

NEDL TRANSFER



HN 3GX5 B

UNTO THE  
END  
"PANSY"

KD 11549

*UNTO THE END*

✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻

---

# UNTO THE END



By *PANSY*

(MRS. G. R. ALDEN)

*Author of . . .*

*“Pauline,” Etc.*

ILLUSTRATED

---

BOSTON  
LOTHROP PUBLISHING COMPANY

KD11549

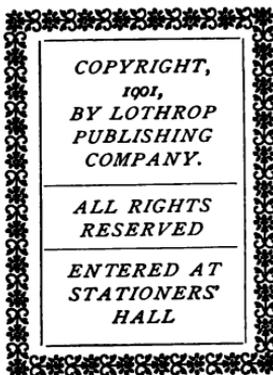


**PANSY**

TRADE-MARK REGISTERED

• JUNE 4, 1895. •

---



PUBLISHED MAY, 1902.

• **Norwood Press** •  
• *J. S. Cushing & Co. — Berwick & Smith* •  
• *Norwood, Mass.* •



# CONTENTS.



CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTIONS . . . . .	11
II. AMBITIONS . . . . .	24
III. A TEXT AND A PRETEXT . . . . .	38
IV. AN APPETITE FOR THEOLOGY . . . . .	51
V. NEW ENVIRONMENT . . . . .	65
VI. ADJUSTING ONE'S SELF . . . . .	78
VII. NARROW LINES . . . . .	90
VIII. HYPER-CRITICAL . . . . .	102
IX. FIGURES AND FACTS . . . . .	115
X. A MODERN MICAWBER . . . . .	127
XI. DEVICES . . . . .	139
XII. JANE . . . . .	150
XIII. ROSES AND THORNS . . . . .	162
XIV. "IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN" . . . . .	174
XV. WHAT'S IN A NAME? . . . . .	186
XVI. THE PASSING YEARS . . . . .	198
XVII. "YOUR FATHER" . . . . .	210
XVIII. "MY FRIEND DR. GORDON" . . . . .	223



## CONTENTS.



CHAPTER		PAGE
XIX.	FENCING . . . . .	235
XX.	PILOTING . . . . .	247
XXI.	"HOW WAS IT TO END?" . . . . .	259
XXII.	"DON'T YOU WORRY" . . . . .	271
XXIII.	AN INJUNCTION . . . . .	283
XXIV.	"WE MUST WAIT, I SUPPOSE" . . . . .	295
XXV.	CHECKMATED . . . . .	307
XXVI.	THE UNEXPECTED . . . . .	319
XXVII.	"WELL — IT IS OVER" . . . . .	330
XXVIII.	POSING . . . . .	342
XXIX.	"THE MANTLE OF SILENCE" . . . . .	353



## ILLUSTRATIONS.



"You'll do" . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
"I saw her at the Schubert rehearsal the other night with Burton Landis" . . . . .	<small>PAGE</small> 171
Grace Landis was almost as much of a schoolgirl as before her graduation . . . . .	324

*UNTO THE END*

\* \* \* \* \*

---

---

# Unto the End.

## I.

### *INTRODUCTIONS.*

“GOOD for Ben!” said Dr. Hollister, looking at the roses in the vase and on his daughter’s cheeks with pleased eyes. “I didn’t know he had courage enough to be individual.”

“Ben is thoughtful for his friends,” Mrs. Hollister said, pushing one of the roses among the masses of Dorothy’s hair; “he ought to have sent them to you, child, instead of to Eunice; they are your color.”

“Ben’s roses are all for Eunice,” said the younger daughter with a toss of her brown head; “he doesn’t care whether I have any or not.”

Eunice laughed as she too helped herself to roses, and pushed them into her belt. “You are romancing, Dorothy,” she said, “at Ben’s expense. His roses are like all his offerings, family affairs.”



“Not this time,” said Mrs. Hollister; “he was very careful in his directions: ‘Won’t you give them to Miss Eunice, and tell her they are the very first blowing, and there isn’t another rose bush like it for miles around?’ Those were my directions.”

