

toria,—“The Deliverance of Israel from Babylon.” His practice was, to jot down a sketch of the ideas as they presented themselves to his mind, and to write them out in score in the evenings, after he had left his work in the candle shop. His Oratorio was published in parts, in the course of 1844—5, and he published the last chorus on his twenty-ninth birthday. The work was exceedingly well received by musical critics, and has been frequently performed with great success in the northern towns. Mr. Jackson is now settled at Bradford, and not long since had the honour of leading his fine company of Bradford choral singers before Her Majesty at Buckingham Palace, on which occasion, as well as at the Crystal Palace, some fine choral pieces of his composition, from his MS. work (since published), entitled “The Year,” were performed with great effect.

Such is a very brief outline of the career of a self-taught English musician, who promises, in the maturity of his powers, to take high rank among native composers. His life affords but another illustration of the power of self-help, and the force of courage and industry, in enabling a man to surmount and overcome early difficulties and obstructions of no ordinary kind.”

FROM “SELF-HELP,” BY SAMUEL SMILES.

APPERLEY:

A SYLVAN SCENE.

No sound was in the woodlands
In the hush of the sunset hour,
Save where the rooks in darkening flight
Wheeled round their airy tower;
And the sylvan calm refreshed my heart,
As the dew salutes the flower.

Soft gathered the twilight ether
Its veil o'er the distant scene,
Whilst a lance of light from the opal west
Shot thro' the leafy screen;
And lengthening shadows of purple grey
Swept o'er the golden green.

The streamlet, hushed to a quiet pool
Lay calm in mirrored rest;
Deep diamond dark with the bending trees
Soft pictured on its breast,
And just one golden spangle
The star on twilight's crest.

Above it, moss stain'd ivy claspt,
Arose a cottage grey,
With children at the open door
And garden wildly gay;
Warm human love with nature dwelt
And blest the woodland way!

ELIZA CRAVEN GREEN.

AN EVENING WITH DRESSMAKERS.

CONCLUSION.

The new comer shut the door, and with head half awry and a keen ratty look at Zabeth, commenced as follows,

Now Mrs. Wellbeaten, I shan't stand this, you have cabbaged half a yard of my bonnet silk, and unless you give it up quietly, I will send a policeman with a search warrant.

Send him, said the compliant Mrs. Wellbeaten.

Oh, you wretch, you think you can do as you like but you will find out your mistake, Mrs. Lumby has examined that bonnet and she says the silk must be somewhere.

Mrs. Lumby is correct.

Then I will either have it or die for it.

Die you may and must, but you will get no more silk.

Shan't I though, then I'll tell you what I'll do, my fine madam, I'll blast your character, I'll tell everybody what a thief you are.

Don't, so many will know what a liar you are.

Well I never! and so people must not only be robbed by you but abused, why you little thieving aggravating wretch I'll murder you, and so saying, she snatched up a quarto volume lying on the table, and hurled it with all her force at the head of the dressmaker. A timely obeisance, to the coming missive, saved the head of my friend, but irremediably damaged mine, for it flew forwards and sent the knob of the door, behind which I sat with my eye to the keyhole, against my forehead, with a violence that made me a very marked, if not a very remarkable man.

Well, Sprento, said my hostess, how do you like No. 1?

In the parlance of the green room, said I, her performance would be called a decided hit; I think nothing but its uncommon thickness has saved my skull from being fractured.

There is one thing, my friend, that surprises me, you made no attempt to clear yourself of the dreadful charge of theft.

Mrs. Wellbeaten laughed pleasantly, and replied as follows:—In her present temper it would be impossible to make my innocence apparent; at some future time when the bonnet is taken to pieces to be cleaned, she will discover that I have not robbed her of a shred. You think, perhaps, I ought to purge my character of a stain so monstrous as this; I tell you, sir, that I cannot clear my character of foul charges; the accusations are so numerous that the refutation of them would consume all my time. The stains on my character, like the designs on Hoyles Prints, are “warranted fast;” or, like the spots on the hands of Lady Macbeth, they defy detergents, and grow more distinct for the washing. For years it has been my doom to labour under charges of some kind; one thinks me a thief, another

says I am an extortioner, a third whispers that I cannot pay my debts, and a fourth declares me a swindler. Instead, therefore, of patching up a character which can never more be made decent or respectable, I stay at home and try to silence all slanderers by a virtuous and industrious life.

