

## HER POINT OF VIEW.

HELEN C. HARWOOD.

Mrs. Austin Martin was sitting in one of the deep rockers in the general assembly room, the office of the Hotel Rockbound. A contented smile crossed her face as she spread her hands wide before the blaze that sprang with cheerful energy from the broad hearth. People looked upon the Martins with satisfaction. Mr. Martin was called a "fine fellow" and in speaking of Mrs. Martin the comment ran "No wonder that Mr. Martin fell in love with her." The spirit of unrest and indecision seemed to fill the room at this moment. Some of the guests were already equipped with walking sticks and a purpose. Others were not sure whether Point Lookout, The Steeple, a boat ride or the Lion's Head should be their morning's excursion. Jack Horton sauntered up to the fire.

"You set a bad example for this fine morning," he said to Mrs. Martin and then sat down beside her.

"Complete idleness is an art these days you know. Then these first few moments of grace just after breakfast are such a comfort. My boys haven't yet had time to topple off a precipice or tumble into the lake."

Horton turned, looked out of the window a moment, gloomily. Mrs. Martin looked also, in wonder at the depression of the always cheerful Jack. A boat with Yale blue trimmings was skimming over the water, and even at that distance the strength and grace of the young oarswoman were visible. Horton moved a little nearer the fire and away from the widow, closing his lips tightly until he wore what Miss Stanton called the Horton compressed Yeast expression. He picked up a book a little vaguely from the chair at his right. The cover was torn and the pages indicated much handling.

"You have read Peter Stirling long ago I suppose?" Horton inquired.

"Yes." She took the book and turned over a few leaves. "Did you enjoy it?"

"Some of it was immense. Peter's rise as a lawyer and a politician is finely done, but I simply can't go the love part, can you?"

"It seems foolish, I know, accept my apology beforehand, if you will, but I think it is true, to life," and Mrs. Martin looked meditatively at the little red castles in the fire.

"You don't believe that Mrs. Martin. Come, you know that you don't."

"Indeed I do, Jack Horton. Men usually stand up for each other and they have a small inward feeling that theirs is the only common sense point of view. Jack it seems to me that you are somewhat in the category to which most men belong."

"Fatally so," answered Horton, picking up a cone from a heaping basket of them and throwing it with considerable vigor into the fire.

"Why so pessimistic?" asked Mrs. Martin. "Miss Stanton must have been expounding her theories to you. She is positive that she believes in them, but she doesn't, not a bit. She will make the discovery some day."

Horton shrugged his shoulders. "But going back to Peter," continued Mrs. Martin. "Men of middle age often fall in love with young girls of eighteen or twenty and in just that desperate Peter fashion."

"Nonsense; a man of that brain and ballast doesn't capitulate in any reckless manner."

"Jack, this only illustrates your youth and inexperience. Wait, if you don't marry until you are forty or forty-five you will be just that way. I will wager you that mica yonder. To be sure, it doesn't belong to me, but no matter."

"Accepted," said Jack, emphatically. I tell you, Mrs. Martin, men are not

such fools at that age. If a man marries at middle age, if there is one thing he does take into consideration it is certainly the prudence of the action."

"I don't say that he doesn't on rare occasions, but usually, if he surrenders at all to the 'happy state' he does so far more recklessly than a much younger man. A man of forty has certainly had time for a fair start on his career. He is just at the age where he would not grow any older or perhaps younger. Nevertheless it is youth that appeals to him. The charm, the freshness of it. He has studied the common sense point of view all his life. Now that is the last thing that he wishes to consider. He has seen the years of his own life unfold and now he would see a fresh leaf that has begun to open do so at his bidding."

"Mrs. Martin, I am sure of one thing and that is that these theories are your own and not Martin's. They are fanciful speculations, but not life. This is the one time, when I can't accept your opinion."

"Jack, I am thirty-five. I never made a real match in all my life, but I have helped to straighten out many a quarrel. Never, though, have I been consolation or peace attachee to the pugnacious love affairs of a bachelor."

"Bachelors are not confidential in such matters."

"Oh, I don't know. But there isn't time for a quarrel. Ten days, two weeks, a month, the affair is all settled and before you know it you have cards."

"Men parse girls past a fragrant or bitter remembrance; present, a peach and a jolly good time or The Only Ones that necessitates solitude, a puff of a pipe, and a star to guide the dark path at midnight; future."

"Well, Heaven knows it is a comfort," interrupted Jack. "But I fear that I disturbed you last night, tramping up and down. I forgot that there was any one on that side of the house. I had to do something."

"Jack," said Mrs. Martin in a sympathetic tone.

Just then a girl in a 'brown walking suit and hat came quickly up to warm her hands before the blaze. The fire brought out the beautiful soft tint of her hair. As Mrs. Martin's eyes swept the line of her figure her face expressed the pleasure that the inspection must surely give.

"You look as if you and 'Rockbound' were getting along very well together," said Mrs. Martin.

"Oh famously," answered the girl. "Vacation is always jolly. Think of it, I have been cooped up for two years with boarding schools and teachers. Last year I traveled with some of the teachers during the summer so I haven't really and truly been away from school for two years. I really thought that I might get the intellectual eye, but Mamma said that there was no danger, but then she added it wouldn't be becoming to me."

A ring of boys outside, a convulsion of arms and legs and Mrs. Martin was up and out of the door.

