THE HEART OF THINGS

SHE had just returned from the crowded concert hall, where she had enjoyed a veritable triumph. Her face was flushed and smiling, and she still held in her hands the great bouquet of roses—her favorite flower—which had been given her as she left the platform. She was recalled to her surroundings by the voice of her maid, Fanchion.

"There is a telegram for madame on the table," she said. Denise picked it up; it was addressed to "Mrs. Fielden," which was unusual. She was known to the London world and her friends as "Madame Elena." She opened it sharply. It was brief and to the point.

"I think it is right to let you know that the boy is seriously ill.

"MICHAEL."

Unconsciously she crushed the message in her hand, and her thoughts flew to the Lincolnshire village where it had been written.

"Bring me an 'A, B, C,' and pack a bag. I am going into the country."

"I wonder is he is really very ill?" she pondered, as she sat in the train. "I think Michael would scarcely have sent for me unless he were. The meeting will be awkward and uncomfortable for him as for me. Poor little Michael, what a name to give a child!—I wonder what he is like now? He was not a pretty or interesting child. I remember he was always crying."

After a drive of nearly an hour she recognized a familiar gateway; she remembered the old coat-of-arms cut in the stonework, though she could not see it now, with the motto, "I live! I die!"

"Master is upstairs," old Hannah said distantly, in reply to Denise's greeting.

"I will go up at once if I may," and before Hannah could raise any objection she was half way up the stairs.

What a great room it was! And how solitary those two figures looked in it!

"I am sorry to trouble you," the man said, getting up as she moved. "I am afraid you have had a long, tired journey; but I thought you ought to know."

"Oh, you poor little soul!" she cried, a sob in her voice, and the next moment her arms were over the bed, and the little figure was gathered to her breast, where she crooned over it, calling him her baby, her little Michael, who she had treated so badly, reproaching herself and showering soft kisses on the wan face in the same breath.

"He is very weak; you must not excite him," a warning voice said.

"I shall not hurt him," she said, holding the boy close to her breast. "See, he is already more content." The little face certainly looked less tired and troubled, and one wasted arm had gone up around her neck, while he made himself at home as a matter of course in those unknown arms.

"Has he been long like this?" she asked. "You ought to have told me before."

"He was never strong, as you may remember," he answered coldly. "He does not take after my family; he pines for warmth and sunshine, as you did. I must remind you that you have never given me reason to think you took any particular interest in him. I was not at all certain you would come now.'"

"Not come!" she exclaimed. Then she remembered. "I beg your pardon," she said humbly; "you are quite right. It is I who am to blame—I who am in the wrong. But—but," her voice growing husky, "I did not know he wanted me so badly. I was so young when I went away—I am not very old now—and I did not understand many things. Perhaps if you had reasoned with me—if you had pointed out——"

"Do you think I wanted a captive instead of a wife?" he asked harshly. "I saw you fretted and pined like a caged creature, I saw the hunted look in your eyes; I knew you would wear your life out in a little while if it went on."

"It was so dull—so dreary," she murmured, "and nobody wanted me, not even you, I think, after a little while. I ought not to have married."

"No doubt it was a mistake, but in justice I must say that that was more my fault than yours. I was years older and I took advantage of your youth and ignorance to fasten a bond on you of which you did not understand the import. No doubt you knew yourself best. You have the life that suits you; you were free to go your own way."

"As you yours."

"As I mine." something in the voice made Denise more uneasily. For six years the man and the child had lived here together; her husband, her child. For six years she had nearly forgotten both; not quite, though she had tried to do so. The man and the child had been growing old together—without love or happiness—while she had laughed and sung. There was nothing young in the house—not even the little form she held in her arms.

Denise was sitting alone one evening in the faded drawing room when her husband came in. As a rule she saw very little of him; they seemed to avoid each other by tacit consent.

"There is something I wish to say to you if you are at leisure," he began.

"I am quite at your service," she answered. "Little Michael is in bed and asleep, and I have nothing to do."

"It is about him I wish to speak," he said, as he sat down. "He is almost well again now."

