

In the name of God advancing,
Sow thy seed at morning light;
Cheerily the furrows turning,
Labor on with all thy might.
Look not to the far-off future,
Do the work which nearest lies;
Sow thou must before thou reapest,
Rest at last is labor's prize.

Standing still is dangerous ever,
Toll is meant for Christians now;
Let there be when evening cometh,
Honest sweat upon thy brow;
And the Master shall come smiling,
At the setting of the sun,
Saying, as he pays thy wages,
"Good and faithful one, well done!"
—Translated from the German.

HER LOVE TEST

By Kathryn B. Henderson
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It was a bright, sunny October afternoon that pretty Martha Linton presented herself in the cosy sewing room of her dear friend, Jennie Brooks. Their greeting was cordial and affectionate. Both had gone to the altar the same week, four years previous, and each had confidentially informed the other their husbands were model men not less than a score of times during that period.

"I was just thinking of you, my dear," said Mrs. Brooks. "Lay aside your wrap and take your favorite chair by the window. How pleasant it is to-day! Really, if I didn't have so much on hand I would put on my things and go downtown on a pretense of shopping."

She rushed ahead in her old school-girl fashion, meanwhile deftly cutting out and arranging a dainty little apron which promised to be coquettish in design.

"You ought to be happy, Jennie," said young Mrs. Linton. "Henry remarked to me last evening that he



"Indeed!" sarcastically, believed that John was the best hearted man of his acquaintance."

A pleased smile ran over the rosy face of Jennie Brooks.

"I think we two are to be envied of our hubbys, don't you?"

The only reply was an affectionate nod on the part of Martha.

"But have you heard of the curious treatment Mrs. Banks gives her husband," rattled on Jennie.

"No, I haven't. My dear, what—"

"Why, she says Mr. Banks jilted her sister before he married Mrs. Banks, and that the sister really died of a broken heart. Of course, his wife didn't know the truth until her sister told it all on her death bed, and from that day to this Mrs. Banks has never ceased trying to make Mr. Banks' life perfectly miserable. Every one says she pays no more attention to household affairs than if she were boarding. For my part, I don't see how Mr. Banks can put up with such conduct."

"Oh! he is perfectly devoted to her. He is just as attentive and solicitous as he can be. What a perfect man!"

Half an hour was spent in mutual expressions of condolence concerning Mr. Banks' unfortunate lot, and in

criticising the various retaliating measures his wife was inflicting.

As Martha Linton wended her way homeward her brain was busy with the tale she had heard. The novelty of such a scheme and the savor of romance it held lent it a peculiar interest. She had an idea. Things were growing a little tame—why not test Henry's love this way?

The mellow, hazy, beautiful October days wore apace and Henry Linton congratulated himself on possessing the most delightful of wives. He was a happy man at home and was proud of her. Business was flattering in its outlook, all the future seemed fair, and what more could he wish.

"Henry, I want a sealskin wrap this winter!" said his wife at breakfast.

A good-humored smile spread over his features as he listened. Then he raised his eyebrows in exaggerated surprise.

"You needn't look so horrified, Henry," she said, a little annoyed at his expressive face.

"I am not horrified—I am simply shocked," he said with assumed gravity.

"Indeed!" sarcastically.

Henry Linton went to business somewhat irritated at the unwonted display of his wife's disagreeableness, but his displeasure wore away before he reached his office.

Before he went home he went to a leading fur establishment and selected a handsome seal garment. He ordered it laid aside and to be delivered at his office before Thanksgiving day.

"My bonny darling shall have her wrap before cold weather sets in," was his thought as he went out of the store. He felt happy that he was able to gratify her wish. A year previous such expense was not to be considered. What a surprise it would be!

He found the evening a little dull. Martha was busy with her fancy work. Without being actually uncivil, she was wholly engrossed with her own affairs. The evening was an illustration of what followed during the week. The days drifted on and Thanksgiving drew near. There was no change in Martha's studious demeanor.

At first Linton resented her lack of affection. He spoke of it frequently. Then pride being aroused, he determined to meet indifference with indifference. He concluded his intended gift would not meet with appreciation if offered while matters were so unpleasant, and he ordered it for Christmas.

Thanksgiving day came and was almost forgotten, and the monotony of Henry Linton's home galled him. Several times he sought by cheerfulness and playful affection to bring about the old sweet way again, but his efforts were dismal failures.

Humiliated and wounded, he grew angry. With the subsiding of ill nature came a feeling of carelessness. Then neglect crept in. If his wife cared nothing for him he was not bound to lavish his affection on her. If it pleased her to withdraw from his love and extend nothing but a tame friendliness, all well and good.

One morning as he sat in the crowded train his attention was attracted by a veiled face. A pair of bright eyes twinkled roguishly at him. When he reached his office he discovered his necktie ridiculously awry. "Why didn't Martha tell me how I looked at breakfast," he thought, as he reflected how oddly he must have appeared. No wonder the fair stranger was amused. It was only another evidence of the indifference his wife manifested toward him. The incident vexed him.

The next morning he again chanced to sit near the lady who had smiled at him. She looked up, their eyes met. A glance of recognition told she remembered him. He scrutinized her carefully and came to the conclusion that she was attractive. That day he noticed a friend was acquainted with her. Inquiry followed.

