

TO A TERRAPIN.

Thou terrapin, terrapin, whither away,
Thou sleek-movin', evill-cryin' tramp:
What dreary, leathern, old pilgrim, to stray
So far from the terrapin camp?
Why prawl at my garden, thou saunterin' crust
Of inscrutable cunning—why sneak
And recoil, like a snake, with an air of distrust,
When a gentleman deigns to speak?

Thou toothless, old, triple-lashed rover, what
news
Brings thee thou from the terrapin isles:
And dews of thy trip thro' the dugs and the
news
Over the pathless and perilous miles?
What bloody banditti bequeath thy way,
And where does thy lone journey trend?
O pride of the turtles, make answer, I pray,
To the question pos'd, thy friend!

Thou Wandering Jew of the terrapin race,
What marvelous mysteries lie
To be daily seen in thy return face,
And forever unsolved thy thine eye?
For thee doth some treacherous mistress await
In her portable palace, I wot,
For she sits night after night at the gate,
And sadly complaint of her lot.
Thou terrapin, terrapin, whither away.
Thro' the dews and the daze of dawn?
No longer, poor eyer, thy steps I wot,
But with them thyself of when gone:
Thou land as raven, no mouth as my own,
Thy soul is a, saulless and sore.
So I wish thee good-morning, thou terrapin,
And bid thee godspeed from my door.
—J. N. Matthews, in the *Current*.

VAN DORN'S LESSON.

BY M. C. FARLEY.

"There's no use talking," said Van Dorn, carelessly, "no use whatever. If a woman had a hundred dollars a day given her for household and other necessary expenses, it wouldn't be half enough, and in a week's time she would be begging to have the allowance increased."

"Try it a little while, Dick," retorted Mrs. Van Dorn. "I won't ask for a hundred dollars a day; but give me a reasonable amount and see if you are asked to increase it."

"No use trying," returned Van Dorn, stuffing his hands deep into his breeches pockets, and staring approvingly at the reflection of his handsome self in the mirror opposite, "I tell you what, Maria, no woman on top of the ground is qualified to carry a purse of her own. The mania for spending money seems to be inherent in the female organization, for no sooner does a woman get hold of a dollar than it burns in her hands until it is spent. Giving my hard-earned ducats into your dear little paws would be exactly like pouring water into a sieve with the expectation of its staying there. No, no, my angel, ask me for anything but money, like my life, it shall be yours right from the word 'go.' But my money, like my life, is not to be parted with, unless in case of the most dire emergency."

Mrs. Van Dorn put her hand to her heart to conceal the tears that would come in spite of her efforts to keep them back. A line or two of the marriage service, "with all my worldly goods I thee endow," persisted in ringing in her ears as her husband thus settled the vexed question of money matters to his satisfaction.

"Besides," went on Van Dorn, warming to the subject in hand, "I can't see what in the world a married woman wants with money. You are at no expense whatever. I provide everything for you that you would buy yourself if you had the handling of the pocket-book. You have your board and a good home without having to give a thought toward contributing to the necessary outlay to procure either, and yet there is hardly a week passes by but you want money. I'm afraid, Maria, that for a poor man's wife, you desire to buy too many fol-de-rols and expensive knick-knacks. Come, own up, now, if it isn't so."

It wasn't so, but Mrs. Van Dorn said nothing. She wished fervently enough that she could have a dollar for every time during their five years of wedded life Dick had dwelt upon that same subject and used the language he now did she would be a rich woman. It was always the same old cry of home, and clothes, and board, coupled with the implied limit of woman's uselessness in the general economy of life. Dick did not mean to be unkind, but she was tired of it, the pinching, the saving, the trying to make one dollar do the duty of ten. She gave all her time and strength to the keeping of Dick's home, to the care of himself and his children, and she felt that no wage receiver worked harder for her money than Dick Van Dorn's wife did for her board and clothes; and when it came to the subject of clothes, Dick had really very little to boast of in the way of purchase. The gossips could have told Dick easily enough just how many times Mrs. Van Dorn's wedding silk had been made over, and that she had taken two old cashmere to the dyer's in order to make one "new" gown from the "best parts" of both of them; that her new hats and equally new bonnets came from the sacred precincts of her bed chamber, and that her boots were never renewed save when the old ones were far gone in general decay. But there were the three little boys, the two twins, and the three months' old baby. Two pairs of restless little feet to be shod, two merry, mischievous bodies to be clad in warm jackets, two hungry mouths to be fed—and everything cost money; and such a lot of money, now that she had to ask Dick for every penny. Mr. Van Dorn lit a 15-cent cigar, preparatory to going out. He always smoked good cigars, and could not exist, he said, with less than three per day at the least calculation; still, he had insisted upon his wife's giving up her favorite magazine, because to pay \$1 a year for a magazine was a sheer extravagance and he could not afford it, and would not.