"He is very delicate still," she said quickly. "He needs a great deal of care—he could not stand much." Could he mean that they wanted her no longer? she asked herself, with a thrill of fear.

"As you say, he needs a great deal of care," he answered slowly. "He also needs more comfort and different surroundings to what I can give him. I have wondered—I have wondered," he repeated, "if you would like to take him with you when you go?"

"Like to take him!" she echoed, her face lighting up with joy. "Need you ask me?"

"No, perhaps not. I thought that you seemed attached to him."

"Attached?" she repeated again, with a laugh. "I love him with all my heart. I couldn't bear to be parted from him now. But don't you mind?" looking at him with inward resentment at his indifference. "Won't you be very lonely without him?"

"It will be best for the child to be with you for a time at least, I think, as you are willing to have him. As you say, he is not strong enough to stand any shock, and he would miss you. I suppose your engagements will necessitate your returning to town soon."

"Yes. I ought to have gone before," flushing at his evident anxiety to get rid of her. "We will go as soon as the doctor says he can travel." Then as he was leaving the room, "I—I should like to thank you very much for trusting me—for letting me have him."

"There is no need. I have been thinking it over and it seemed best for the boy," he answered, as he closed the door.

"O course, there would be no thought of me in it," she said to herself bitterly. "I wonder why he hates me so much now? Once upon a time," the rose color in her cheeks growing deeper. "I am sure he cared for me more than a little in his curious restrained way."

It was still early when she went upstairs to bed, but she was tired of her own company. As she lit the candles the boy opened his eyes—he slept in a little bed in her room now—and called to her.

"I am not a bit sleepy. Come and talk to me, mother," he said. She sat down in the low chair and laid her head on his pillow, as he liked to have her.

"I've got something to tell you, sweetheart," she said, tucking one of his hands under her cheek. "What do you think has happened? You are to come with me to my mother's home. How will you like that?"

A wiser and more prudent mother would have hesitated to excite the child at that hour, but Denise was a creature of impulse.

"Go away with you and see all the beautiful things you have told me about? Do you really mean it, mother? How lovely!" springing up in bed with shining eyes. "And is father coming, too?"

"Father does not want to come, darling." The childish face grew pale.

"It will be dull for father all alone here," he said seriously. "You ask him to come, mother; he'll come for you."

"Not for me—for me perhaps least of all," she murmured, forgetting that she was talking to a child; but little Michael was wiser than his years.

"Go, now, mother," he said, coaxingly. "Try * * * Wait. I'll tell you a secret; it can't be wrong to tell you. Father keeps a picture of you locked up, and I saw him looking at it one night, and—and," in an awed whisper, "he kissed it before he put it away. People must love a person very much to kiss their picture, mustn't they, mother?" Kisses had been rare luxuries in his life.

"Kissed my picture? Are you sure, little Michael?" The child nodded, watching her intensely. Denise thought of how she was going to make the desolate home more desolate, and the tears rushed to her eyes.

"I'll try, my sonny—I'll try for your sake," she cried, and she went from the room. Her heart was beating fast with fear and excitement as she hurried down the stairs before her courage failed her. What if he should be angry; what if he should repulse her? She shivered at the thought.

She softly opened the library door, where he was in the habit of sitting at night. A lamp was burning dimly on the table in the center of the room, and its light fell on the bowed head of a man; some books and papers had been overturned as he threw out his arms and mutely emphasized that aspect of despair. Denise forgot her fears.

"Michael!" she cried in a sobbing voice, her arms round his neck, her cheek to his—"Michael! I've been a bad wife, but I want to be a better one. Will you take me back?"

He looked up, and she saw that his eyes were wet.

"Is that you," he said heavily. "What is it—what has happened?"

"Nothing," softly, "except that I have found out that I want you. We both want you, little Michael and I. You won't send us away—or you will come, too?"

"Want me—you?" he said in a husky whisper. "Is it really true, Denise?" He held her in his arms as one holds something very precious that one is afraid to touch. "I had almost given up praying and hoping."—The King.

