

MY POOR WIFE.

BY J. P. SMITH.

CHAPTER X.—(Continued.)

"I don't like your story, Paul," Helen observed, rising abruptly with a shiver. "Let us go home; it is getting quite cold."

"Yes, it's an unpleasant tragedy enough," I assented, rather eagerly—"let us turn our thoughts to lighter subjects. By-the-by, Helen, what is this I hear about a garden party at the Grange next week? Have we received an invite?"

"Yes, it came this morning. Don't you remember me showing it to you? Lady Hershaw expects her son on Saturday for the races and the ball at Ringwall!"

"Garden parties, races, balls! By Jove, the county is waking up at last! I hope you have your frocks in order, Nell. You have? That's right."

"I say, my dear," I continued, rather awkwardly, after a few minutes' silence, "d'ye know I've been thinking it's rather hard on Edith Stopford, after cheerfully bearing the stagnation of the spring and winter, being carried off to Buxton with the old gentleman, just when the fun is coming on. Very hard, indeed, now, isn't it?"

"Very."

"Helen, don't you think it would be a neighborly thing if we asked her to stop on a week or ten days with us here and join the general after the races?"

"It would."

"Shall we ask her—eh?"—"If you wish it, Paul."

"I—I don't wish it particularly, if you don't, my dear," I answered rather lamely, for her curt uninterested replies put me out, though I scarcely knew why. "I only thought it would be a neighborly act, and very little trouble to us, as, of course, we must attend all these festivities."

"Then let us ask her."

"You are the person to do that; she would not come on my invitation. I think, if you asked the general first—his such a suspicious, crotchety old fellow—it would be better."

"I'll ask him tomorrow. Now, let us go in, please; the air is quite chilly."

She kept her word, and the general giving his consent, Edith came to us on the following Thursday, and to all appearance my wife and she got on most cordially together, so much so that on the third or fourth day I ventured to question Edith's emphatic assertion in the cedar walk, but she only shook her head.

"No, no, I am right; she does not like me, and she never will. It's of no use my trying to make her. Hush, hush, here she comes! Don't let her see you speaking to me, Paul," and with a hurried, nervous movement that I saw naturally attracted my wife's attention and even brought a faint color to her cheek, Edith turned from me and affected to be deeply interested in a book.

In the beginning of the following week I was unexpectedly called away from home on business connected with Edith's trouble. Helen drove me to the station, and suddenly, when the train was on the point of starting, implored me to take her with me—not to leave her behind—impressing on me that it was the first time we had been parted since we were married, and if I loved her the least bit, to take her with me now—"now."

CHAPTER XI.

Rather impatiently disengaging the hand she had seized, I reminded her of her duties to her guest, whose existence she seemed to have forgotten, at which she recovered her senses, begged me not to mind her foolishness, and with a cheerful smile nodded farewell.

I was detained in town longer than I expected, and, when, on the fourth day, the express bore me northwards again, I sighted the beech woods of Colworth with a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction I had not experienced even after the absence of years. Yet no one but the groom met me at the station, though I had wired my arrival. A hasty inquiry relieved my fears; all had gone well in my absence, I was informed, and at the lodge gate Edith awaited me, and, with an excited gesture, begged me to descend.

"Here you are at last, dear boy!" she whispered, glad welcome sparkling in her lovely eyes. "I—we thought you were never coming. Helen is busy with the housekeeper; I don't think she knows the train is due yet, so you'll have time to take a turn in the wood with me and tell me all—all. Oh, Paul, such a time I've spent since; but for your dear cheery letters I couldn't have borne it!"

Half an hour later I entered the house, briskly calling my wife's name, but no answer came. She was not in any of the sitting rooms, so I hurried up to her own room and found her standing motionless by the window. She did not move or seem aware of my entrance until I touched her reproachfully; then she turned with a slight shiver, and hid her face against my shoulder.

"Why did you go away—oh, why did you go away, Paul?" was all she said.

"Helen, what a greeting! What's the matter with you, child? Am I not back to you now, whole in mind and body?"