Another knock at the door, and another woman enters.

Nah Missis, is me gahn doin'?

Yes ma'am, its here, quite ready.

Rowl it up, will ya, and lap it i' this ere enkutcher.

The dress was wrapped up and tied up as desired, and placed before her on the counter.

Hah mitch is it?

Half-a-crown, said Zabeth.

Can ya change a suvrin? asked the hag, holding a new farthing between her finger and thumb.

Indeed ma'am I can't, but I will send my daughter to get it changed.

Noa, noa, niver mind it nah, it 'll be reyt, it 'll all be reyt, and so saying she took up the bundle, walked out and shut the door after her.

Mrs. Wellbeaten, I asked, how long did you and your daughter work at that dress?

We began yesterday, after dinner, and finished as the Foundry bell was ringing eight.

There was then, I remarked, fourteen hours labour in it for a single person, and the remuneration, you say, half-a-crown.

Yes, full fourteen hours of labour, but not quite half-a-crown; in this instance, believing the woman to be poor, we found hooks and eyes, whalebone, and braid. Our actual wages perhaps will be two shillings.

I am not a man in any way soft-hearted. I have as little sympathy for ill-fortune as most men, but here I found it necessary to pull out my handkerchief and blow my nose, for the waters of compassion had always in me an odd preference for the nasal channel.

Mr. Sprento, said Zabeth, I fear I am a great fool.

Your last observation, said I, may have truth, but it wants originality' I was thinking the same thing before you spoke.

I believe, added my friend, that the woman is dishonest, and that the half-crown is lost.

Your creed, Zabeth, is as pregnant with truth as it is void of consolation. A more crafty, dishonest and plausible woman is not often found among working people; the warning was on my lips but she was gone before it could be uttered. Surely, Zabeth, you have friends among the middle orders of a different stamp to these.

Mr. Sprento, you see the velvet cape hanging yonder.

I do.

Well, a fortnight ago, one, that you would have called a lady, sent for me to her house; I went; she requested me to make up that

cape in a peculiar style which she fully explained. The material was costly, and the lady at fault in her reckoning. I saw her error and pointed it out, but she was headstrong, unteachable, imperious. She went so far as to remind me that she was the lady, I the menial. That was enough, I sat down grimly to my work. I asked repeatedly for instructions which I followed to the letter. At ten o'clock at night the robe was finished and tried on.

Oh! my cape, my cape, my beautiful cape, screamed the lady, spoiled, spoiled, quite spoiled. For once I lost my temper; from the poor I can take much, I know their trials, their sore straits. but from the vulgar rich I will take nothing; I will not lay upon my soul the sin of fostering the pride which is their curse and ours; so I approached this frantic woman, and I said, do you say I spoiled your cape; did I not tell you repeatedly that if made in that way you would not be able to move your arms? Young man, said I, appealing to her son, did I not forewarn her the result would be precisely what you see?

You certainly did, said the son.

Very well, you shall not say then, here or elsewhere, now or hereafter, that I spoiled this cape, I will not suffer work like this to be shewn anywhere as mine. I have three daughters to support, and my character for skill at least, shall not be impeached. Take it off ma'am, or I will; she hesitated, and then began to take it off, protesting all the while she would not. And now, ma'am, I said, you must suffer me to take home this cape and I will make it as it should be made.

Never! never! did I think to rule her in her own house?

Very well, madam, as you will, but if you do not permit me to finish it, I will burn it before your eyes, and pay you its value, be it what it may.

I seized the cape and stepped towards the fire. Quick, said I, with your answer, as in a moment more it will be all in a blaze.

The answer came in time, I brought it home. I have finished it with unusual care, the lady will call for it to night, and—Here Zabeth was interrupted by a knock. Here she is, said I; talk of the devil, and you know the proverb, and I slunk into my hiding-place. The lady caused quite a tumult, much shuffling of chairs, and rustling of satin, but at last the silk velvet cape was put on, and the lady was in raptures. The tasteful artiste had far outgone her poor conceptions of the graceful, and the lady pronounced it faultless.

Mrs. Wellbeaten, said she, in a fit of gratified vanity, you shall be my only needlewoman; at times you forget what is due to your superiors, but the past shall be forgiven.

