

HIS FLEETING IDEAL.

The Great Composite Novel.

The Joint Work of P. T. BARNUM, JOHN L. SULLIVAN, BILL NYE, ELLA WHEELER WILCOX, MAJ. ALFRED C. CALHOUN, HOWE & HUMMEL, INSPECTOR BYRNES, PAULINE HALL, MISS EASTLAKE, W. H. BALLOU, NELL NELSON and ALAN DALE.

(Continued from page 1.)
would lie down, and requesting him to tell Miss Brown that she need not see her again till morning.

As soon as her father had gone out Edna quickly placed her violin and several rods of music in the case, then hurriedly put all her jewelry and a change of clothing into a little valise and lowered the light.

She waited for an hour after Miss Brown had gone to bed in the adjoining room, then quickly put on a street dress, and carrying the valise and violin case left the house as noiselessly as a shadow.

Looking neither to the right nor left she made her way to the Third Avenue Elevated road and took a car bound south.

She got out for Fulton street, utterly ignorant of her whereabouts, and quite as uncertain as to her destination, but to her great joy she saw a respectable looking hotel near the station, and this she entered with a confidence of manner that in no way indicated her feelings.

She wrote her name on a blank card "Miss Louisa Neville," and asked the waiter who appeared in the parlor to have her registered and a room assigned her.

She had \$20 in cash besides her jewels, and this, so she thought, would enable her to live till she could find a place for the exercise of her talents.

Although not hungry, Edna Crawford went down to the dining room the following morning, and while waiting for her coffee she looked over a paper that lay on the table.

It was a copy of that morning's World, and a glance at the "want" columns decided her as to what she should do next.

After the most anxious look for a breakfast she put a veil over her hat and hurried to the World office, on Park row. She was about to write out an advertisement, applying for the position of governess, when a handsome middle aged man, with a refined German face, raised his hat and said, as he handed her a slip of paper:

"Please to oggskuse me, mees, but I am not sure if mine is goot English. Is dot spelled right?"

With a flushed face and trembling hands Edna read the following:

WANTED.—Immediately, a young lady who can play violin solos in a European concert company. Apply in person and with own instrument to Herr Karl Steinmetz, No. 8 Union square, New York.

IV.—ONE PURPOSE AND TWO ENDS.

By ALAN DALE. Illustrated by WALTER H. M'DOUGALL.

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Lena Hartman, the banker's daughter, was one of those matter of fact maidens who seem to have been created as a useful foil to the sentimental gushfulness of the romantic damsel.

Miss Hartman was more than delicately plain. Her appearance suggested an intense regard for meals. Like the German frauin, who is not at all disinclined to talk love over a steaming dish of Frankfurter sausages, supplemented by sauerkraut, Miss Hartman was eminently healthy.

As for her amiability, it was simply without limit. Miss Hartman was impervious to the petty worries of life. One of her friends always declared that nothing less than an earthquake would ever cause her the least agitation.

Henry Henshall called upon this portly maiden in due time, and her appearance filled him with a vague fright.

His artistic instincts told him at once that he need never expect from her either sympathy or even interest in his plans and his aspirations.

But his promise to his father dwelt in his mind sacredly intact. He would be a martyr, and he must feel some consolation in that. Most men do.

It is well to reflect that one is a martyr, even though too late to be included in Fox's book.

The face of his unknown idol blotted from his mind the large, immobile features of Miss Hartman the instant he left her, and he felt that as a reward for his sacrifice he could at least indulge in the luxury of thinking of this strangely met, strangely lost woman.

Lena Hartman was motherless, and had recently engaged as companion a woman whom Henshall regarded with undefined mistrust. She was a light haired, blue eyed woman, who years ago must have been extremely handsome, but her features were now livid with care. Her movements were furtive and catlike, and she seemed to regard the life she was living as unreal.

"What induced you to engage her, Lena?" asked Henshall one day, with the privilege of a newly made fiancé. He had glided into this position in such an unutterably commonplace manner that the chains so easily forged were hardly galling.

"Because she interested me," declared Miss Hartman. "I feel that she has a history. You always tell me, Harry, that I am the most unromantic being on earth. I know it. I can, however, appreciate romance in others, though I am aware that you think even that impossible."

Mr. Henshall sighed. He wondered stupidly if Lena would feel interested in his own brief, pointless romance.

He dimly saw the jealous demon rapping for admittance at the smooth doors of Miss Hartman's placidity. He saw the baffled retreat of this demon. He declined to admit even the possibility of Miss Hartman's jealousy.

His acquaintance with women was very slight. He imagined that the passionless affection evinced for him by his promised wife was one of those airy trifles, the presence or absence of which was but of slight significance to the welfare of the woman.

One morning Mr. Henshall called at Mr. Hartman's house, more with the object of "reporting for duty," as he styled it in mental irony, than with any well defined object in view.

Mr. and Miss Hartman were out, he was informed. Mrs. Smith, the chaperon, was at present the only member of the family now at home. She was in the drawing room, ventured the domestic discreetly.

Henshall never knew afterward what it was that prompted him to enter instead of leaving the conventional card to indicate his unsatisfied visit.

He told the servant he would stay for a time and wait the arrival of the father and daughter. Then leaving his hat and cane

in the hall he walked to the door of the drawing room, and with a slight premonitory knock entered.

The room was unlighted, save by a full, red shaded lamp that cast a pink effulgence on objects in its immediate neighborhood.

