shoulders and strong arms would have made a better and healthier man of him in the field or workshop; one who as a farmer or machinist might have made something of his muscular inheritance, but who had been thrust into a position he was wholly unfitted for by the weak ambition of a doting mother and the vanity and self-indulgent influence of his own character.

A gentle step, a timid deprecating tap at the study door. "Eyes right—attention!" In one moment, like a soldier on drill, the reverend gentleman had wheeled into position at the table, snatched up a pen, dipped it into the ink, and held it suspended over the paper, as he said in the half-annoyed tones of a person suddenly disturbed in some absorbing train of thought: "You can come in."

Softly the door was pushed ajar, and a sweet young face, fair and fresh as an apple blossom, and framed in braids of soft brown hair, peeped timidly in. "Quite alone, dear?" she asked, glancing round the apartment; and then satisfied that he was so, the wife came in—a girlish figure, though one arm clasped her sleeping baby to her bosom; in the other hand she bore a small tray with snowy white cloth. Pausing a moment on her way to deposit the child among the cushions of the lounge, she came to her husband's side.

"What have you got there, Lucy?" he said in half-reproachful tones, though his eager eyes contradicted his assumed indifference.

"Only a little lunch for you, dear," said the little wife, coaxingly, and she removed the desk and set the little tray before him.

"You silly child! what is it?" Lucy raised the cover and revealed a small juicy beefsteak, temptingly cooked, a biscuit, and a cup of steaming tea. "Oh, I have not any appetite; I do not want it," said the husband, making a very faint demonstration of pushing it from him.

"Yes, you do, dear; I know best. Did not you tell me yourself that brains needed food, and that mental labor was more exhausting than any other? Take a little sip of the tea first, dear, and maybe that will bring an appetite."

"You are a little goose, Lucy," said the Reverend Boswell, as he took the cup from her hand; and so, just to please the affectionate little thing, he ate and drank all she had provided—and he did it, too, just as if he relished every mouthful. You would never have guessed he did not relish it. Oh, he was such a good man! And Lucy sat by, delighted that her idol had condescended to accept her meat and drink offerings.

"There now; these poor, dear, tired brains will feel all the better," she said, laying her soft hand carelessly on his low brow. "It is too bad for you to sit here, hard at work, all this lovely day; but tell me, have you worked very hard this morning?"

"Well, no, not very," said the self-convinced idler. "It is too warm to do much."

"Warm here, dear?" said Mrs. Holland, glancing round the cool, fresh, orderly little room, and contrasting it with the kitchen, the heated scene of her own labors. "Then it must be because you feel weak; do you?"

"I thought you would come up and read for me, Lucy; I have been expecting you."

"But I could not come to-day, you know," said the wife, deprecatingly. "It's washing day!"

"Well, what if it is? You do not wash, I presume."

"No, dear, not exactly; but Katie does."

"But you are not Katie."

"I beg your pardon, but I am on washing and ironing days."

"What do you mean?"

"Only, of course, that when Katie is washing, I have her daily work to do."

"I do not see what great amount of work there can be to do in such a family as ours."

"That is because it is not in your line, Boswell. If it was you would soon find out that there is work to be done in every well-managed family, however small; and where there is a baby, and only one inexperienced servant, there is a good deal of work to be done."

"Work, work!" said the parson, fretfully. "One would think to hear you talk of your work, that we lived in a palace and entertained company every day of our lives."

"I am very thankful that we do not," laughed the sweet-tempered little woman.

"Well, I can't understand it, I'm sure. Do tell me now what have you had to do this morning?"

"I will," said Lucy, seating herself on the lounge by her child. "It is a fine day, and Katie has a very large wash; so I set her at work early, and I made the beds and put the rooms in order, and then I cleared away the breakfast things, and swept and dusted the parlor and entry; and I put fresh flowers in the vases, and I picked and shelled the peas, and made the pudding, and cooked your steak, and tended the baby—"

"Well, he is asleep."

"Yes, he is now; but he was wide awake all the morning, and just as cunning as he could be. I only wish you had seen him when I—"

"Oh, yes, I dare say; but I don't care to hear about it."