"Oh, yes, you are!" she answered, half drowsily. "I hope you had a

pleasant time in town. Was it not very hot?"

I looked at her uneasily, and was startled by the great change in her appearance—so startled that I did not speak for a minute.

"My absence does not seem to have agreed with you, Nell," I said, with a forced sprightliness, and pinching her wan cheek. "I must not let you try a spell of widowhood for some time again."

"Oh, there's nothing particular the matter with me," she returned gently, withdrawing from my touch. "There goes the luncheon bell. Be quick and get ready, Paul; we must not keep our guest waiting, you know."

She scarcely spoke or ate anything during the meal, but sat with downcast eyes, listlessly playing with her knife and fork. The oftener I glanced at her the more painfully I was struck by the change in her looks, intensified by contrast with Edith's rose-tinted cheeks, sparkling eyes, and gay, sweet laugh. Her skin had completely lost its clear, healthy hue, and was gray and opaque, her eyes were sunken and dull, and there was a hard, harsh line about her mouth that robbed her face of its youthful appearance.

"Helen," I said anxiously, following her from the room when she was leaving to dress for the garden party at the Grange, "I do not think you are well enough to go to the party. You had much better remain quietly at home, and I'll get Dr. Finlay to prescribe you a tonic that will bring back your color and appetite."

"There is nothing the matter with me, I tell you. Why do you worry so, Paul, and try to prevent me from going to the party I have been so looking forward to? I won't stay at home—there!"

I drew back, almost dumbfounded by the violent querulousness of her tone, and said nothing more.

Arrived at the Grange, I was stopped by an old Indian friend, and lost sight of my party for some time. I was trying to find them—at least, my wife, who I knew still felt shy and ill at ease among the notabilities of the county, and give her the support of my countenance, when I was detained by my hostess, who exclaimed animatedly:

"Ah, here you are at last, Mr. Dennis! I have been looking for you everywhere to make up a set of tennis."

"Thank you," I said hastily. "I am looking for my wife. She was so poorly this afternoon that I wanted her to go to bed instead of coming to your charming party."

"Poorly—your wife!" exclaimed Lady Hershaw, gazing at me in genuine astonishment. "Mr. Dennis, why everyone is commenting on her appearance! I never saw her look so well; I scarcely recognized her at first! Why, she is the attraction of the afternoon; the men are flocking round her like bees round a honey-pot, and I am perfectly distracted trying to find partners for those yards of unfortunate girls lining the tennis ground. Do help me make up a few sets, or—with a meaningful glance in the direction my eyes had also taken—"send your invalid wife home to bed at once."

I looked stupidly at my "invalid wife." She was reclining on a couch of cushions "under a spreading chestnut tree," surrounded by a crowd of young men, her host, a very handsome, dissipated looking man of 22, kneeling at her feet holding a plate of strawberries and cream, while others were treasuring her parasol and her fan, all which overpowering attention she was receiving with the haughty ease and careless aplomb of a professional beauty of five years standing—my Helen, who, but a month before, would have turned away with a scared blush from the careless glance of a stranger.

"Yes," I responded slowly, turning to my hostess, "you are right, Lady Hershaw; my poignant anxiety is relieved for the moment. Pray command my services in the tennis ground."

CHAPTER XII.

I played—I do not know how many sets—with varying success. Still the group under the chestnut tree did not disperse, but rather increased as the afternoon wore on. Of course I was very pleased my wife should be the object of such flattering and unpromising attention, as I had resented the lukewarm, careless manner in which she had at first been received by the county families, and the scarcely veiled contempt and pity in which I was held for allowing myself to be entangled into such a wretched marriage; but, after a couple of hours of public reparation, I felt my wounded vanity as a husband satisfied, and rather unceremoniously dispersing her animated court, informed her of my wish to return home.

"Home!" she repeated, with a flash of her eyes that was almost insolent. "What nonsense, Paul! Why, it is barely 6 o'clock! Besides, I have just promised to play a game of tennis. Go home if you are tired, and send the pony trap back for me in an hour or two."

