

A Confidence

A Story of One Who Misjudged His Wife.

"Twenty years! I am notched and grizzled. You are only mellowed, ripened." My friend smiled and lighted a fresh cigarette. He puzzled me. Rumor had led me to expect to find him, after my long absence, a disappointed if not soured man. I had sought him here in the retreat where he and his cold, ungenial wife lived. It was said, like a pair of hermits. Arriving at a moment when the lady was absent, I thought myself fortunate and prepared to probe the unobtrusiveness of one whose affection in early youth had left a very sunny spot on my memory. I was, in fact, ready to give him all the pity and sympathy which a bachelor of experience can feel for the irremediable mistake of a married friend.

lived. The news of what appeared to be total ruin reached me first in a telegram which I found waiting for me one night when I returned home from a dinner party alone. My wife having pleaded a headache and retired to her room early in the evening. I gathered up the letters which had come by the last post and carried them to my dressing room, where I sat down to read them. Imagine casting one's eyes on a bit of paper as the eyes of the owner of a million and raising them with the knowledge that one does not own a penny in the world! I sat long immovable, stunned with the suddenness of the blow.

"How was I to tell my wife? How would she bear it, she who had married me for the splendors which she must relinquish, the woman whose beauty, whose gentle if cold companionship and perfect conduct toward me and the world I had bought with gold? If she could not love me before, how bitterly would she turn from me now?"

"I had sat for two or three hours motionless as stone. The first gleam of dawn crept in at the edges of the blinds, and I stirred and writhed in my chair. The door opened, and my wife, in a white robe, appeared on the threshold in the gray light.

"What ails you?" she said gently. "Nothing that I can tell you at present," I said. "Go back to your rest."

"Will you not tell me what is the matter?" "Certainly, I will tell you tomorrow. It is only some bad news."

"While I was speaking for keen eyes caught sight of the open telegram and of the letters scattered on the paper which spelled ruin. The next moment she was on her knees beside me.

"Oh, my dear, will you not share this trouble with me?" "I was so stupid from the shock I had borne that the sweet words and pleading tone came on me like a second blow. The next moment I was sure she had heard them, did not believe in them. I answered cruelly.

"Unfortunately you will have to share it with me." "No, say 'fortunately.' Oh, my love, my husband, am I so unworthy? Must I be counted as a thing bought with gold, living on gold and for gold, and cast aside when gold fails and love might well take its place?"

"Is it not absurd, I said, 'that you should imagine you could love me now when you could not love me through all the five years of my devotedness to you?'"

"She crept nearer to me and wound her arm around my neck. 'I loved you,' she said, 'I loved you since the first day I knew you. But I knew there was a plan made by others to force me upon you that your possessions might be useful to me and those belonging to me. The knowledge of this paralyzed my actions, even my looks. I knew you thought you were taking a loveless wife, and seeing you were willing to take me so I was too nervous, too timid, too proud, too unhappy, to have any power within me to deceive you. Now for the first time my heart has found a way to speak. We will work, we will laugh, we will be happy together.'

"She tightened her sweet hold of my neck. My arms closed around her." He stopped suddenly. He had been talking as if unaware of my presence. There was a long silence and before it ended my hand found its way to his shoulder.

"I understand now, old friend," I said softly. He shook himself up and laughed a little bright laugh.

"Yes," he said, "I thought I should give you a surprise. So much for the opinion of the world and a man's penetration of a woman's heart and mind. And here we are, after all, with enough saved out of the wreck to live on simply and with content. Hark, I hear wheels. My wife is arriving home. Come and be introduced to her."

"The terrapin disease. The terrapin is thought to have much influence in causing sickness, and the terrapin disease is either a rheumatic affliction about the chest and ribs or possibly some pulmonary trouble. The association of the terrapin with diseases in this portion of the body doubtless originates from the fact that the ribs of the terrapin are not free, as in the case of most of the higher animals, but are united into one piece.