Lucy bent down over the sleeping child to pat and kiss him, and when she raised her head there was a tear on the baby's dimpled cheek. Poor little thing! Had he been weeping in his sleep? for the mother's fair face was as unruffled as before.

"Are you coming to read to me, Lucy?"

Lucy hesitated.

"I will if I can—after dinner."

"Oh, I am going out to dine with the Allens."

"You are! Why, Mr. Holland, you did not tell me!"

"No, I did not think of it; and I do not suppose it makes much difference to you."

"I thought it would be a good day for you to go over to see that old deaf Mrs. Otis. I hear she tells everybody she does not know her minister by sight."

"Well, she won't acquire that knowledge to-day, any way. Mary Denny promised to call for me at the Allens' and take me for a drive in her pony carriage down to the lower mills at the Pond, and that is much pleasanter."

"Of course it is; and such a lovely day, too. You will have a charming ride. I am so glad! It will do you good to leave your writing, I am sure."

"Yes; but about that old Mrs. Otis! Can't you go there instead of me? You might."

"Of course I could. But she is so cross I am half afraid of her; and besides, it is you she wants to see, not me."

"Let her take the best she can get," said the unconscious egotist; "I can't go."

"Shall you be home to tea, Boswell?"

"I rather think not. Mary said she would leave me up at the Whites' on our way home; they are to have the

choir up there this evening; they said something about your coming, but I told them it was of no use to ask you, for I knew you would not leave the baby all the evening."

"Of course I could not," said the wife, picking up her baby and the tray. "You will have a beautiful day; I half envy you the nice ride; but I'm sure you need it, and if I were you I would not write another word to-day. Just lie down on the lounge and take a nap, and you will be all rested and bright by dinner time. If any one calls I will say you are engaged (you are, you know, engaged for dinner) and I'll call you in time to dress, and bring you some hot water. Now take my advice," and nodding and smiling, the unselfish woman drew down the shades and left him.

And this was but a sample of their daily lives.

Mrs. Briant, Lucy's mother, was a widow of some property. After the marriage of all her children she had broken up housekeeping, and had been making a long visit to each of her two married sons, and now she wrote to say if it was agreeable to Mr. and Mrs. Holland, she would come and make them a visit of a few weeks.

Of course Lucy, who was the youngest child and only daughter, was delighted. She came, all tears and smiles and blushes, to show the welcome letter to her husband. Of course he was not quite so much elated at the prospect; it was not to be expected he should be; and most wives would have resented his unsympathizing coldness; but Lucy had such a pretty, winning way, and then she had, all unconsciously, learned the habit of arguing with him through his own interests.

"Mother is so cheerful," she said, "and so pleasant, you will find her excellent company; and then she is such a splendid housekeeper, and knows everything, and Katie and I are so inexperienced. She is a capital cook, too, and makes things go so far again as I can. And such nice things as she can make! I am only afraid after she has been here you will think I don't know anything; but I shall keep my eyes open, and try to learn her way of doing things. I did not think half enough of it while I lived at home. And then she has had so much experience with children, she is as good as a doctor; and I am such a little goose if anything ails the baby; but I shall feel as if he is all right if I can pop him into mother's arms, and I shall not have to rout you up at night to go for the doctor every time he screws his dear little face up into a pucker; and then she is so fond of babies I dare say she will tend him half the time; and think how much more time I shall have to read to you and make parish calls!"

In due course of time Mrs. Briant made her appearance. She was a delicate, pleasing, lady-like little woman, with sweet brown eyes and a marvelously sweet voice, that "excellent thing in woman." Never yet came Nemesis in gentler form or more alluring guise; but it was Nemesis all the same. She was an acute and observing woman; there was quiet but keen penetration in those soft brown eyes, but there was no bitterness about her.

She read her son-in-law's character at once; the soft brown eyes went straight through his shallowness down to his selfishness and indolence. Of course her motherly instincts were all on Lucy's side, who, she saw, was drooping under a burden of care beyond her strength; but she never thought of making her unhappy by pointing out her husband's faults to her; on the contrary, she always praised him wherever she conscientiously could, treated him with marked deference, and made him more comfortable in a dozen little ways, while she was all the time quietly loosening his wife's bonds and transferring them to him.