I moved away, feeling as if a glass of cold water had been thrown into my face, and the court of admirers closed round her again. As I walked moodily across the tennis ground a soft little gloved hand grasped my arm, and Edith whispered entreatingly:

"Oh, Paul, dear, do help me to get rid of this stupid man! I'm tired to death of him, and he won't leave me. You look tired yourself, and as if you had quite enough of the festivity."

"I was thinking of going home. Are you ready to come, Edie?"

"Quite. Let us start at once; I'm so glad I met you, Paul."

Bidding her cavalier an unceremonious adieu, she put her hand within my arm and we walked home across the fields, leaving the pony trap for Helen to order whenever she liked.

The hours went by. Edie and I dined tete-a-tete, made music together, took a moonlight stroll to the river, still Helen did not return. At last, some time after midnight, we heard the sound of approaching wheels, and presently she entered, with glowing cheeks and glittering eyes, escorted by Sir William Hershaw, who she informed us had persuaded her to remain to dinner at the Grange, where they had had such a delightful dance afterwards; then, with a careless nod to me and Edith, and a whispered good night to her escort, she went straight to bed. I stood rooted to the spot staring after her, until Edith's soft palm was passed pityingly over my hand, her lips, close to my ear, murmured soothingly:

"I am so sorry—so sorry, dear boy; but you must make excuses for her; she is young, you know, and from her bringing up does not understand the usages of society. If you like I'll give her a hint tomorrow that English gentlemen do not do those things. She means no harm, I'm sure."

I could have no explanation with Helen that night, for when I went up to her room, she was sleeping heavily, and the next morning she rose at day-break, and did not appear at breakfast. When I returned from the club at Shorton, I found Edith established at the tea table with her dainty work strewn round her, waiting to pour out my tea, just as I had pictured her, with timid rapture, a hundred times during the months I had courted her so reverently; and my wife sitting under a tree on the lawn facing a window, Jim duddled up in her arms, and Sir William Hershaw's bold dark eyes looking into hers with undisguised admiration.

I started from my seat with a sudden desire to kick him then and there out of my grounds, when Edith, divining my movement, interposed.

"Paul, Paul, for heaven's sake restrain yourself! Think of the shame, the scandal that would follow; and she means no harm, I'm sure. Oh, indeed, I'm sure of that. I've not had the opportunity yet of speaking to her, but—"

"Do not seek the opportunity," I interrupted fiercely; "it would be of no use. I will speak to her; but I think she must be losing her head. I can't make out what possesses her. I married, as I thought, a harmless, innocent child—married her through—"

"Pity, generosity, through the noblest spirit of self-sacrifice. Oh, I guess the story of your courtship and your marriage, my poor Paul! I have guessed it some time, and it has not helped to make me lot lighter, to reconcile me to what I lost in losing the—the love of one of the truest, noblest—ah, what am I saying—what am I saying!" she cried, covering her face with her hands and shrinking from me. When I see you treated like this, I—I can't help it, my heart speaks out. Oh, go away—go away! Do not look at me, please."

I was about to leave the room when a servant entered and handed me a letter. After reading it, I laid it silently before my companion. When she had read she turned to me with burning face and sobbed faintly:

"I wish I were dead—oh, I wish I were dead!"

"Hush, hush," I whispered; "you must not say that! Tonight, Edie! it must be."

She shivered.

"You—you will be with me, Paul? You will be with me, Paul? You will not leave me?"

(To be Continued.)

HIS "BRUTAL AND BLOODY."

Daniel O'Connell's Remark About the "Speech of the Throne."

The first member of the reformed parliament reproved by the chair for unseemly language was Daniel O'Connell, the great Irish agitator. The incident, which occurred in the first week of the meeting of the house of commons, is also remarkable for having evoked from the speaker a definite ruling on an interesting constitutional point. The "Speech from the Throne" called attention, among other things, to the insecurity of life and property in Ireland, and asked for coercive measures for the repression of crime. In the course of the debate O'Connell characterized the speech from the throne as "brutal and bloody." Lord John Russell at once moved that the words be taken down. "Oh!" exclaimed O'Connell, "when we speak of Ireland and her wrongs it must be 'in bondsman's key, with bated breath and whispering humbleness.'" Lord John Russell objected to the word "bloody" being applied to a speech which had, only a few days previously, been delivered by the king—William IV.—in person in the house of lords. O'Connell insisted that it was not the speech of the king, but the speech of the ministers. The speaker agreed with the honorable and learned member on the constitutional point, but informed him that his language was not calculated to preserve order and decency of debate. The "bloody and brutal whigs" subsequently became a popular phrase with O'Connell in his speeches in Ireland, and, indeed, is not unknown today in Irish political controversies.—The Nineteenth Century.