“Well, that was because I am the eldest daughter, and Ben is trying to be conventional,” said Eunice, while the others laughed.

“Ben is a good boy,” said Mrs. Hollister, in a tone that apologized for her laugh. “A kind-hearted, manly boy; he will be his mother’s comfort, always, I am sure. He grows increasingly thoughtful of her.”

“But he will never know what to do with his hands and feet,” said Dorothy.

“He will know what to do with his brains,” said her father. “If Ben Kendall doesn’t make a place for himself in the world, I shall be disappointed. He is really an unusual boy. If he ever gets to college, other people will find out what he is made of.”

“Oh, father!” said Dorothy, “do you believe Ben will ever get to college? How can he, with his mother to take care of, and they so poor?”

“I don’t know,” said Dr. Hollister; “that is what Ben means to do, and he is the sort of boy who accomplishes what he undertakes. I know what I should do if I had a little surplus money, I should take delight in giving Ben’s faith and courage a lift. I believe in the boy.



Well, Miss Dorothy, what excites your risibles now? Isn't your imagination able to conceive of Ben Kendall as other than an awkward country boy?"

"It isn't Ben, father, it is the idea of your having any surplus money. I'll confess that my imagination isn't equal to any such flight."

"Not while I have you and Eunice to look after, eh?" said the smiling father. "But you forget that some 'Ben' or other will be taking one or both of you off my hands one of these days. What then?"

"May the days be long between," said Mrs. Hollister, with the serenity of a mother who felt sure that neither daughter had as yet given a serious thought to such possibilities. Dorothy was ready with her answer.

"Ben will be too old for college long before that time, father. Eunice and I are going to be nice, sweet-hearted old maids who will look after the parish for you. We will make the calls and manage the 'Pastor's Aid,' and all the rest, while you and mother visit together and enjoy yourselves. You may preach a little, on Sundays, but that is all you need do; we have it planned out beautifully, haven't we, Eunice?"

Eunice broke her muffin quietly and smiled on her chattering sister; and the mother, watching them both furtively, said to herself:—

"They are still heart-free and equally interested in all the world. I knew I could trust



them! Girls at school with their minds on their books are not likely to be thinking of love affairs. I am glad that we live in a town where there are no young men who will be able to force my buds before their time to bloom. They will have a chance to develop slowly into sweet womanhood."

Very soon after this exchange of pleasantries, the Hollister family scattered for their busy, pleasant day. Eunice took her mass of glowing roses to her father's study table, admonishing him, as she made a place for them, not to get excited over his sermon and overturn the vase. She had pushed more of them into her belt, remarking as she did so, that they looked pretty against the white of her dress, if they were not becoming to her.

"Why, they fit you," said Dorothy, "every shade and tint in the world does; nevertheless, they ought to be mine, being one of the very few colors that my brown skin will tolerate. Poor Ben's roses are the best of him, I think. He doesn't know what he is sighing for. What a homesick boy he would be in college! and imagine how such college boys as we met at Hattie's would torture him! I don't believe I am sorry that there isn't the slightest prospect of his ever going."

"Ben isn't easily troubled when he makes up his mind not to be," said Eunice; but she said it with the air of one to whom it made



little difference what troubles came to him. Then she dismissed the boy from her thoughts, and gave herself to the pleasant duties of the hour.

It was almost an ideal home, this one in which these two young creatures were growing into womanhood. The town itself was of the sort that might have been chosen for ideal conditions. It was not a large town, yet was large enough to redeem it from the pettiness and uncultured espionage that commonly belong to small places.