"Mr. Holland," she said to him one day, in her sweet, gracious way, "will you have the kindness to pick us some peas for dinner to-day?"

"Me? I pick the peas?" asked the astonished son-in-law.

"Oh, no, no," hastily interposed Lucy; "I will get them; I was just going."

"My dear child, no! The vines are wet with last night's rain; and with your thin dress! I would not have you do it for the world; and I am sure Mr. Holland would not hear of such a thing."

"No, no! certainly not," said the reverend gentleman; "it is not fit for her, of course;" though he remembered uneasily how many times she had done it, even in the rain. "But cannot Kate get them?"

"I do not think she can," said the gentle voice; "she is very busy ironing your shirts, and she does them very well, but she is very slow. I could shell the peas if I had them; but it is no matter; if you do not care about them, we will do without. We have only plain boiled corned beef to-day, and I thought you would like some vegetable besides potatoes with it; but please don't go if you don't want them."

But Mr. Holland was an epicure in a small way, and he did not fancy a dinner of beef and potatoes. So he went, and from that day the picking of the peas, beans, cucumbers and toma-

atoes was, without any talk, dropped quietly into his hands.

And so with many other little out-of-door duties which usually devolve upon the master of the house, but which Lucy, in her loving eagerness to spare her husband time and trouble, had indiscreetly taken upon herself; Mrs. Briant laughingly accused her of over-officiousness, quietly took them out of her hands and restored them to their rightful owner. And all this was done so sweetly by the amiable lawyer that neither party could gainsay her, and the mystified minister really felt she was sustaining him in his rightful authority. Indeed, he was morally and physically a better, happier and more useful man for the healthy out-of-door employments to which her sagacious administration had subjected him. He dawdled less with his pen, and wrote better when he did write.

By the time Mrs. Briant's visit drew near its intended close, the gentle tactician had her Leviathan pretty well in hand; for though quiet in her advances as the incoming tide, she was quite as irresistible. Lucy, cheered by her mother's presence and silent support, and set free from the household bonds that had so oppressed and enthralled her, was herself once more. She had regained her natural elasticity of step and feeling, and brought out by her mother's judicious management she had taken and worthily filled her proper place in the parish as the minister's wife, and was beloved and respected in the congregation.

"I have been thinking, my dear Mr. Holland," said Mrs. Briant in her most effluent tones, one day when the soup she had presided over had given him great satisfaction, "that after I leave you, Lucy had better have a second girl."

Mr. Holland looked up in blank surprise, and calmly and sweetly the lady went on:

"Katie, though a good girl as far as she goes, is very inefficient. She is honest, but she is a miserable cook, and very wasteful. But all such young girls are; they waste half enough to keep a family. And the washes are very heavy; gentlemen and babies," she said, with a rippling laugh, "make a great deal of washing, you know, and Katie is very slow, and if you have to put it out that is very expensive. And then there is so much sewing to be done. I did hope we should find time to make up your new linen before I left, but it is not cut out yet, and Lucy will never get through a dozen shirts alone. Poor girl! the parish and the baby make such heavy demands upon her time, I think she will have to put your shirts out to be made." And with a few pleasant remarks about the parish and the weather, she smilingly withdrew.

But the good seed had been carefully sown. The parson, though not overwise in general, was sharp and shrewd where money was in question, and knew the full value of dollars and cents. He took the matter into consideration, nicely balanced the pros and cons. He knew that Mrs. Briant, in her quiet, lady-like way, had been very efficient in his family; she superintended the cooking, and under her direction were prepared the savory meats that his soul loved. He knew, too, that since her advent among them his weekly expenses had been lessened, not increased. He knew that the liberal board which she had insisted upon paying ever since she had been with them amounted to half as much as his salary, while her generous gifts supplied many needs of the little household. He knew that she relieved his wife of much care and labor; and that her experience during the baby's troubles in the Ivory business, upon which he had just entered, had already saved him the fatigue and expense of many a visit to the doctor; and all these loving services were freely given. On the other hand, if she left, all this must stop. An additional servant would cost him three dollars a week, to begin with, and how much in waste and discomfort? And as to putting out washing and sewing, those were bugbears of unknown expense which he could not estimate. The parson drew his conclusion—he was used to that business; "in conclusion" was his favorite portion of his sermon—so, in conclusion, he requested Lucy to invite her mother to become a permanent member of the family; and Lucy, who in her unselfishness thought dear Boszy did it all for her sake, could not express her joy and gratitude.