Some women in their party clothes look like Christmas dolls.

RIFLING GREAT MAN'S MAIL

Snobbishness and News Enterprise of Boswell.

Samuel Johnson has been called "the brightest ornament of the eighteenth century," but without the fussy, obtrusive but superlative talent of Boswell, the actual life of Johnson would never have been revealed to us. Boswell was in deadly earnest. He took infinite pains to collect material at all times, in all places, from all men. The author of "The Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft" has recorded a story of Mr. Mauritius Lowe, a painter and a protege of Johnson, which shows Boswell's "nose for news," and his snobbishness as well. Lowe had requested Johnson to write him a letter, which Johnson did, and Boswell came in while it was writing; his attention was immediately fixed. Lowe took the letter, retired, and was followed by Boswell:

"Nothing," said Lowe, "could surprise me more. Till that moment he had so entirely overlooked me that I did not imagine he knew there was such a creature in existence, and he now accosted me with the most overstrained and insinuating compliments possible.

" 'How do you do, Mr. Lowe? I hope you are well, Mr. Lowe? Pardon my freedom, Mr. Lowe, but I think I saw my dear friend Dr. Johnson writing a letter for you.'

" 'Yes, sir.'

" 'I hope you will not think me rude, but if it would not be too great a favor you would infinitely oblige me if you would just let me have a sight of it. Anything from that hand, you know, is so inestimable.'

" 'Sir, it is on my own private affairs, but——'

" 'I would not pry into a person's affairs, my dear Mr. Lowe, by any means. I am sure you would not accuse me of such a thing, only, if it were no particular secret——'

" 'Sir, you are welcome to read the letter.'

" 'I thank you, my dear Mr. Lowe. You are very obliging. I take it exceedingly kind.'

"Having read, Boswell went on: 'It is nothing, I believe, Mr. Lowe, that you would be ashamed of——'

" 'Certainly not.'

"Why, then, my dear sir, if you would do me another favor you would make the obligation eternal. If you would but step to Peele's coffee house with me and just suffer me to take a copy of it, I would do anything in my power to oblige you.' "

Lowe was so overcome by this sudden familiarity and condescencion, accompanied by bows and grimaces, that he had no power to refuse. They went to the coffee house. His letter was presently transcribed, and as soon as he had put his document in his pocket Mr. Boswell walked away as erect and proud as half an hour before.

"I ever after was unnoticed," says Lowe. "Nay, I am not certain," he adds, sarcastically, "whether the Scotchman did not leave me, poor as he knew I was, to pay for my own coffee."

Structural Changes in Man.

Recent researches have furnished some startling facts regarding changes which man is at present undergoing physically. It is believed that man was formerly endowed with more teeth than he now possesses. Abundant evidence exists that ages and ages ago human teeth were used as weapons of defense. The practice of eating our food cooked and the disuse of teeth as weapons are said to be responsible for the degeneration that is going on. In ancient times a short-sighted soldier or hunter was almost an impossibility; today a whole nation is afflicted with defective vision. It is almost certain that man once possessed a third eye, by means of which he was enabled to see above his head. The human eyes formerly regarded the world from the two sides of the head. They are even now gradually shifting to a more forward position. In the dim past the ear flap was of great service in ascertaining the direction of sounds, and operated largely in the play of the features. But the muscles of the ear have fallen into disuse, for the fear of surprise by enemies no longer exists. Again, our sense of smell is markedly inferior to that of savages. That it is still decreasing is evidenced by observations of the olfactory organ.

The Parental Catfish.

"The catfish," said an angler, "is the only fish I know that seems to have any affection for its young. Other fish disregard their young altogether—will even eat them at times—but not so with the 'catty.' The first time I discovered this good trait was last summer. I was angling in a mill dam, and in the clear water I saw a host of little catfish, accompanied by two adults. The adults—husband and wife, no doubt—watched over the babies with anxious care. They darted in this direction and in that, keeping the coast clear, and if a stranger fish approached they ruffled up and fought it off like lions. They did a thing that indicated great intelligence in them when they saw me. Happening to glance up and catch my eye, they feared that I meant mischief, and instantly they sank down to the bottom and thrashed the mud about with their tails, thus creating an opaque cloud wherein their young and they were invisible. Since that time I have often seen catfish with their young. There have been two adults in each case to look after the small fry, and in the presence of some great danger the opaque cloud of mud has always been drawn about the brood."—Philadelphia Record.