"I hope, Maria, that some day you will view this subject from my point of view," said he, carefully adjusting his hat before the mirror and admiring its natty appearance; "but I'll tell you what it is, dear, few women, if any, realize the full value of money."

"I will never ask you again for money, Dick—never!" said she as he strolled away.

Mrs. Van Dorn looked at her careless, good-natured husband with an expression that haunted him even among the ledgers in his counting-room.

"Can't think what the little woman means, I'm sure. Not ask me for money, gad! I only hope she won't

for a week or so, any way. Though I might have given her a trifle, perhaps—only a man does not like to encourage his wife in a habit of that sort. But never mind—she'll come round again without doubt—women always do."

A few days later, as Mr. Van Dorn went home to a late dinner, he was surprised to see a servant bring in the meal, and ring the bell for them to take their places at the table.

"What is the matter? Is Mrs. Van Dorn ill?" he asked, for a servant was one of the "articles of luxury" his wife had insisted upon getting along without. And, in fact, he had encouraged her to do so on the ground that "his mother never employed one."

"I am quite well," answered his wife herself at that moment, taking a seat; "but I am very busy now, and found it necessary to have help about the house-work."

Dick looked at her in surprise. She was quite pale, but there was a sparkle in her eyes that had not been there since their first year of married life. Still, he didn't quite like the idea of her hiring a servant without as much as asking his consent.

"I thought I told you, dear," said he, presently, "that we would be obliged to economize for a while. This Wall street trouble has upset business all over the country, and is making us a lot of worry, and I don't believe we can afford the additional expense of a servant."

"Perhaps, Dick, were you to cut down a few, a very few, of your own personal expenditures—such as wine suppers, for instance—you would find a considerable sum to your credit at the end of the month," said Mrs. Van Dorn, gently.

Dick blushed guiltily. He wondered who had told his wife about that wine supper. To be sure, it was a foolish bet made on the fall elections, and he had lost it; but what could one expect?

A man must be a man, or lose standing with his fellows—one or the other.

And really it was, after all, none of Maria's business. He earned the money, she did not, and he had a right to use it as he pleased.

All she had to do was to sit there in the comfortable home he provided for her, and be supported.

He was certain now that he didn't like it about the servant, and he rose from

the table feeling that he had a grievance.

What on earth did Maria need with a hired girl? She had told him often enough that Benny and Billy were just as good as they could be, and that the baby wasn't the least bit of trouble in the world.

All she had to do was to see to them, and do the little house-work necessary for them all. Mr. Van Dorn would have been mightily offended if anybody had intimated to him that his wife was a drudge. Another week went by. Somehow there seemed to have come a great change in Maria.

He was puzzled to account for it, whenever he had time to think about it. The servant was still in the house, and a nurse girl had been engaged to care for the baby. Maria was certainly developing a peculiar method of retrenchment.

At this rate he would be obliged to give up his elegant new fall overcoat, for his salary was not large enough to cover so many expenses. Maria didn't look well. She was too pale; but then she never had regained her bright color since the twins came. Still, with two girls in the house now, she ought to soon be as bright as ever. As the weeks dragged on Dick began to experience a feeling of loneliness. If he asked his wife to walk with him, she excused herself on the plea of not having the time to go. If he came home a trifle earlier in the evening, she was invariably poring over a lot of newspapers. She no longer welcomed him at the door. She never now came into the dining-room at meal-time until the bell rang. It was, at the least, a very unpleasant change; and it struck him suddenly one day that it had been a long time since Maria had asked him for a "little money." It was all of six weeks since he had given her a cent. When the first consciousness of this defection came to him, he was busy over his ledger.

"It can't be that she is running up bills!" he gasped; "she certainly wouldn't carry it that far!"

Filled with an undefinable terror—for, with all his careless selfishness, Van Dorn was strictly honest, and hated debt as he did the devil—he put on his hat and started for home. He had only turned the corner, when he saw his wife coming down the broad steps of the Bennet Building. Wondering what could have taken her to a newspaper office, he stopped and waited for her to overtake him. He looked curiously at her as she came nearer. There was a certain smartness in her apparel he had not seen in a long time. It struck him that her gown was of a fabric new to him, and there was a freshness about the delicately gloved hands and the pale-blue bonnet ties that he had not noticed before. A sudden fury took hold of him.