COSTLY PLATE.

Some London Companies Have Old and Interesting Services. Few people, at least in this country, possess plate worth such a fabulous sum as that owned by London's lord mayor during his term of office. Its face value has been computed to be slightly over £20,000, though three times that amount would not buy it owing to the historical interest attached to many of the articles.

The two solid silver soup tureens which are employed at the banquet to distribute 100 gallons of clear turtle to the guests are valued at £500 apiece and are said to have been in possession of the corporation for over a century.

Moreover, there are a gross of silver dinner plates worth £1,500, 200 ice pails valued at nearly £1,000, 200 cut-glass dishes, the cost of which £2,000 would not cover; 83 solid silver metal dishes worth another £2,000, and hundreds of other articles, such as grape scissors, salt cellars, wine cups, waiters' trays, decanter labels, etc., all of solid gold or silver and valued at over £5,000.

This collection of plate is constantly being increased, for every lord mayor at the expiration of his term of office is expected to add an item, the cost of which must not be lower than 100 guineas.

In addition the lord mayor's official regalia is costly in the extreme. The diamond pendant that hangs about his neck could not be bought for £1,000, and his collar cost a quarter of that sum, while his pearl sword necessitated the expenditure of £100 when it was new.

But the other companies in the city possess plate of even greater value. The Goldsmiths, for instance, own the most priceless collection, the worth of which it is impossible to estimate. It includes Queen Elizabeth's coronation cup, for which an offer of £5,000 was refused some time ago. The Fishmongers' company boasts of, among other things, a silver chandelier, and estimates of its value have never fallen below £3,250.—London Tit-Bits.

POINTERS ON MANICURING.

When the nails are fragile, a little wax and alum rubbed upon them will strengthen them. If brittle, a little almond oil or cold cream will be found beneficial.

To remove white spots from the nails use a mixture of refined pitch and a little myrrh upon them at night, wiping it off the next morning with olive oil.

When about to manicure the hands, dip the fingers into warm, soapy water and hold them there for a minute or two in order to soften the nails and the scarfskin about them.

The scarfskin should be gently pushed back from the nails before they are polished. It should never unless absolutely necessary be cut with the scissors.

Agnails, improperly called hangnails, may be prevented by proper attention to the scarfskin which surrounds the nails.

For manicuring only a pair of curved nail scissors, a nail file, an orange stick, a chamois polisher, a bottle of vaseline and a box of rose salve or nail powder are necessary.—Mary E. Walker, M. D., in Ladies' Home Journal.

A Toothsome Revenge. During the reign of Charles II., the age of gallantry, it was the custom among gentlemen when they drank a lady's health, in order that they might do her still more honor, to destroy at the same time some part of their clothing.

Upon one occasion Sir Charles Sedley was dining in a tavern and had a particularly fine necktie on, whereupon one of his friends, to play him a trick, drank to the health of a certain lady, at the same time throwing his necktie in the fire. Of course Sir Charles had to do likewise, but he got even, for not long after that, dining with the same company, he drank the health of a fair one, at the same time ordering a dentist whom he had engaged to be present, to pull out a refractory tooth which had been troubling him. Every-one else was obliged in this manner to mourn a molar.

Sitting Room Drama. "Who comes there?" called little Willie, the sentry, in threatening tones as he brought his deadly wooden gun into shooting position. "A friend," answered little Tommie from behind the rocking chair. "Advance and give the countersign," hissed the sentry, "or I'll shoot your head off."

Refuse of the Universe.