It had been generously laid out, with wide streets that were carefully kept, and beautifully shaded by grand old trees that had been the pride of generations. On either side of the streets were long rows of homes, with lovely lawns and side yards where flowers bloomed, and fountains played, and birds delighted to spend their summers. Choice homes were these, belonging chiefly to that usually choice portion of the world, the real "middle class," who have not riches, in the sense that we have come to use that word, yet who are very far removed from poverty. The town was wont to boast that it had no "poorer classes." There was no "slum district," nor even an alley where doubtful members of the community congregated. The churches kept careful guard over a few families that sickness or accident had disabled for a time, and slipped in



their quiet sacks of flour and' tons of coal as occasion demanded ; but for the most part the inhabitants needed no help save that which came from their own honest efforts. An occasional "ne'er-do-weel" shadowed for a time the fair name of the town, but he generally found the atmosphere uncongenial and slipped away. Naturally the society of the place was choice. The people were to an unusual degree interested in schools and libraries and lectures, and all those functions that stand for culture. It was said jocosely by half-envious adjoining towns that whoever desired to become a public speaker should try to secure Brantford Library Hall, provided he could find an evening when it was not engaged, for he would be sure to have an audience in Brantford. Behind the fine old town was an outlying farming community, where were men who were always counted among the substantial people of Brantford, and whose broad acres under thorough cultivation had been the pride of their fathers and grandfathers. In truth, Brantford was able to pride itself upon its old families.

Yet among these honored old families was here and there one whose farms had not brought financial success. This had been conspicuously the case with "old David Kendall," as he had been called even before he was at all old. The farm had come to him heavily stocked with mortgages, for his father before him had



not been successful, and the young man, David, who had hoped never to be a farmer, had shouldered the heavily encumbered burden and struggled pathetically with it, and grown poorer year by year, until, still in what ought to have been his prime, he had slipped away to that other country, where men who by nature and keen desire are fitted for a certain work, never surely have to let it slip from them while they struggle with something else. Witty people, or those who aimed to be witty at the expense of fine feeling, used to say that the only successful thing David Kendall ever did was to die. Perhaps that was because his was not like common dying. It was more like a door opening for an eager soul that had been all its life repressed, and that caught a glimpse of another sphere where people really *live*. Certain it was that David Kendall, who had been patient and faithful and in earnest all his fifty-four years of life, had never looked radiantly happy until that morning when, just as the sun had climbed the last obstructing hill and was bathing his fields in glory, the door of that other country opened for him and his new day began. But he left his son Benjamin and Benjamin's mother behind. Being the self-sacrificing soul he was, that surely would have troubled David Kendall had not the Master, whom all his life he had served, assured him that he could safely leave those two to Him.



They were brave, the two who were left. The boy, Ben, was only fourteen when his father went away. But he was large for his years, and strong; and his knowledge of farm matters was greater, the lookers-on said, than his father's had been. They said of him that his father had talked over matters with him and asked his opinion, when he was a mere child. And it was true that the father had discovered in his boy an instinct, or an aptitude, — what shall it be called? — for deciding what should be done about the farm, that he knew he had himself never possessed. Therefore the boy was used to being consulted, and had been trained to think.

They let the farm on shares to a practical farmer, with the condition that the boy, Ben, should be allowed to work one small portion of it as he pleased. There were those who laughed and said that the wisdom of the father as to farming was cropping out in the second generation, when it was found that Ben pleased to grow only flowers. But he worked. How that boy did work! Not only at flowers, but as the years passed, at corn fields and potato lots; doing a man's share before he was seventeen. And between times, on rainy days, and holidays, and in the long winter evenings, he was at his books.

Down in his heart Ben Kendall hated farming as thoroughly as his father ever



had; and unlike his father, knew of a certainty that he should by no means spend his life in farming. What he wanted was to become a physician. What he meant to have was a thorough medical education. He could not remember when this plan had not presented itself to his mind as something that was to be; yet at nineteen it looked to almost everybody, but Ben, like an utterly hopeless ambition. Even his mother, who had strong reason for believing in him, urged him at times to give up his dreams and "stick to farming."

"I believe you could do it," she said to him earnestly the evening that he brought her a crisp ten-dollar bill from his own private earnings, to complete the interest money for that year, — "I believe you could, Ben, and make it a success; you've got it in you, somehow. Your father used to say you understood it better than he did; and wouldn't it be better to be a successful farmer, and hold up your head with the best of them, than to struggle along as a poor country doctor?"