When you hear praise of a man you dislike, do you not hate him all the more cordially?

DYING WORDS OF FAMOUS MEN.

The Last Utterances of Some of the World's Greatest Celebrities.

"It is well."—Washington.
"I must sleep now."—Byron.
"Is this your fidelity."—Nero.
"Then I am safe."—Cromwell.
"Let the light enter."—Goethe.
"God's will be done."—Bishop Ken.
"Lord, take my spirit."—Edward VI.
"Lord, receive my spirit."—Cranmer.
"Don't give up the ship."—Lawrence.
"It is the last of earth."—J. Q. Adams.
"I am about to die."—Samuel Johnson.
"Independence forever."—John Adams.
"Give Dayrolles a chair."—Chesterfield.
"I shall be happy."—Archbishop Sharp.
"Don't let poor Nellie starve."—Charles II.
"I thank God I have done my duty."—Nelson.
"I feel as if I were myself again."—Walter Scott.
"An emperor should die standing."—Vespasian.
"The best of all is, God is with us."—John Wesley.
"It matters little how the head lieth."—Raleigh.
"A dying man can do nothing easy."—Franklin.
"Many things are becoming clearer to me."—Schiller.
"I feel the daisies growing over me."—John Keats.
"Taking a leap in the dark. O mystery."—Thomas Paine.
"Don't let that awkward squad fire over my grave."—Burns.
"Here, veteran, if you think it right, strike."—Cicero.
"I thought that dying had been more difficult."—Louis XIV.
"Let me die to the sounds of delicious music."—Mirabeau.
"It is small, very small," alluding to her neck.—Anne Boleyn.
"Let me hear those notes so long my solace and delight."—Mozart.
"We are as near heaven by sea as by land."—Sir Humphrey Gilbert.
"I do not sleep. I wish to meet death awake."—Maria Theresa.
"I resign my soul to God; my daughter to my country."—Jefferson.
"I would not change my joy for the empire of the world."—Philip Sidney.
"Farewell, Livia, and ever remember our long union."—Augustus Caesar.
"I have sent for you to see how a Christian can die."—Addison to Warwick.
"Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit."—Christopher Columbus.
'I want nothing, and I'm looking for nothing but heaven."—Philip Melancthon.
"I have seen all things, and all things are of little value."—Alexander Severns.
"Remorse! Remorse! Write it! Write it! Larger! Larger."—John Randolph.
"O, liberty, liberty, how many crimes are committed in thy name."—Mme. Roland.
"Let us cross over the river and rest under the shade of the trees."—Stonewall Jackson.
"Crito, we owe a cock to Esculapius; pay it soon, I pray you, and neglect it not."—Socrates.
"I am dying out of charity to the undertaker, who wishes to urn a lively Hood."—Hood.
"Throw up the window that I may once more see the magnificent scene of nature."—Rosseau.
"I pray you see me safe up, and for my coming down, let me shift for myself."—Sir Thomas More on the scaffold.
"My soul I resign to God, my body to the earth, and my worldly possessions to my relatives."—Michael Angelo.
"I have provided for everything in my life except death, and now, alas! I am to die, though thoroughly unprepared."—Caesar Borgia.
"It will not be long before God takes me, for no mortal can live after the glories which God has manifested to my soul."—Toplady.
"Lord, enlighten and soften the hearts of my executioners. Adieu forever, my dear children. I go to join your father."—Marie Antoinette.
"Be of good comfort, brother, for we shall this day light such a candle in England, as, by God's grace, shall never be put out."—Latimer to Ridley.
"What is the matter with my dear children! Have I alarmed you? Oh, do not cry. Be good children, and we will all meet in heaven."—Andrew Jackson.
"My country! O, how I love my country."—William Pitt, the younger.
"Here is a book (the Bible) worth more than all others ever printed; yet it is my misfortune never to have found time to read it. I trust in the mercy of God. It is now too late."—Patrick Henry.
"Not one foot will I flee so long as breath bides within my breast, for He who shaped both sea and land this day shall end my battle or my life. I will die King of England."—Richard III.
"Father in heaven, though this body is breaking away from me and I am departing this life, yet I know I shall forever be with Thee, for no one can pluck me out of Thy hand."—Martin Luther.
"I shall die regretting. I have always desired the happiness of France. I did all in my power to contribute to it. I can say with truth that the first wife of Napoleon never caused a tear to flow."—Josephine.
"Lockhart, I may have but a moment to speak with you. My dear, be a good man, be virtuous, be religious, be a good man; nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here."—Walter Scott.
"Thy creatures, O Lord, have been my books, but Thy Holy Scriptures much more. I have sought Thee in the courts, fields and gardens, but I found Thee, O God, in Thy sanctuary, Thy temple."—Lord Bacon.
"I have meditated upon the state of the church, the spouse of Christ, I have fought against spiritual wickedness in high places, and I have prevailed; I have tasted of the heavenly joy, where presently I shall be! Now, for the last time, I commit my soul, body and spirit into His hands. Now it has come."—John Knox.

