TWO SCHOOLFELLOWS.

Over the hill and valley
Drawn by the steam horse's power,
The railroad king is speeding
Fifty miles an hour!

He counts his wea'th by millions,
By thousands counts his men;
O'er ten thousand miles of gleaming rails
He wears his sceptre pen.

The diamonds of the coal mines
And the lordly mines, grim,
And the gold of the waving cornfields
Pay tribute unto him.

But pale and worn is the monarch;
Unheeding is the eye
Before which the smiling country
Goes flitting and whirling by.

And he sees but does not notice
The farmer rein old Gray
At the crossing, to let the special pass,
Speeding upon its way.

Stalwart and strong is Farmer John,
And tough with sun and weather,
"Ha, wife," he laughs, "you'd never think
He and I were boys together!

"He, that shadow, silent and sly,
No bigger than my arm,
He owns a hundred millions, and I
Have only you and the farm!

"But, Lord, who ever would change with him
Poor fellow, he never sees
Our upland meadow of clover red,
Our blossoming apple trees.

"He only hears the clanging wheels,
And the engine's whistle shrill,
Ours are the humming of the bees
And the wild bird's Summer trill.

"And while in the dusty town he toils
At a toil that ne'er is done,
I swing my scythe to a merry song
In the cheery wind and sun

"And we shall be jogging behind . . Gray
When he sells his bones shall be
How long do these meadows keep the sound
Of his rattle train roaring by?"

—*Philadelphia Record.*

WHO WERE THEY?

We had not long been settled at Hilton Vicarage when we became acquainted with the Jervoyses, who lived in a small house close by the vicarage gates. They had taken it on yearly lease, many years before our arrival in the parish, but had so thoroughly settled down into it that I think the village would have been as much astonished by their flitting as if the church steeple had suddenly started off for a constitutional. He was a singularly handsome, fine-conserved man of forty, or thereabouts; she, a slight, graceful invalid of thirty, but of so fair and delicate a complexion that her age was not easily fixed. They lived very quietly, though there seemed to be no lack of money; certainly not, when it was a question of relieving any real distress in the neighborhood.

When they first came there had been, doubtless, plenty of guesses as to their origin, but by the time Frank and I took possession of the vicarage all curiosity respecting them had died out. Though they had come as perfect strangers, with no introductions, and had quietly and unobtrusively parried all attempts to discover their antecedents, their quiet, regular life, and their particularly charming manners, had recommended them to everyone in the neighborhood, and they depended only on themselves to have had the entree of every house for miles around. Mr. Jervoise made a few acquaintances in the hunting field, where his skill and courage were alike remarkable. After a time the wives of these gentlemen called on Mrs. Jervoise, and returned singing her praises as loudly as their husbands lauded Mr. Jervoise; but, somehow, the acquaintance begun never got any further. Mrs. Jervoise was an invalid, and declined every invitation on the score of health; so that in process of time her only lady associate had been my predecessor, the late vicar's wife —a dear, feeble old lady, to whom no one could resist, and who still continued to live in the village even after her husband's death, and made a point of introducing me. Like everyone else, I was charmed with Mrs. Jervoise, and found, in spite of her reticence, that my increasing acquaintance only added to my liking. Certainly no vicar's wife ever had a more efficient sympathizer and helper in any case of distress. Her kindness and ingenuity were alike inexhaustible, and, I always ready to assist both with hand and heart, purse and brain, she was a perfect godsend in our over-grown and very poor parish. Several years passed, our life being of the fairly Midland county, nineteenth century reproduction of "Sleepy Hollow;" but one day we were rudely startled from our peaceful existence.

A case or two of fever had occurred in one of the low-lying lanes running down to the little river that flowed through the center of our village, but no one thought more of it than to shrug their shoulders over "those dreadful cottages, regular fever nests you know," and to inveigh against the landlord, a non-resident, for not keeping them in proper sanitary order. I am wrong, though, in saying that no one did more than this. The Jervoises, as usual on such occasions, came nobly to the front, and Mr. Jervoise might often be seen coming out of one or other of the wretched hovels.