"I don't mean to be a 'poor country doctor,'" Ben had said, imitating her tone, but he had laughed good-naturedly, and had added: "I'll agree to the 'country' part, but not the 'poor.' I'll be as good a doctor as can be found in the country, I promise you that. Don't you worry, mother; I'll take care of you, and cure your neuralgia yet, perhaps."



His mother had laughed with him, but afterward she had sighed.

She was used to plodders and, in a sense, believed in them. She was not sure what became of people with ambitions. She had never fully understood that much of her husband's failure in life was due to the stifling of his early ambitions.

There were certainly difficulties enough in the boy Ben's way to choke all ordinary ambitions. He was a good scholar, but few, besides his teacher, realized it. He was keen-brained, but he was also sensitive and shy, and painfully awkward. It was true, as Dorothy Hollister had said, that his hands and feet were trials to him, on occasion. His embarrassment before women generally, and in the presence of certain men whom he looked upon as great, was so extreme as to give him the appearance of being under the mental average. Yet there were a very few, of whom Dr. Hollister was notably one, who insisted that Ben Kendall had more than the average of brain power instead of less, but that he had not yet had a chance to find his level.

In such a town as has been described, and with such environments, the Hollister girls had spent their nineteen and seventeen years. Dorothy had been born in the fine old manse which was now her home, and Eunice had been transplanted to it so early in life that



she considered her claim almost as good as a birthright.

Dr. Hollister was a power in the community. His residence of eighteen years had given him a chance to make his opinions felt; and he would have been a man of mark anywhere. A good student, with natural abilities perhaps above the average, and with a certain personal magnetism that helped him to make friends rapidly, he had by no means remained in Brantford for lack of opportunity to go elsewhere. On the contrary, he had in his earlier years been so distinctly popular that the people of his parish had fallen into the habit of regarding distinguished-looking strangers with suspicion, seeing in them a possible committee prepared to make a loud "call" to their pastor. So frequently had this experience been actually lived through, that Brantford was educated to the belief that in Dr. Hollister it had a prize, on which many envious eyes were set; but that on account of devotion to his flock he could not be moved by offers of higher salary and greater opportunities. It had been good for both pastor and people to have feelings growing out of this state of things cultivated into habit. Even the act of loving, if long indulged, becomes a habit, and in certain directions Dr. Hollister's influence was undoubtedly enhanced by the thought that he was much wanted elsewhere, and for love of them could



not be had. It may be said to have become the habit of Brantford to admire and love Dr. Hollister.

For these and other reasons the daughters in this home had come up to the threshold of womanhood without encountering many of the petty trials which touch the lives of most minister's families.

For instance, the people of Brantford First Church never quarrelled. They had their differences of opinion, of course, but owing to their habit of conferring with their pastor—to whose views it was their habit to defer—they had been kept from outbreaks, and even from internal wounds of any depth. This state of things was helped by the fact that Dr. Hollister's excellent judgment had never shown itself more distinctly than when he chose a helpmate for life. It is doubtful whether pages of description could give a better idea of Mrs. Hollister's character than her daughter Dorothy expressed one day, after a two hours' business session of the "Pastor's Aid," with Mrs. Hollister in the chair.

"Eunice, you ought to have heard mother to-day, she was simply grand! I never realized so fully before, that she is described in the Bible. She certainly was as 'wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove.' Some of those dear women came to the meeting feeling a good deal like hawks ready to pounce upon



*UNTO THE END.*



a grievance and cut it up and pass it around the parish; and mother just smoothed their plumage and poured drops of oil here and there on the troubled waters, and they went home feeling that they are the salt of the earth, as some of them are. My metaphors are a trifle mixed, as usual, but you know what I mean."

## II.

### *AMBITIONS.*

**S**MOOTH waters in every sense had the Hollisters enjoyed. So smooth, indeed, that there were times when the mother had a troubled thought occasionally because of this fact.

“Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth,” she quoted once to her husband, and added, “Sometimes it half frightens me to think how smoothly our lives flow along. What ‘chastening’ have we ever had?”

“Bide your time, my dear,” would the good doctor reply. “The Father can be trusted; we are His, and that is enough. Some children haven’t strong enough natures for strong discipline; they have to go slowly, and be loved into the kingdom; perhaps that is the way with us.”

His wife could afford to smile over such half-humorous hints. She believed that her husband was strong enough for any treatment, and kept close enough to his Master to need



no discipline. It was her own faulty nature that troubled her.

“Or that ought to trouble me,” she told herself, gravely, in these moments of anxiety, “but yet it doesn’t, very often. I cannot help being happy most of the time; yet when I think that discipline may come to me through the children, it frightens me. If one could only always shield them!”

Her confession, however, describes fairly well the normal state of the Hollisters; they could not help being happy most of the time.

Their financial condition has already been hinted at. “Surplus money” was certainly something unknown to the family. Perhaps Dr. Hollister would have had none had his salary been far larger than it was, for his heart was large, and the needs of the world pressed hard upon it. He considered his salary fair, though there were many in his congregation who would have been appalled at the thought of supporting their families on the sum they gave their pastor. Still, the pastor’s family had never suffered for lack of money. The daughters when ready had entered together one of the best colleges then open for women; Eunice having held herself back for a few months and Dorothy having pushed her studies, that the two might be together, as they had been all their lives. Their record during their first year in college had been such that parents



and parish could afford to take pride in it. Now their first long vacation had begun, and they were planning to enjoy the summer at home with the new zest that absence gives.

“Ten long, lovely weeks to be together!” said the girls, gleefully, looking forward to them as to a happy eternity of time. “Only ten weeks with the children!” said the father and mother, when they were alone together, and to them it seemed but a day in a long stretch of time.

That first Sunday after their home-coming was a perfect June day. Eunice and Dorothy came down dressed for church in white garments, just alike, save that a touch of pink set off Dorothy’s dark skin, and a hint of pale blue enhanced Eunice’s fairness. She had roses, however, in her belt.

“I must wear a few of Ben’s roses,” she said, as she arranged them. “See how these buds have opened since yesterday. Is Uncle Jared Hicks reconciled yet to Ben’s wasting his time and ground with ‘jest posies’?” she asked her father as he came from his study to join them.

“I fancy that he is. As nearly as I can gather the facts, Uncle Jared was struck dumb with astonishment when he found that Ben had sold flowers enough at Easter to pay for an extra horse that was needed. I think the entire Hicks family will at least respect roses, after this.”



“Ben is making a success of his flowers in every way,” Mrs. Hollister said, as the four passed out and down the elm-shaded walk together. “If he could be induced to give up that wild notion of becoming a doctor, and give his entire attention to their cultivation, I believe he would be a rich man one of these days. It is wonderful what success he has with choice varieties. His mother says that all blooming things like to grow for Ben, and it certainly seems so. I tell your father that he ought to encourage such a manifest talent as that, and pour cold water on the other fancy.”

“Not I,” said Dr. Hollister, firmly. “I like Ben’s flowers, but I believe in Ben’s ambitions. I expect him to become, in time, a very respectable physician. He will be late in getting started, of course, unless Dorothy or some one else finds a ‘surplus’ for him; but I like his pluck in holding steadily to that one idea, and I expect him to carry it through to success.”

The church was unusually well filled that morning, even for Brantford, which believed in church-going. Dr. Hollister’s congregation was the largest in town, and the morning was too perfect to afford any excuse for staying at home.

No fairer flowers bloomed in all Brantford than the doctor’s two, and many pairs of eyes strayed interestedly to the pastor’s pew that morning to look upon them.