THEY ARE RECONCILED.

The Reuniting of a Vanderbilt Scion and His Wife.

A reconciliation has taken place between Elliott Fitch Shepard, Jr., of New York, a grandson of the late William H. Vanderbilt, and his wife, Esther Wiggin Potter Shepard. For six months they were separated by reason of allegations of impropriety on his part, because of which Mrs. Shepard brought suit for a legal separation. The influence of peacemaking members of the family prevailed, and, presumably, there will hereafter be smooth sledding.

MRS. E. F. SHEPARD

The marriage of these young people was a society sensation. Elliott Shepard, whose father was the famous publisher, was one of the liveliest young men Yale ever turned out. His bride was the daughter of a grocer who kept a small store in Greenport, L. I. She was the prettiest girl on the island, could swim, ride a horse and play tennis. Mrs. Elliott F. Shepard, the mother of the defendant, who was instrumental in reuniting the young people, lives at Woodlea, which is situated at Scarsborough-on-the-Hudson, and is one of the finest country estates in America. The Pompeiian gardens there are marvels of the gardener's art.

VALUE OF BABY'S CRY.

It Helps to Make a Healthy Pair of Lungs.

The early cry, which is painfully trying to some young mothers, especially to a nervous one, becomes less distressing if she stops to think that the lungs, never having been used, need exercise in order to make them strong. For the first three months the infant is too weak, even with a fair amount of crying, to develop the lungs more than one-third their normal capacity, and that these organs cannot be considered perfect until they are inflated to their utmost is enough to make her tolerant of a fair allowance of crying. A year of simple breathing would not accomplish as much toward developing the lungs as a moderate amount of crying each day for a month. It is the deep inhalation, such as accompanies a good cry, which alone can make the lungs strong. Healthful infants cry normally, and they should be allowed to do so a portion of each day. When the cry is whining or continuous it is usually caused by overindulgence of some kind, or by mistakes, such as handling the baby, when he is more comfortable left alone. Too much entertaining causes nervousness and cold extremities, which make necessary too many wraps or too hot a room; this results in discomfort and weakness and lack of fresh air. Sleeping in a bed with older persons is bad for a baby; it draws upon the vitality. Indigestion is never natural; it is caused by overfeeding or improper feeding.—Harper's Bazar.

What the Duke Is.

A teacher who was showing portraits of Queen Victoria and her family held up a picture of the Duke of York. Nobody in the class could tell who it was. "Well," said the teacher, "he is the Duke of York, and now can any of you tell me what he is?" The hand of a little girl went up as she answered quickly and promptly: "He's the heir consumptive to the British throne."