Don't attempt to gain time by stealing it from sleep.

SIGNIFICANT FACTS.

CAUSE AND EFFECT IN THE RECENT ELECTION.

Republican Control of the House of Representatives Was Saved by Gains in States Where Protection Was Emphasized as a Prominent Issue.

A vote for Democratic congressmen will be a vote to overturn the Dingley tariff law, which has been the primal factor of our present prosperity; which has increased the wages paid to American workmen one billion dollars in the past eighteen months; which made a balance of trade in our favor of over six hundred million dollars last year, and is building new factories and setting more men at work in our mills, factories, logging camps and mines. It will be a vote to endorse the free-trade Wilson law, which closed our mills and factories, and enforced idleness and poverty upon American workmen.—Tacoma Ledger.

It is a fact of history that in the states of the far West the campaign ending Nov. 8 was chiefly fought on the issue of protection. The extract just quoted from the Tacoma Ledger is a fair sample of the arguments and appeals relied upon by the leading Republican newspapers of the Pacific coast to reach the intelligence of voters. Day after day, week after week, the journals supporting President McKinley's administration and its policies spread before their readers the facts and figures of revived prosperity under protection as contrasted with the facts and figures of depression and ruin under four years of free trade and tariff tinkering. Every Republican speaker followed the same line.

A different policy was pursued in the Middle and Eastern states, more particularly the Atlantic coast states. In these states the tariff was almost entirely ignored alike by newspapers and campaign speakers on the Republican side. Naturally it was ignored on the Democratic side. Republican writers and orators had little or nothing to say about the leading feature in the policy of the Republican national administration. The needs and demands of the American merchant marine, albeit of vital consequence to the people of the Atlantic coast states, received scarcely a word of recognition. So far as the voters of these localities were informed the issue of marine protection and the restoration of American shipping was not involved in the campaign.

Mark the result! The Republican majority in the national house of representatives was wiped out by losses in the Western, Middle and Eastern states and the control of the house by a majority now estimated at thirteen was saved to the Republican party by the gains of congressmen in the states west of the Missouri river. Leaving out the gains in these states, where the doctrine of protection was made the leading issue of the campaign, the lower house of the Fifty-sixth congress would be in the control of a coalition of Democrats, Populists and free silverites.

There is possibly a lesson in these facts that campaign managers would do well to keep in mind hereafter.

FOREIGN BALANCES.

American Devotees of Alien Industry Are Hard to Please.

Today and every day there are assertions that the Republican policy thus far has produced nothing but a treasury deficit and an extravagant advance of prices to the disadvantage of consumers. These are assertions hard to answer within the limit of profitable discussion. The treasury shows a deficit only because the war makes a difference, and there has been no advance in prices of protected or other manufactured goods, as men commonly assert. To put the thing plainly, both statements are made by men who tell untruths or take great pains not to ascertain the truth.

The daily treasury reports are published with regularity, and while they show smaller receipts for customs in October than usual, for reasons not hard to find, it is easy to understand that the undecided condition of trade and of the industries has curtailed receipts without reference to the present tariff. The assertion as to the effect of the existing tariff upon prices has nothing whatever to support it. The level of prices reached after the collapse of the Leiter speculation has been lower because of the exceptional and disappointing influence on the market for wheat, and also of all grain. The range for all other than farm products is, on the whole, lower since last May, the season considered, than it has been in any previous year.