Indeed! said I, mentally.

Take the cape home, Lucy, and your mistress will call upon me to-morrow for the money.

I must have the money to night, said Zabeth.

The lady stared like a tragedy queen, but the dressmaker was unabashed.

I seldom get so insulted, said she, but pray name the sum, and name enough and you shall be paid.

Nine shillings, ma'am. Seven and sixpence for making the cape, and one and sixpence for the foolish work done at your own house.

The lady put down the money, saying, you are, I suppose, now satisfied, and you will attend to-morrow for your future orders.

No ma'am, I shall not attend to-morrow, or on any day. The last stitch I shall ever sew for you in this world is in the cape you have gotten. Good night, madam.

Grandly and sublimely sailed away that rich lady on her cloud of shimmering satin, but grander still, sublimer far seemed that little dressmaker, as her form rose to its tiny height, as the bright face, for an instant and but for an instant, darkened like a thunder-cloud, and her eye flashed back the lightning of her proud disdain.

When the door had closed on that gorgeous drapery, and Zabeth was about to resume her work, I rose and grasped her hand, for I felt that through all time and on through the "eternity to come" the soul that is within me had found a sister.

Esteem, reverence, admiration, in a word every kindly feeling were awaking within me, as I gazed on that noble woman, so tender yet so heroic, so gentle yet so firm, so even-tempered yet so sorely tried.

Not long, however, was I fated to indulge this pleasing reverie, for another intruder stumbled in, and this time it was a man and drunk!

This person's business will best appear from his own words.

Zabeth, said he, my own Zabeth, I'm here again you see. Ah, girl! those were happy days when we lived at Linley, green woods and pleasant fields they were through which we rambed after school-hours. There I gathered you the prettiest flowers, the finest nuts and blackberries. I wanted none for myself, Zabeth, I gave them all to you, because I loved you, yes, I loved you; and here overcome with drink and tender recollections, he wept plenteously. After a while he rose up, and looking at his lost love, muttered to himself, No, no, I was not good enough. I'm a fallen lost man, not half good enough, yet I loved her, and then he said aloud, good bye, and God bless you. Don't be grieved, Zabeth, you know I never see you only when I get drunk, and think of the old times.

Good night, James, good night, go right home to your wife and your little ones.

I will, Zabeth, I will, God bless you, you tell me to do what is right, and I will do it. After I have been here they never can

get me back to the alehouse. Good night, Zabeth, good night.

And the poor, fallen lost man, staggered out into the street, and straightway as if a strong angel had seized him by the hand, in the gloom of the night and amid the darkness of his own soul, through all hindrances and temptations, he walked resolutely on to his home, his wife, and his little ones.

After the last visitor had gone, I looked at the face of Zabeth. Some women, I know, would have laughed and jested at his foolish tears, but in her face there was a silent, mournful profound compassion, and I felt more and more that we were akin.

It was now getting rather late, the work was all folded up and put aside, Maria, the eldest daughter, prepared a repast of toast and coffee, and I drew up to the table and partook with them.

When the frugal meal was over, Maria, Jane and Emma, drew from under the sofa some music of the new school and began to sing.

The poetry was well-chosen, simple, yet heart-stirring, and what is rare, happily married to music worthy of it. The New Notation, so far as they were concerned, was no failure, for their singing was delightful. "The Better Land" was one of the songs I remember, and the others were equally good. What was better, it lifted us all off the ground, it raised us above the mists and smoke of this world into the pure air and the clear sunshine.

All of us felt that above and beyond the turmoil and dust of this earthly grovelling life, there was a region of stainless ether—radiant with the smile of God—where, throned above all cloud and storm, reigns for ever, peace, peace.

I rose with a glad and thankful heart, took my leave of that untrumpeted heroine and her daughters, and so ended "An evening with dressmakers."

Every woman has a right to be any age she pleases, for if she were to state her real age no one would believe her. Every one has a right to wear a moustache who can. Every one who makes puddings has a perfect right to believe that she can make a better pudding than any other woman in the world. Every man who carves has a decided right to think of himself by putting a few of the best lumps aside. Every woman has a right to think her child the "prettiest little baby in the world," and it would be the greatest folly to deny her this right, for she would be sure to take it. Every young lady has a right to faint when she pleases, if her lover is by her side to catch her.