"Maria," said he, as she halted for a moment before him. "Maria, where have you been, and what have you been doing? Why is it that you have asked for money during all those weeks? Have you been running up bills at the shops?"

"I have not," said she quietly. "And I deny your right to catechise me in this fashion on the public thoroughfare."

"You resist my authority."

"Let us walk on; people will observe us if we remain standing in this conspicuous place," returned his wife in a low tone.

In silence they reached their home.

"Now, Maria," cried Van Dorn, angrily, as they entered the little parlor,

"I demand an explanation of your conduct. It has been fully six weeks since you have had a cent of housekeeping money from me, and yet you have a new gown on, and have seen fit to employ two new servants. I confess that I don't understand it."

"The explanation is easy enough," returned Mrs. Van Dorn, pulling off her gloves. "I have gone back on the staff of the *Daily Advertiser*."

If she had struck him in the face Van Dorn could not have felt the blow more keenly.

"Without my knowledge or consent!" he ejaculated, trembling with rage.

"The time was, Dick," said Mrs. Van Dorn, gently, "when your wishes

were laws to me. If that time is now gone it is your fault—not mine. Five of the best years of my life I have willingly given to your exclusive service—all for the sake of being supported, as you say. Six weeks ago I discovered that I would be happier by being self-supporting. The position of proof-reader on the *Daily Advertiser* has been a standing offer to me since the day I left the office to become your wife. They pay me now the same salary they paid me five years ago—that is, \$30 a week. If you remember, I used to be reckoned an expert and commanded the highest wages. I am much happier, dear, since I went to work for salary than I ever was during these five terrible years that I gave all my time just for my board and clothes. After all, I doubt if there is in life a sweeter feeling to a woman than that which comes with the knowledge that she can earn a little money of her own."

Van Dorn had always been desperately jealous of that newspaper office. He knew that the proprietors were unfriendly to him, and always had been. He knew, too, that the elder of the firm had attempted to dissuade Maria from marrying him in the first place, and he had only waited until his wedding ring had been legally placed on his bride's finger ere he sent in her resignation himself, and gloated over the act.

"Wifehood and motherhood cuts no figure, then, in a woman's happiness in comparison with money," he cried, violently. He had rather have given her every cent of his salary than that she should have gone back to the office.

"This cry of wifehood and motherhood is a subject overdone by men," said Mrs. Van Dorn, calmly. "Speaking from a personal point, I can say that I fail to find an all-satisfying feeling in the fact that I am a wife and a mother, particularly when I remember that I am a moneyless wife and a moneyless mother. It is well enough for a woman to marry, but, speaking from experience again, I think it unjust to herself to assume such duties before she has become financially able to support herself in the position. It would be ridiculous to suppose that, because a man is husband and father, every other feeling is swallowed up in that knowledge; and it is equally absurd to suppose, because a woman is a wife and a mother, that she ought not to have an idea beyond either. The result of my observation leads me to the conclusion that the very best wives and mothers have been those who were taken into full partnership with the husband, and had a hand in the spending of the money as well as the earning and the saving of it."

"I never knew you had such a mercenary spirit, Maria," said Van Dorn, slowly. "It isn't a mercenary spirit, dear," smiled Maria, brightly. "It is only the spirit of independence. I became tired of working hard day after day, and realizing nothing for my labor. On the contrary, you made me feel that I was a perpetual expense to you, and that, though I labored hard, my toil was of no earthly consequence to you, and that, do what I would for your comfort, and to make your home cheerful, I was nothing after all but a toy that had to be supported. I am heartily sick of working for my 'board and clothes' in my husband's house. To be sure, I shall only get my board and clothes, now that I receive a salary, but there is this difference: when the *Advertiser* pays me my thirty dollars a week, the money is an acknowledgment of the worth of my services to the firm—not a gift."

"Your arguments are like the arguments of women the world over—one-sided and narrow. Have you no regard for my feelings, that you become a servant in some other man's office?" cried he stormily. "Is it true you have no self-respect in this matter? A man doesn't care to have his wife work for hire."

"Men must change their practices or pocket their pride. And it was to save my self-respect that I accepted the situation. I tell you, Dick, a man could not be self-respecting if he was forced to beg and plead for that which was rightfully his own. And a woman is as human as a man—and as sensitive. Be sides I will not defraud you. I will bring my wages into the family, and offer the weekly stipend a cheerful given sacrifice upon the household altar."

Dick glared at his wife, speechless with wrath.

"Madame, do you suppose I will permit you to spend a penny of your money in the house?" he burst out. "Have you lost all your regard for me—for your children—your home?"