"She is Mrs. Jackson. Her husband died during their honeymoon, and she is now employed as secretary of Iron, Steel & Co., the contractors. She is

one of the gay widows, Linton, so beware!" was the result of his questioning.

As the days went on Henry Linton learned to watch for the jaunty hat and pretty face as he stood on the platform waiting for the train. Soon a smile, distant yet not unfriendly, was the result. A little courtesy offered in a jostling crowd in helping her from the car steps was the beginning of what proved a pleasant acquaintance.

"You seem a little depressed this morning," she said one day, as they occupied seats together. "I wonder if somebody was cross this morning at breakfast?"

"You have divined the truth," he replied. "Not really cross, but indifferent."

"I'm sorry," she said, archly.

There was no change in Martha Linton's course. She was not always ill tempered, but she managed to make herself utterly apathetic without appearing to make it intentional. Two months had passed in this way.

"Do you know, Clara," said Linton, after greeting his train friend, "that I believe life isn't worth living with the heart starving for love and affection."

They had long since addressed each other by their christian names, and were now on the footing of familiar friendship.

"You echo my sentiments exactly," was her reply. "There is no use in going through life unhappy on that score."

"Are you perfectly happy?"

"Well—I am this morning," she replied, looking into his eyes.

He pressed her hand unobserved by others, and the pressure was returned.

All day Henry Linton was preoccupied. His thoughts continually reverted to the morning's incident. Alone in his private office, he paced the floor. He reviewed his married life from the hour he vowed faith and fidelity at the altar to the miserable present. Wherein had he failed as a lover, as a husband. The thought occurred to him that perhaps Martha's heart had gone out to another. Such things had happened, and were happening every day. He would have an understanding with his wife. If she did not love him in the old way she would be at liberty to go. Did he love her? Yes, his heart told him, but this continual apathy was slowly driving all love from his life. Then, there was Clara. She was always pleasant and ready with a smile. She was pretty, too—and every ready with kindest sympathy. What a tender love she could bestow!

That night Martha was invited out to tea, and Linton's intended interview was postponed indefinitely. He spent a quiet evening with his papers, and retired early.

As he stood waiting for the train the next morning he became aware that he was impatient for its coming. Clara Jackson would soon appear, for she lived near and always came just as the train rumbled up to the station. It lacked five minutes before she would smile into his eyes. Did he love her? he asked himself. He assured himself that he did not—but then, he cared for her in a way. Hers was a delightful friendship, and then she was sympathetic. Why could not this friendship ripen into a passionate attachment—the train of thought was interrupted by the sight of the approaching train. A musical voice at his side remarked:

"A penny for your thoughts!"

"Good morning, Mrs. Jackson," replied Linton. "Perhaps they are worth more than you offer."

"Perhaps," she replied, doubtfully. Seated at last in the coach, while mentally commenting that she looked remarkably attractive in her tailor-made suit, he remarked: "I was thinking of you."

A vivid flush dyed her face.

For a little while neither spoke. There was something of restraint between them. Curiously enough both felt they had reached a point at which it would be decided whether the future was to be more or less than their past. He seized her hand within the folds

of her dress, and with hurried words outlined his domestic affairs, and commented on the strained relation existing between him and his wife.

"I am hungry for love and affection," he said, "and I seem instinctively drawn to you. I have been candid and truthful with you and you know my situation. I have tried love, and, trusting in its endurance, have found marriage an illusion."

When they parted she promised to meet him the next day.

"Are you going out this evening?" queried Martha Linton, as Henry took up his hat, shortly after their evening meal.

"Why do you ask?"

"I thought if you did not have particular business on hand you might remain with me instead of going out."

"I did not suppose you cared enough for my society to want me to stay," he returned, gravely.

"Oh! yes I do," she replied. "You have been away so much evenings that I have been very lonely."

Henry Linton's heart throbbed quicker than it had for weeks. He stood in the middle of the room, hat in hand, looking at his wife. She sprang from her seat, and, coming close to him, smiled up into his eyes.

"I will stay if you choose it so," he said, returning the smile.

"I choose to have you, then," was the laughing response.

In her piquant way she arranged his chair and hers before the glowing grate. In half an hour the old-time terms of endearment fell from their lips as of yore, and for the first time in three months Martha's lips sought those of her husband.

Henry Linton did not go to the little railway station at his usual time the following morning. He took the next train, and as he left home he left a kiss on Martha's lips.

"Can't you come home early this



"Oh, yes I do," she replied.

evening, dear?" she asked at the door.

"I will if nothing prevents," he said gayly, waving his hand to her.

An hour later he penned the following note:

"Mrs. Jackson: I sincerely prize the confidence you have given me, simply because it was given me freely. I will never violate it. Since our conversation I have learned that the love I thought was a chimera is the truest and best gift in my possession. I am in honor bound to give what I exact, and it is my firm intention to be true to myself and my love.

"Forget me. Should we meet it will be as friends only. Respectfully,
"H. L."

Henry Linton never asked an explanation for Martha's peculiar course. In her heart she resolved never again to cloud her life with foolish experiments in the way of retaliation for a moment's irritation or a passing mood's crossness, but she never knew the danger.

She Must Be Doing Something.
"Eve never went to a woman's club."

"No, but perhaps if she had she would not have found time to sample the fruit."—Illinois State Journal.