Among the wandering eyes were two that belonged to a stranger. Mr. Burton Landis had by no means planned to spend a Sunday in Brantford; on the contrary, he had intended to be well on his homeward journey by the time the Sabbath morning dawned. So it all happened, as we reverently say, because Mr. Daniel Cairnsworth, the iron prince of Brantford, was not at home during business hours on Saturday.

“You are sure he will be in on the ten o’clock train to-night?” Mr. Landis had asked of his gray-haired secretary.

“Well, sir, all I can say is that such was his plan when last heard from, and he is a man who generally carries out his plans.”

“Yes,” said Mr. Landis, “that is undoubtedly his reputation; but he will not come down to his office to-night, you think?”

“Oh no; the train slows up at the crossing a few feet from his gate; it does so simply for his accommodation, sir,” — the secretary paused a moment, to allow time for the absorption of this hint of his chief’s greatness, — “and Mr. Cairnsworth swings himself off and goes right up to his house, where his family are waiting for him. He is a man who is very fond of his family.”

Then Mr. Landis, who did not care whether or not the great iron magnate ever thought of his family, expressed himself as charmed that



a man of such wide business interests and cares did not sink his home life in them. After that, he insinuated an idea.

“Now, under the circumstances, if I should happen out to his place in the very early morning, before Sunday had fairly commenced, one might say, do you think he would give me a very few minutes of his time? I would not need to detain him long, of course, and my own time is quite limited.”

Then had the gray-haired secretary taken on an added dignity as he replied firmly:—

“I should say, sir, that your chances would be very poor indeed. Mr. Cairnsworth is a man who never allows business to intrude upon his Sabbath. He will not even allow the trains to halt at his crossing on Sundays, and he is a man who never looks at a Sunday newspaper. If your business is of importance to you, the way to prejudice Mr. Cairnsworth against it is to try to bring it to his notice on the Sabbath day.”

“Ah!” said Mr. Landis, in an admiring tone. “Isn’t that refreshing! To find a man in this pushing age who has power enough to keep his world of business shut out one day in seven is to find a genius.”

And as he bowed himself away, he said to his inner self:—

“Hang it all! Now I shall have to lie over in this place that looks as though it kept Sab-



bath all the week, because their country nabob is as narrow as a piece of chalk."

This is why Mr. Burton Landis, having inquired at the hotel for the church in which he should be likely to hear the best music, had been promptly directed to Dr. Hollister's as the place where they had the best of everything; and found himself seated just where he could command a view of Eunice Hollister's profile, without having the appearance of staring. Mr. Landis was an ardent student of beautiful faces, especially in young womanhood, and he made good use of his present opportunities.

As the service progressed, he discovered that the girl with an exquisitely moulded neck and chin, and who carried herself with a grace that belongs only to the few, had also a voice of purity and strength. He told himself that a voice like that, under cultivation, would be sure to make a sensation. Then he wondered to whom the voice belonged, and set himself to planning how to discover, and how to make his knowledge of use.

Ben Kendall sang in the choir, and his position commanded an excellent view of the congregation. Why the numberless glances that the stranger gave toward the pastor's pew that morning should have roused in Ben the determination to speak certain words that evening, he did not himself stop to consider; but



he carried out his resolution. Under the shelter of the twilight, as they were walking home from early church, he spoke the words that had long been in his heart.

It was the most natural thing in the world for him to join the Hollister girls and walk home with them of a Sunday evening; he had been doing it all his life, and no one but himself had thought twice about it. His road home lay directly past the manse, and his mother did not attend church, evenings. Besides, he and Eunice Hollister had gone to and from the primary class hand in hand years before, and had been excellent friends ever since.