And now you know the reason the Reverend Boswell Holland resembled St. Peter. Don't you see? He had a "wife's mother" in the house!—Waverley Magazine.

Idleness Discouraged. "I see it stated that there is an alarming lot of idle money in the country just now."

"Say, I'd like the job of setting a little of it at work for a week or so. I'd have it putting in eighteen hours a day and sixty minutes every hour and nothing off for meals. Oh, I'd keep it busy all right, all right!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Young man, don't turn down a leap-year proposal because the girl can't cook. She may be able to pay your board.

Rubberton—Why did you ask Slopy to lend you \$5 just now? You have \$100 in your pocket.
Wiserly—Just a little scheme of mine. He thinks I'm broke and won't ask me for a loan. See?

Between Friends.
Palette—Well, old man, how's business with you? Anything doin'?
De Auber—Well, I guess yes. Just received a commission from old Milltuns, who wanted his daughter's portrait painted badly.

Palette—Wanted it painted badly, eh? Well, you are the very chap for a job like that.

Those Foolish Questions.
"Yes," said the man, "I lead a calm and peaceful life."
"Are you married?" asked the woman.

"Pardon me," rejoined the man, "but didn't you hear what I just said?"


Information Wanted.
Bachelor Brother—Is that baby in the fowl or animal class?
Young Mother—What do you mean?
Bachelor—Why, he crows one minute and bellows the next.

A Temporary Stash.
Mr. Timmid—Miss Pechis—er—Ma-jel—I'm going to kiss you!
Miss Pechis (haughtily)—How dare you, sir? Besides, the shades are up.—Philadelphia Press.

It Is, Indeed.
He's a veterinary surgeon, but since the automobile began to replace the horse he has turned his attention to dogs and other small animals.
"Literally, then, his practice is going to the dogs."—Philadelphia Ledger.

The Last Word.
"So her husband made a will for bidding her to marry again."
"Yes," answered Miss Cayenne, "I didn't know he had so much sentiment."
"It wasn't sentiment. It was merely another form of expression in their old-time struggle for the last word."—Washington Star.

No Work in His.
Fuzzy Fred—Ef enny feller wuz ter call me a liar wot do youze tink I'd do?
Weary Willie—Dunno. Give him a cross look, mebby.
Fuzzy Fred—Now; I'd go ter work an' fix him fer de horspittle.
Weary Willie—Well, mebby I'd fix him fer de horspittle, but I wouldn't go ter work.

After the Elopement.

She—I just got a telegram from papa.
He—What does he say?
She—"Stay away and all will be for given."

Real Contentment.
"Some people's idea of a contented disposition," said Uncle Eben, "is being willin' to sit down comfortably an' wait for meal times while somebod' else does all de work."—Washington Star.

Tradition Goes Wrong.
"Yes," said the friends of the family, "they were married in haste."
"And repented at leisure, eh?" queried the other.
"Oh, no," was the reply; "they repented in haste, also."

Two Different Brands.
Nell—Last night Charlie Huggin and the nerve to take a kiss from my without asking.
Bess—That's nothing. His brother Jack asked me for a kiss the other evening and didn't take it.

Gentle Reminder.
"Isn't that clock a little slow?" asked De Borem, as the cuckoo chirped the hour of 10.
"No," replied Miss Cutting, as she tried in vain to strangle a yawn; "it only seems slow."

Wisdom of Experience.
Parker—Did the climate in Florida agree with your wife?
Enspeck—You bet it did. Otherwiser she would have made it hot for the climate.

Not a Pressing Engagement.
Her mother eyed him with cold consideration.
"I suppose you have come to press your suit?" she said in heavy tones.
"No, no," he replied. "I pressed it at home. How does it look?"
And he prouddened gayly on our foot."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.