Sometimes one is discouraged in the attempt to submit facts in response to such bald untruths. Any statement of prices in general or in detail is comfortably ignored by the people whose theories it does not fit, and their falsehoods go on all the same. But it is the fact that the general average of all nonfarm prices is lower than it was at any other time since any economist has supposed that prices were at a fair level, and lower than at any time when the industries of the country were fairly prosperous.

The depression in the cotton industry, due to a production materially in excess of demand, has made it beyond the power of anybody to discuss intelligently the situation in that branch. The iron industry is not only producing more than at any previous time in the history of the country, but according to the latest returns is actually consuming in manufacture more than ever before, and there are also export demands, including 40,000 tons of steel rails for northern Europe and 100,000 tons of steel plates for foreign ports, besides many orders for all sorts of

finished products, including 4,500 tons of billets from Pittsburgh.

What are the objectors principally troubled about? If they know anything they know that this country is sending nearly 100,000 tons of its products abroad in the iron and steel industry alone, in spite of all foreign competition. The country does not do so well in its exports of products of some other industries, and yet has gained so greatly in manufactured products compared with Great Britain, our chief competitor in the foreign markets, that its latest statement indicates a condition of things in the last degree discouraging to British manufacturers. One has only to read the statements of the leading men at the last meeting of manufacturers in that country to realize how distressing the American competition has become. What is to be done to satisfy the incurable devotees of foreign industry here? Are we to let everything foreign come into this country without regard for American production? No one of them dares to ask this openly, and yet what can we do better than to pile up an indebtedness of \$50,000,000 a month against foreign countries, in excess of merchandise exports over imports, upon which we can draw at pleasure?—New York Tribune.

THE CRUCIAL POINT.

How to Find Profitable Employment for American Ships.

The main question is no longer with us one of navigation laws. We can easily compete in building the best ships in the world. That is the crucial point. The expansion of our commerce and the greatness of our ocean carrying trade are now sure to go hand in hand.—Norwalk (Ohio) Daily Reflector.

The "crucial point" is successful competition, not in building ships, but in sailing them after they are built. The country is full of cheerful optimists who think that to be able to build ships as cheaply as they can be built in the European shipyards is to settle the whole question of restoring American marine prestige. Far from it.

The American ship must employ American seamen, pay the American rate of wages, supply its crew with the American standard of subsistence, and submit to the extortion which foreign insurance companies practice upon American hulls and cargoes. The increased expense of operating the ship under these conditions necessitates a higher freight schedule than that exacted by foreign ships. With its cheaper pay roll, cheaper subsistence and lower rates of insurance a foreign ship can carry merchandise at a profit for a price that would drive the American shipowner into bankruptcy.

Therefore it is plain to see that the "crucial point" is not the building of the ship at all. This, to be sure, is an important consideration, as far as it goes, but it is by no means the chief consideration. If the American-built ship is to carry American commerce under the American flag it must be in some way compensated for the existing disadvantages of larger cost of operation as compared with ships of foreign register, just as the American manufacturer is compensated for the difference between the pauper labor of Europe and the well-paid labor of America.

Here is the real "crucial point." The national Republican platform of 1896 suggests a solution of the difficulty—namely, the imposition of discriminating duties on merchandise carried to this country in foreign vessels. If there is any better solution nobody has yet discovered it.

How to Get More Gold.

The American people, like Oliver Twist, want "more"—"more," when the thing in question is gold. It is true that gold has been pouring into the country as a result of the heavy balance of trade in our favor, and that is well, but it is not enough. According to W. W. Bates, ex-United States commissioner of navigation, the people of the United States have paid out, on an average, \$150,000,000 annually for the last thirty years, to foreign ships for ocean transportation.

However much gold we may take in payment for our surplus exports—and we intend to take in all we can get—it will never be enough, and it ought never to be enough until we add to it the millions we are now paying out to foreign vessels for our ocean carrying. That amount, added to the American side of the balance sheet, by being paid to the American owners of American vessels, would look well when we came to make up our yearly statement of receipts and expenditures.

Trusts in a Free-Trade Country.

