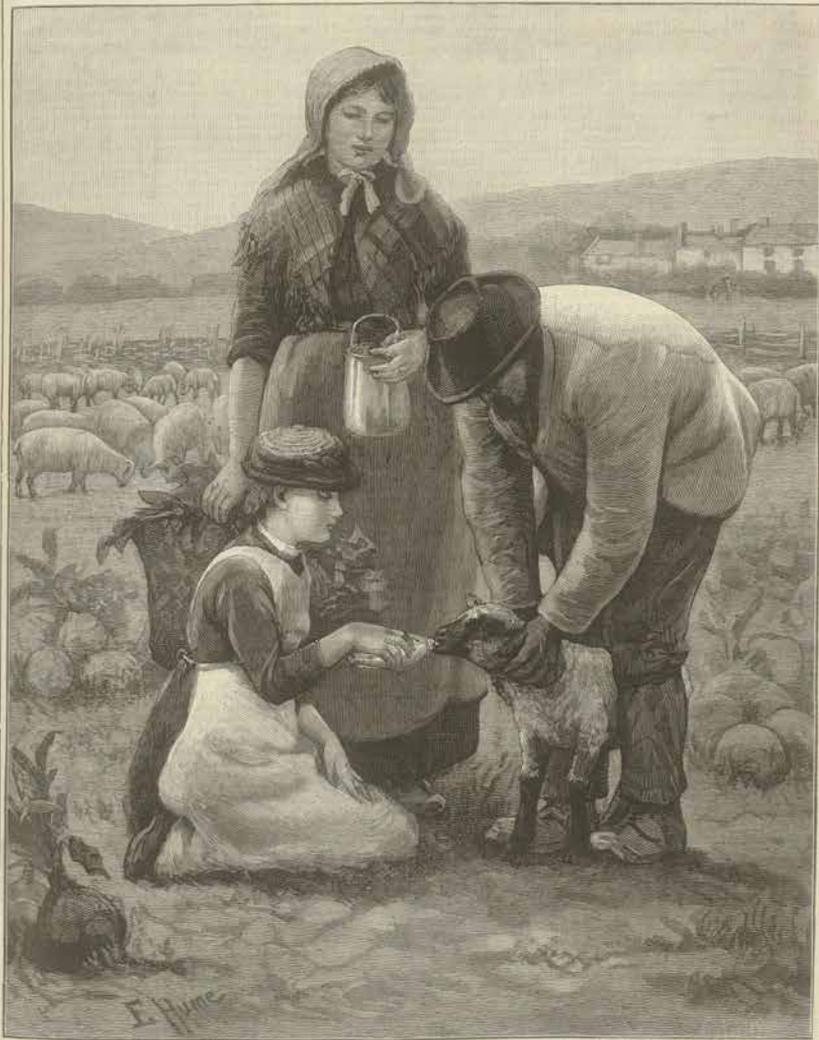


THE BRITISH WORKWOMAN.



income of upwards of a thousand a year. He was above the ordinary level of the country gentleman, and had been to college, and travelled throughout Europe, and was well fitted to adorn his social position. His personal temper was that of a benevolent, kind, and charitable man, one who would readily do any good action in his power, and one to whom his friends might confidently look for just and considerate treatment.

Hostile and enmities to all, both gentle and simple, his house was ever open to any that could claim a welcome, either by virtue of their rights or of their needs. His time was spent in the various recreations and pursuits that made up the life of a country gentleman of that period, but in his case,