"I have not," retorted she, airily, "else I would have left you all. For your sake, for my children's sake, for my home's sake, I am here. I only refuse to waste my life in baking, and boiling, and stewing, in practicing ignoble economies for one who can not appreciate the sacrifice I make in so doing. My time is worth as much in a pecuniary way as yours. I command and receive as high a salary as you do, and when I gave up a paying situation to be your wife, your housekeeper, and the mother of your children, I expected we would be equal partners in money matters. It seems that you thought differently, and, therefore, until you change your opinion, I shall keep my situation." And so the matter rested.

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Six months had passed. Strangely enough, under the new regime Mrs. Van Dorn had recovered her old-time good looks and her old-time, high spirits. Dick began once more to entertain for his wife that feeling of admiration she had inspired him with in the days of their courtship. He admitted to himself that the change had benefited her, though he was far enough from owning the fact to her. Her health was better, but Dick could not but know that all that Maria gained by the change was just that much lost to him and his home. Maria had been an exquisitely nice housekeeper, and it gratified on his feelings to come home to a tumbled parlor, where everything was at "sixes and sevens," and dust lay an inch deep on top of everything. Hired help, Dick confessed, did not take that interest in making a man's

home cozy and comfortable that a wife did. He wished Maria wouldn't seem so abominably delighted with her \$30 a week. He hated to hear the rate of that money in her purse. It gratified on his feelings to know she was earning in another man's office the money she ought to have received from him. And besides, as she improved in health and appearance, the old-time spasms of jealousy shook his breast with renewed vigor. Dick had been a very jealous lover, and he was now a jealous husband.

It was certainly very annoying for him to come up town in a shower and see his wife sailing down street just in advance of him with some other gentleman holding an umbrella over her, and, worse than all, to see her look so cheerful and even happy under the circumstances. A wife's place was at her husband's heart. He wished Maria would consent to give up that ridiculous situation. It made him feel so unspeakably foolish to have his friends say, "Why, Mrs. Van Dorn has gone back on the paper, hasn't she?" or, "You must have strange taste, Van Dorn, to allow your wife to kill herself."

Doctors are agreed that there is not

only a suicidal wave sweeping over the country at certain seasons, but that it is always followed by a mania for writing poetry. Couldn't it be arranged to have the mania come first?

"Tis now the hunter takes his gun—
The fields he rambles over,
From early dawn to set of sun,
A giddy, disordered night,
A bandag'd hand carcassing,
Returns he sadly home at night,
With several fingers missing.

—*Somerville Journal*.

"You are not looking well," "I'm not feeling well, either," "What's the matter?" "I had a fearful nightmare last night. You know that my wife owned a pug dog, and the cussed brute died." "Ice stale?" "Yes, sir; been sick since last winter, you know."

"But we are doing well enough here, and rent is much cheaper. It is more convenient for me, because it is nearer the office."

"P-r-e-i-s-e-l-y," ejaculated Van Dorn, "and for that reason more than others."

"Now, Dick."

"And I propose now to take you in full partnership into the business—not only in financial matters but into housekeeping as well."

Maria did not seem overjoyed at this prospect.

"If you mean, Dick, that I am to go back again and work for my board and clothes, then I must decline," said Mrs. Van Dorn, firmly.

"Maria, if you will never repeat that horrid phrase 'board and clothes,' I'll make you the most elegant present you ever received," said Dick, hastily.

"I won't promise, and I don't care now for elegant presents. I am able to buy for myself all that I require."

"But, Maria, we must move, for father has purchased that cottage and given it to me—to us," I mean," hastily correcting himself, "and I will set aside every week whatever sum you say is necessary for housekeeping. Since you seem to feel so about it, matters shall be so arranged that a specified amount shall be paid to you every week, to do with as you please. I only stipulate that you go no more to that abominable office."

Maria said she would think about it. But, as a week later, the Van Dorns did go, bag, baggage, and babies, into the new house, it was agreed by her friends that Maria had closed with her husband's terms, and that Van Dorn had profited by his lesson.

—*Life*.

"MAMMA," said a little girl, "do all wicked people go to the bad place?"

"Yes, dear." "And all the good people go to heaven?" "Yes." "Ain't some people wicked than other people?"

"Yes, I suppose they are." "Well, I think that the people who are not so very wicked ought to go to the bad place only in the winter-time."

—*New London Day*.

"WHAT is the chief difference between the newspapers of to-day and those of the olden time?" recently asked a rising young journalist of a superannuated newspaper-man. "The apparent lack of fire to be reported," was the veteran's response. "Conflagrations there are in plenty, with holocausts, and to spare; but the plain, old-fashioned fire seems to have had its day."