"It was a Beothuk Indian legend that when God made the world he swept the universe of the refuse and cast it into the sea, and when the white men came from the rising place of the sun they called the heap Newfoundland and chose it for a dwelling place," says Norman Duncan in Ainslie's. "It may be so. In its remote parts Newfoundland might easily be taken for the leavings and rejected materials of the work of creation, there cast away. It is as fertile as an ash heap, which, moreover, it resembles in that it contains scraps of everything which entered into the making of the world—iron, copper, coal, gold and all other treasures under the ground. The interior is a soggy, rock-straw barren, an interminably vast waste, where not so much as a shrub is to be seen and no human clothes to live. Stunted forest fringe coast, a stony growth of pine and spruce and birch, through which you may walk miles in vain search for a schooner's spar. The shore line is rocky, in some places except by flood and fire bare of all soil-grim, naked rock. To many a Newfoundland a sandy beach would be as great a wonder as a horse."

Meerschaum Cost in Making. A fire in a pharmacist's shop the other day spoiled the proprietor's stock of meerschaum and incidentally disposed of the idea common in most smokers' minds, that this commodity is very expensive. Meerschaum itself is not expensive. That used by the manufacturers in this country is imported as raw material from Austria, but most of it is obtained in Asia Minor. Usually there are three or four different grades, running from the rough and mixed to the pure and finely grained article. There is no duty upon it. The chunks, not unlike enamel coal in shape, are packed in oblong boxes, about two feet and a half long, a foot wide and a foot high. The raw material is quite brittle and has to be soaked in water before it is used for modeling.

Meerschaum pipes are expensive because much of the material from which the bowls are made has to be thrown away before a piece is found that has no flaws in it. The shavings, however, are never wasted. They are used to make a cheaper grade of pipes which are known as chip meerschaums.—New York Post.

Control Your Temper. There are three reasons why one ought to control his temper, and the first is self respect. When one loses command of himself and throws the reins upon the neck of passion, he may have for the moment a certain enjoyment in the license, but there must surely come a reaction of regret.

When he is calm again and the fit has passed away, every serious person must be ashamed of what he said and what he did, of the manner in which he gave himself away and the exhibition he made of himself. He will recall the amazement on the faces of his friends and the silence which they adopted as a protective measure and the soothing language which they used, as if they were speaking with a baby, and the glances which passed between them. He will not soon hold again with them as strong as he did before this outburst, nor will he have the same claim upon their confidence as a sound and clear headed man. He has acted like a fretful, peevish child and has for the time forfeited his title to manhood and the place of a man.

Woodworms Can't Stand Benzine. Woodworms can be destroyed in books and woodwork by benzine. Books are locked up in a cupboard with a saucer of benzine. The insects, as well as their larvae and eggs, soon die off. Furniture and carvings are similarly placed in a room with a dish of benzine and kept closed up for several weeks, the time required for the complete destruction of the insects varying according to the thickness of the wood. New woodwork can be protected against their entry by a coating of glue, as, living on vegetable substances, they do not touch animal products.

Amusing Superstitions. If you count warts, you will increase their number, or to handle a toad will cause warts. If two persons wash in the same water or dry their hands on the same towel, they will shortly quarrel. To bore a hole in the door frame and put in it the hair of a colored person is supposed to cure whooping cough. The rattle of a rattlesnake, if carried in the pocket, will prevent rheumatism or, if placed in the bureau drawer, will keep away moths.

The Shrew. The shrew was originally the shrew mouse, which, when her young were helpless, would fight desperately in their defense, and so well known was the courage of this little animal, which would even go out of its way to seek an enemy at times when the nest needed protection, that the word became applied to a woman who was ever ready to seek a quarrel.

He Objected. "No, sub, Mistah Doctahman," objected the gentleman of color—"no, sub; doan' yoh go ahead en vacuumate dat ole 'ooman er mine. Doan' yoh do hit. Des plunk dat air stuff in my hofe arms, but doan' fix huh so she gwine hab er so'e arm en caht' ten' ter de white folks' washin', kase er yoh do 'Eze pinked' got ter go ter wuk!"—Baltimore American.

Hopeful. Editor (to artist)—I refused this drawing a year ago. Why do you bring it here again? Artist—I thought you would have had more experience by this time and know a good drawing when you see it.—Boston Herald.

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