more than in most, doubtless refined by character and tastes. So the earlier years of manhood passed away. Then came a sudden change. He had a relative—one account says it was a brother—who was of reckless and prodigal habits, and consequently poor. This man Wesley had again and again secured, till at last, wearied by continued applications and by protestations of amendment that were never put into force, he refused longer to do so. The selfish nature of the other was suggested by the refusal, and in his rage and disappointment he attempted his benefactor's life. Luckily the fatal missile, and the stout Lincolnshire squire, changed with his assistant, dressed the weapon from his hand. Whether or not he took any proceedings to punish the aggressor is not known—the absence of any hint renders it probable that he did not—but the whole spirit and tenor of his life underwent a sudden revolution. He formed the resolve of passing the rest of his days in strict seclusion. This resolution he at once acted upon, and to it he adhered. He left his ancestral home, all pleasant memories and sweet associations, and sought for some one to that bound him to the port. As if knowing that there is often the greatest consolation to be found in the most crowded cities, he came to London, and in Great Street—then the resort of poor authors and literary hacks—selected and rented the house that was to shelter him for the rest of his days. Of this dwelling he occupied only three rooms: a for male, shop, and study respectively. An abject woman was his only attendant, and she saw him but rarely and only when necessity required. Like all other habits his diet was also changed, and was now as severely plain as it had been formerly liberal. It was consisted of vegetables, bread, milk, water-cress, and a little oatmeal, with occasionally the yolk of an egg as a luxury. But he treated his mind less rigorously. He bought such new books as appeared, but apparently only to skim and cast them aside. There is nothing to show that any intellectual

employment or design was planned or entered upon during his lifelong seclusion. Save for his desultory reading, his time appears to have passed in prayer and meditation. Thus the years went slowly on. The various members of his family, including a daughter—who had married a Yorkshire gentleman of property and position—made various attempts to see the recluse, but in vain. He rarely quitted his residence, and never made a journey of any length. The climate of friendship as well as relationship were forgotten or unheeded. But he nevertheless, though reserved and seclusion, was neither morose nor unamiable. Much of his income and his time were given to charitable purposes. Though changed he was not secured. So this various life passed on, to earlier

Parted in Anger.

By PAUL CHITERS.
Author of "Mosses of the Truth," &c.

CHAPTER I.

IN BITTERNESS OF FEELING.

AND they had parted in anger!

This was what had precipitated to the grief of Madge Mayall, as she stood gazing on the open sheet of paper in her hand, as if scarcely able to believe her senses.

It was a letter; the postman had just delivered it, saying

"A love-letter for you, Miss Mayall. On the 1st and turned laughingly away."

The little thought how much sorrow he had brought in that small envelope, how many tears would be shed over its contents. It was not a very lengthy epistle either; yet what a sting its words gave Madge as she read—

"Madge,

"It is my painful duty to inform you that your brother, William Mayall, has, we believe, perished at sea, the vessel in which he was engaged, having gone down during the recent storm."

There was more, the effect of which, having ascertained she was his nearest relative, the amount of wages due to him would be paid to her on application; but to this part your Madge gave little heed, the first paragraphs so completely engrossed her, for what could she do for what was left, now he, her only near relative, her brother, the darling of her heart

in childhood—yes, and her darling still, she felt, as usual and again she read the sad brief words, as if to make sure it was not a dream, was really dead; now that she would never see him

again; never sleep his hand; never kiss his brow; never hear his voice more.

She had been to him as a mother in his earlier years, for he was very much the younger, and had been left for her to bring up, guide, and care for, by parents who had both died when he was in infancy, having but all but those two, the mother and youngest of the family; and now he was gone; and—and they had parted in anger. Poor poor Madge!

How is it that the fragments of her mind's memories? Times, looks, movements, smiles, little incidents, brief conversations, small things almost unheeded at the time, or which had been unobscured of her years, rising to new life, come back with vivid freshness, and re-awaken feelings, hopes, and yearnings which have long lain dormant and dead?

Death's touch is a sacred hand. It spelt its power to call up visions which others or voice has



"SHE WAS FRETTE AND WEEPIING." (See page 6.)

years spent in the enjoyment and pleasure of a country home, its later in a lonely and cheerless dwelling situated amid the poverty and gloom of a dreary London street. But his strange mode of life preserved him to some extent from being utterly forgotten. As the Lincolnshire squire he would have lived and died, unnoticed and unknown. As the London recluse he has saved himself from total oblivion. He died October 29, 1836, in his eighty-fourth year, far away from home and kindred, and the story of his life remains a testimony to the curious workings of the human brain, a proof of the change that so evil art may produce in a nature originally gentle, trusting, fit, and from confidence in others to distrust of all mankind.

R. STAMBEY WALKER.