Persons who have insisted, in season and out, that protection is the father of trusts will be bothered to explain how trusts continue to flourish in Great Britain. Another of these combinations of capital is in process of formation among the dyers in the Bradford district, and at last accounts only one large dyeing firm was standing out. The fact is that trusts are born of strenuous competition, and if, as is taught by economists of the Manchester school, competition is whetted by free trade, Great Britain should be the natural home for trusts. Certainly no conditions should be more favorable to growth of trusts than those produced in Great Britain by the intense industrial rivalry that country is meeting, both at home and abroad, from the United States and Germany. Greater economy in production is an industrial necessity for the United Kingdom.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

The men who have made a noise in the world have not used their mouths alone.

A GROWING INDUSTRY.

America Destined to Supply the Whole World with Wine.

Ten years ago Joaquin Miller, "the Poet of the Sierras," registered the prediction that before the middle of the twentieth century America will have become the leading wine producing country of the world. At present we are a long way off from the realization of that prophecy, but in view of the rapid progress made in the past few years in the development of this important industry there is reason to believe that within the time specified this country will not only produce the great bulk of the wines consumed at home, but will be a heavy exporter of wines. In 1897 the American production of wines aggregated 30,303,740 gallons, an increase of about 12,000,000 gallons over the total for 1896. For the year 1897 the wine product of France, the leading country of the world in this industry, was 854,713,420 gallons, a decrease of 325,098,100 gallons as compared with the yield of 1896. This would indicate a larger consumption and a more general acceptance of our domestic wines, as well as a material advance in the gross output.

A large production of this increase in home production is due to the fact that American wines are slowly but surely making their way to popular favor by virtue of their high quality. It used to be thought that France was the only country in the world capable of turning out champagnes of such standard excellence as to meet the exacting requirements of the American palate. This is no longer the case. American champagne makers are now producing wines that are in every way equal to the choicest vintages of France, and the time is not far distant, according to reliable authorities, when the superb sparkling wines of our own land will largely displace imported champagnes, and when the millions of dollars which we now send abroad every year for this class of wines will be in great part kept at home and distributed among American grape growers, wine makers and wage earners. Joaquin Miller's prediction is in a fair way to be realized.

A Senator Off the Track.

The prejudice of our people against subsidies alone prevents the building up of the merchant marine, of which we all could feel as proud as we do of our navy.—Senator Hanna.

The senator is woefully off the track here, and must be set right, else he may do incalculable mischief. Subsidies never have sufficed in this country to build up our merchant marine, and they never can. They are far too restricted in their application, and they favor one while closing the door to active competition among other of our own steamship lines. Subsidies to mail carriers and auxiliary cruisers are desirable and right, and they cannot be made either too generous or too attractive; but, as the sole remedy for our merchant marine, they are not sufficient. As a part of a great policy or system, subsidies are all right, but as the only part, hope will continue to be deferred until the heart not only sickens but dies.—New York Commercial.

Odds of Twelve to One.



Uncle Sam—I say, mate, is that an American ship out there?

American Sailor—No, sir; nit.

U. S.—Why so positive? You surely can't make out the flag at that distance.

A. S.—True enough, but I'll bet you 12 to 1 I'm right. That's the odds against us on the sea.

"Under Proper Laws."

Naval expansion is inevitable under the unanswerable logic of destiny. But what the country most needs now is an expansion of its maritime fleets. Under proper laws that would promptly set in, and while taking no millions out of the treasury it would turn uncounted millions into the channels of industry and make America as busy a builder of merchantmen for the outer world as she has long been of locomotives.—Philadelphia Record (free trade).

Here is a definition of the peculiar virtues of the policy of discriminating duties that is hard to beat. Under this very proper law, precisely similar to the law enacted for the same purpose a hundred years ago by the founders of the republic, there would be no taking of millions out of the national treasury, but there would be a wonderful turning of "uncounted millions into the channels of industry." We should begin by building a vast fleet of iron and steel ships for the American merchant marine, and by the time this demand was supplied our splendidly equipped shipyards with their cheaper materials and superior mechanical equipments would be ready to build ships for the rest of the world. All this, as the Philadelphia Record very truly observes, "under proper laws," but in no other way.