One day, on going that way to inquire after one of the sick when I met him coming from the very cottage I purposed entering.

"Are you going in to see the Dawses, Mrs. Wargrave?" Because, let me warn you, it is a case of scarlet fever, and a bad case too."

I looked, as I felt aghast.

"Yes," he went on, "it is pretty bad. I felt sure what it was when I first went in, and Mr. Hall, who has since seen, confirmed my opinion. There is nothing you can do for them. Your husband is here, so has the doctor; and considering those young children of yours, I don't think you should venture."

I confess the recollection of my nursery unnerved me, and I turned, like a coward.

"But you?" I asked, as he came back with me.

"Oh! me!" he answered with a half smile, "I am fever-proof, and Cecil is not nervous. Besides, I have taken precautions, and then—we have no children."

He hesitated as he added the last reason, and it flashed across me that I remembered an exquisite miniature of a child, of which I had just caught a glimpse once, in Mrs. Jervoise's work basket, and to which, as she at once covered it, half unconsciously, with her work, I did not venture to allude.

From this day I seemed constantly to meet Mr. Jervoise. He constituted himself assistant to the doctor, devoted to my husband and man-of-all-work generally to the parish. His hands were soon full, for ere long there was hardly a house without at least one invalid.

I also was busy, though my mother-in-law swooped down on us at the first hint of an epidemic, and carried off our three babies. The dear old lady would fain have carried me off with them, but I rebelled. Who, if I went, was to look after Frank, who had an unconscionable habit of forgetting on an emergency that he was a mere mortal; and would work as if he possessed the lives of fifty cats and the strength of a score of horses; for which forgetfulness, I may mention, he was pretty safe to pay severely afterwards?

So I stayed, and though sternly forbidden to go into any of the infected houses, I found I had plenty to do in keeping up the necessary supply of kitchen physic, and acting as matron to an impromptu home for (temporary) orphans, who were sent up to me to be out of the way, from all parts of the parish.

At this time Mrs. Jervoise utterly cast off her invalidism, and worked side by side with her husband so courageously and skilfully that there was not a soul in the place who did not look on them as direct messengers from heaven to help us in our need. At one end of what seemed an interminable period, the epidemic was at last got under, and we all began to rest and regain our wonted habits. A few cases, however, still lingered, and the large number of fresh mounds in the churchyard testified to the severity of the visitation. But, in spite of these witnesses we felt the worst over and rejoiced accordingly.

One afternoon, when I was busy preparing the nurseries for my children, who were to be brought back by their grandmother in a few days, I heard my husband calling me at the foot of the stairs. But for a troubled tone in his voice, which I at once detected, I confess I should not have hurried, as it was, I ran down with a half-made curtain in my hands.

"Mary, can you put on your bonnet, and come over at once to the Jervoises? They are in trouble."

"What has happened? I exclaimed.

"He has," was the reply. "I called in about some trifle on my way up from the village, and Bessie, the maid, told me, with a face as white as a sheet, 'master was down and missis was very nearly wild.' I went in but I soon found that I could do no good, so I pelted off to see if Sister Emily had left, as she had talked of doing. Luckily, those kind Simmonds's had persuaded her to allow herself one more day of rest before taking up fresh work, so she then and there came back with me to the Holt; and now, dear, I want you to come at once, and see what is to be done with her. There is something dreadfully wrong about those two, I am certain, from a few words she dropped in her misery this afternoon; but no matter, however it is, Jervoise is 'not to be morally convinced—and, anyway, she is in trouble, so come along, little woman!"

In less than ten minutes we were at the Holt. Mr. Jervoise was sleeping —at all events he was quiet, and Sister Emily had gone to her own room to get a little rest, but Bessie, the maid, told me, with many tears, that her poor "master was down and missis was very nearly wild."