Horton looked out of the window. "There is an empty boat, Miss Brown. Shall we take it?"

Horton was a swift oarsman and they went at a rapid rate down the long length of the lake. He pulled up his oars quickly as they came near the boat with Yale blue trimmings.

"You are working, as if you were practicing for the college crew," he said to the girl at the oars.

"One can't forget old habits. Then it is such a glorious morning; I feel like a young lion," and she shook back a dark, wavy lock of hair that had fallen against the flush of her cheek. "But we must be off," and she nodded to the other girl in the boat. "We are on our way to ask a pine tree to take us up to

board in one of his topmast branches. Then we can view the world with a more critical eye, can swing and breathe pine oxygen and that will absorb all the trying things in one's mind." For a moment the animation left her face. "But, dear me, Miss Brown, what have you been doing?" and she nodded gayly at the store, toward which they had been drifting.

A man of rather portly figure was pacing up and down, his eyes upon the ground and his hands nervously fingering a grey mustache.

"Oh," said Miss Brown, "Mr. Barrett knows that I always like to dance until twelve and last evening he stopped at eleven. Consequently I am avoiding him this morning."

"Aren't you severe? You know that he gave up dancing twelve years ago and has only begun again since your arrival, two weeks ago."

"Dancing is good exercise for him. I think perhaps he will stay later to-night."

"Well," answered Miss Stanton, "it's a bit dull for Mr. Barrett this morning, but it is a handsome feather in Mr. Horton's cap. He is an artistic soul, you know, and for the sake of harmony, I don't doubt, but that he will feather his oars. Bon Voyage. We must be going," and she turned the boat quickly around.

"Ethel," said the other girl in the boat with the Yale trimmings, "Is it supposed to be very serious between Miss Brown and Mr. Barrett?"

"Yes, at least on his part it is absolute devotion. He is twenty-eight years older, but some way his years only seem to increase his ardor. His bachelorhood has always been his toast. He is a manufacturer of a good deal of wealth and has been here summers ever since I can remember. At times there have been a lot of pretty women here, but never an indentation did they make on the time-piece of his life."

Ethel Stanton pulled in her right oar a moment, brushed back the wavy dark lock. "Gertrude," she said earnestly, "boarding school is abomination from many things."

"Yes," said the other, "in a way it is."

"You haven't for one thing any particular haunting, nagging desire to be useful, to do something, to be anything but yourself, provided that is an attractive self. There is Miss Brown. She is charming and she is at peace with herself. She hasn't any ambition except to be through school, out into society and into the world"

"It is convenient," admitted the other girl, "but would you change, if you could?"

"No," she answered. "Gertrude, I had a letter from Miss Reid this morning. She said that the money had been collected and that there was enough to start the settlement school of Bookbinding and Pottery. A queer combination isn't it? There are two little old French women in Chicago who at one time had one of those nice small bookbinding shops in Paris, on the rue de Levres. They understand the business thoroughly and they are going to be in charge of the classes. Then there is an Englishman from Torquay that Miss Reid has discovered and he has found some valuable clay. Now there are to be day classes and evening classes—all absolutely free. There are great opportunities in the bookbinding line in this country. The pottery works are to be carried on in the same manner that they are at Torquay. Every man, woman or child is to come and work out his own design and some day we may have a famous pottery like the one there. Whatever profit there is will be divided among the laborers. Miss Reid says that she will be there part of the year. The rest of the time I am to be in full charge."

"But Ethel, have you decided about the other matter?"

For the next two weeks the habitues of the hotel veranda had more than the scenery, the nature of the dessert or the temperature to occupy their minds. In fact it would have been decidedly dull had it not been for this new developing interest, for the thermometer had displayed an unusual amount of conscience for one belonging to a summer resort. The tramps, the rides, the tete-a-tetes of Mr. Horton and Miss Stanton were not so interesting to be sure, for, for two summers had they not been friends and foes? But Mr. Barrett, the man who delighted to expatiate on the peace of his eight and forty years, and who chuckled over the singleness of his state that, was a different matter. The veranda missed the companionship of this gentle, genial scuffer and the clock work of his ways. His gifts of bon bons and flowers were the cause of intense excitement and deep concern. The seriousness of the affair was not only apparent by the oblivion of bait, fishing tackle and pipes in Mr. Brown's daily career, but also by the fact that the expression on Miss Brown's face and the roses at her belt were the source of much more enthusiastic conversation than the fresh loveliness of her frocks.

Mrs. Martin was to leave the next day. For a last view and breath of pine, she started for the tall woods. She walked some distance, until she came to the skirts of the mountain where a high, many sided rock had stationed itself. On either end of the rock there were small concave openings. These places looked warm and comfortable, but she walked on and around both ends until she came to the farther side where the sun came down more generously. She sat down and leaned against the rock. The kinnikinnick felt so soft and springy she put her head down and fell fast asleep. The chipmunks came out to play, then an occasional squirrel. They eyed the sleeper with distrust, but she was so quiet. Certainly it was safe and this was their favorite play ground. At last they got into a dispute with one of the younger squirrels and it was agreed that his penalty for taking the wrong view should be to go to the top of a tall pine that apparently came right out of the rock and shake down some cones with which to flavor their five o'clock tea. Mounting a tree is certainly not difficult for a squirrel, but the cones were not quite hard and dry and the young squirrel shook and shook first one branch, then another. Suddenly he

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