If a woman lives in the same neighborhood with a family of young children, she can become a missionary to China, by taking charge occasionally while the mother gets out of jail.

Science AND Invention

A French physician removes most foreign bodies from the ear by sucking them into a soft rubber tube.

"Nieves penitentes," slightly inclined snow columns resembling shrouded figures doing penance, are a peculiar phenomenon of the Andes to which Sir M. Conway has given attenion. They are the last remains of drifts or slides which have become hardened in nearly vertical strata of different densities.

A plan recently employed in France for giving a stereoscopic effect to magic-lantern pictures thrown upon a screen is to furnish each spectator with a pair of prisms, set in spectacle frames, through which two pictures, side by side on the screen, are viewed. The angles of the prisms are varied for widely different distances from the screen, but owing to the natural power of accommodation of the eye, the same angle serves at distances not widely variant.

Two coats of hot oil, carefully applied after thorough cleaning of the metal, are recommended by a Canadian artisan as an improvement over any process now in use for preventing rust of structural iron and steel. The oil would fill crevices, cracks and holes where paint cannot enter. It would cover rough places often imperfectly coated in ordinary painting, and it would be a fine preparation for subsequent painting or covering with cement coating.

Some of the giant Sequoias of Southern California are estimated to be from five thousand to eight thousand years old, having perhaps, spanned the entire period of written history. A section in the American Museum of Natural History was cut from one of thees trees at a height of twenty feet, is a little more than eighteen feet in diameter, and its concentric rings show that it began its growth in 550 A. D., the tree reaching a diameter of thirteen feet at Columbus landing.

Arsenic, the dreaded poison that Professor Armand Gautier of Paris asserts is essential to life, proves to be disseminated in the primitive rocks, from which sea-water derives its store. The minute quantity taken in the food becomes localized in the skin and its appendages, the thyroid and mammary glands, the brain and the bones, and it is stated to be the exciting ferment of the functions of sensation and reproduction, just as phosphorus is the exciting element of the functions of cellular nutrition.

Fresh discoveries are continually adding to the world's known stores of iron. Last summer extensive fields of iron ore were found in northern Norway, on the coast of Sydvaranger Bay, near the Russian border. Analyses at Christiania show that the ore tion, because the presence of titanium which is regarded as a good indication, because the presence of tianium in large quantity retards the melting of ore. It is said there are good harbors near these new iron fields, and surveys have shown that the ore covers a very large territory.

Recent researches by Professor Macfayden have shown that many microorganisms can be exposed to the temperature of liquid air for a period of six months without any appreciable loss of vitality, although, at such a temperature, the ordinary chemical processes of the living cell must cease. Referring to Professor Macfayden's experiments, Professor James Dewar says that the organisms in the state just described "cannot be said to be either alive or dead, in the ordinary acceptation of these words. It is a new and hitherto unobtained condition of living matter—a third state."

IS ROOSEVELT'S INTIMATE.

Chester I. Long, Recently Elected Senator from Kansas.

Kansas has recently elected a United States Senator to succeed W. T. Harris. The chosen individual is Chester I. Long, the Conyears old and is the youngest Senator gressman, who is 44 ever elected in the State. He is a native of Pennsylvania, a former resident of Missouri, and a graduate of the law office of George R. Peck, now of Chicago, who induced him to enter politics. He is now serving his fourth term in Congress. He is a personal friend of President Roosevelt.

CHESTER I. LONG.

What He Was Coming To.

Anxious Patient—Do you weally think, doctah, that I shall have a gween old age?

Gruff Doctor—Unless you die young or acquire a little gumption, you have before you the prospect of the greenest old age possible to humanity.—Baltimore American.

Great-granddaughters of Franklin

Miss Wainwright and Miss Schroeder, the latter a daughter of the Governor of Guam, have just entered Washington society. The young ladies are great-granddaughters of Benjamin Franklin.

There are people in the world who never work and who just sort of absorb a living.

What's the difference between half a dozen dozen and six dozen dozen? Look out!