The young man saw seated on a low chair close to the lamp the apathetic form of Mrs. Smith, the chaperon. She had not heard his knock and remained seated, her hands folded listlessly in front of her, her head bent slightly forward, until the sound of his light footfall reached her ear. Then with a start she rose and placed her hand upon the region of her heart.

"You alarmed me, Mr. Henshall," she declared, with an attempt at a smile that was a signal failure. "I did not expect anybody, because Mr. Hartman and Lena have gone out. Let me see," hesitatingly. "I think they went to a reception at Mrs. Van Auker's house on the avenue. Did you wish?"

"Nothing," interrupted the young man, with a reassuring smile. "I thought I would come in for a few minutes and rest myself."

The absence of Miss Hartman was by no means regrettable. In fact Mr. Henshall felt a distinct relief at the respite from bald platitudes that her visit on the avenue afforded him.

He looked at Mrs. Smith's face. She had evidently been sweeping. He had undoubtedly interrupted a painful meditation.

Well, he reflected, she ought to thank him for that at any rate. That she was not inclined to express any gratitude either by words or by looks was very apparent. It was clear that she did not consider herself bound to entertain Miss Hartman's guest.

After a few uninteresting remarks, uttered uninterestingly, she rose and announced her intention of retiring to her room.

"I leave you," she said, "provided with a couple of readable books, and am sure that you will find them capital entertainers. Of course you will wait to see Lena and Mr. Hartman. I know it would be a great disappointment to you if you failed to meet them."

She accompanied these with a faint, significant smile that was irritatingly visible to Mr. Henshall. He colored slightly, and bit the end of his mustache to restrain the rather impatient retort that rose to his lips.

Mrs. Smith moved noiselessly about. There was the same feline suggestions about her walk that he had noticed before.

"Good night," she said indifferently. As she passed him something fell at his feet. He saw it there before him, but made no effort to pick it up for a few seconds. Then he stooped and raised it from the floor. It was an old fashioned gold brooch, one of those trinkets that we have seen our grandmothers and great-aunts wear, and have admired in the days of our childhood.

At the back of the brooch was a portrait, beautifully colored, standing out conspicuously from the dull gold frame.

As he looked at it Henry Henshall was conscious of a mental shock such as he had rarely received. The picture conjured up a whole train of reminiscences that for the last few weeks he had hardly ventured to disturb, for in the startling eyes and an canny expression of the photographed face he had no difficulty in recognizing the man whom he had seen in the Wagner palace car, and whom he had mentally dubbed the heavy villain of the episode.

In an instant he was on his feet; his hand was upon the bell, his intention was instantly to send a servant to Mrs. Smith, summoning her to his presence.

He was spared the trouble. The door was noiselessly opened and the lady herself entered the room.

"I dropped my brooch," she said apologetically. "No, do not trouble," she added as he made a movement. "I think I know where to find it."

The young man's heart was beating violently. He wanted to tell her that he had picked it up, but was unable to find the words.

He held it up and tried to speak. In an instant she had snatched it from his hand.

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about this man as you conscientiously can. To show you how much in earnest I am I will tell you my reasons for asking this."

He then related to her the story of his journey in the Wagner palace car, omitting no detail likely to interest her.

He then told her (and strange to say, he really believed it himself) that his object was to find the girl, although engaged to Miss Hartman. He would be perfectly loyal to Lena, but he felt that he could not go through life without having met his ideal, if only to speak with her briefly, to study her beauty for one hour.

He must see her. He would perhaps forget her if his curiosity were satisfied. Ah! how easy it is to "talk one's self in," as the saying is. What a delightful thing an eased conscience!

Mrs. Smith was a woman of the world, and she understood the complexion of the case far more thoroughly than did young Henshall. But apparently it served her purpose to gratify him.

"Do you know the names of the people with whom you saw him?" she asked.

"Crawford," he answered. "Did you learn that they stopped at No. 3—West Thirty-eight street?"

"Yes," in intense surprise, "I called there."

"So did I," she said quietly, "but the bird had flown."

"Have you any idea who the Crawfords were?" It was his turn to question.

"None at all," she replied bitterly. "I need hardly say that Watson is not my husband's name. He has assumed many aliases, but the name to which he was born is Leopardi. He is an Italian by birth. He has called himself Rimaldi, Duval, Schimmerlein, Henshaw and Watson, as far as I can remember. I met him two years ago. I knew him as Dr. Henshaw, the mind reader."

"Hypnotism was a subject in which I was deeply interested. I attended all the lectures on the subject that I could possibly find. I met Dr. Henshaw at his house. I was rich. I had money and jewels."

"How it came about I can never thoroughly understand, but we were married. Two months later he left me penniless. I waited for his return, and waited in vain. A child was born to me. Thank goodness it died. I took this position temporarily. I live for revenge, and," fiercely, "I will have it."

Grave fears for the safety of his ideal surged up forcefully in the bosom of Henry Henshall as he listened to this story. That she was in danger was now very evident. His mind was made up.

"A man and a woman, both in earnest, and working together in unison, ought to be able to accomplish a great deal. I want to find this man, and this woman," he said, again furnishing excuses to himself. "You want to find him as a wronged woman. Shall we join forces?"

She hesitated for a moment. Then her mind was made up.

"Willingly," she said.

NEXT WEEK.—Chapter 5 by William Howe, the noted Criminal Lawyer of New York, chapter 6 by America's fairest prima donna Pauline Hall, and chapter 7 by Inspector Byrnes.

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