On the evening in question Mrs. Hollister was not with them, having stayed with a neighbor who was ill, so Dorothy walked home with her hand on her father's arm, leaving Eunice to Ben. She glanced back at Eunice with a mischievous smile of triumph at having secured her father all to herself, and then they dropped behind and walked slowly, as Dr. Hollister liked to do, after preaching, content to listen almost in silence to the music of his daughter's voice. This arrangement gave Ben great satisfaction, though he was unusually silent, and his heart was beating so hard that it seemed to him Eunice must hear it. A tremendous resolution had Ben taken. His heart had admonished him that it would be better to let well enough alone, at least until fall. If it should



happen that Eunice did not want to hear what he had to say, how completely would the long, lovely summer over which he had dreamed be spoiled. Why not make sure at least of that blissful season, with its picnics and rowing parties and wild-flower excursions? So many excuses for being together! What if words of his should make it all impossible? That was one side of the question. For the other side, his conscience asked if he were not taking an unfair advantage. Suppose for one miserable moment that Eunice Hollister did not share his feeling, would she be willing, after understanding it, to walk and talk with him in this friendly fashion, making an Eden garden for him out of the prose of his everyday life?

“In short,” said this royal soul to himself, wiping the perspiration from his forehead as he thought of the possibilities, “is it right for me to keep on in the old way, when I understand myself, and know the only thing that will satisfy me?” Through what chemical analysis the question passed in his old-fashioned brain shall not be explained. Many modern young men would have laughed at his conscientiousness, but Ben settled it with himself that silence would be no longer right; and for Ben Kendall to decide that a position of his was wrong was equivalent to changing that position. All people are not so; there are those who, seeing that their course is questionable, yet move steadily on in it be-



cause it is agreeable and the other way is hard. Ben Kendall was not fashioned in such mould. He began the moment they had turned the corner and were thus removed from possible listeners.

“Eunice, while I have a chance with you alone, may I tell you something, and ask you something?”

“Of course you may,” said the innocent lady, in her sweetest tone, flavored with the faintest tinge of condescension. “You tell me everything, you know. Why do you consider it necessary to begin in such ceremonious fashion? You have not grown afraid of me, I hope, because I have been away for nine months.”

“Oh, no,” said Ben, hurriedly. “That is, I — I hope I haven’t. But I have something particular to say to you to-night, and I am not sure how to begin it.”

The thought crossed her mind that Ben was entangled in the meshes of some romantic friendship. She ran over, mentally, the names of half a dozen girls, and wondered which it was, while she called him a ridiculous boy, and asked herself why he need be a simpleton! She had hoped that he would have more sense than many of the boys of the neighborhood, and be content to wait for a man’s experience until he should become a man. “If he hasn’t committed himself, I shall tell him not to for at least three years; five would be better. I won-



der why boys reared in the country have to be such fools about these matters?" She had time for all these thoughts, because they had been overtaken by old acquaintances who lingered to comment on the beauty of the evening and the pleasure it was to them to see the girls at home again. Eunice gave them her talk, while her thoughts were with Ben.

As soon as they passed on, out of hearing, Ben began again.

"There is no use in trying to fix up a way to say it, Eunice. I don't know proper ways of doing things, but I know myself, and I may as well say right out plain, what I guess you know without my saying it, that ever since I have realized that I was going to be a man, some day, I have thought of you as the girl who was going to be my wife. I don't mean for years yet" — he made breathless haste to add this, because he felt the thrill that ran through her frame, and took in something of the meaning of the exclamation that escaped her lips.

"Of course I am nothing but a country boy without any education to speak of, and I'm not in any way your equal, and never shall be, for that matter. But I shall get the education, Eunice, and the other things that go with it. If you will just have the patience to wait, and will let me feel that I am working for you, and that you are interested in my winning, why, I know I shall win. I don't know whether I



ought to say these things, yet ; but it came over me to-day that perhaps it wasn't honest to keep on hugging my plans and hopes, connecting every step I take or want to take in life with a thought of you, without saying a word to you. Though of course you have known all along just how I felt."

She interrupted him now ; laid a hand on his arm with a gentle imperativeness.

"No, Ben, you must let me speak now. I have never had the least idea of such a state of things. Do you suppose I would have led you on, as I must have seemed in a hundred ways to be doing, if I had dreamed of this for a moment? I thought we were real good friends, almost like brother and sister, and that was all. You have always seemed to me something like what I could fancy a younger brother to be ; you know how interested I have been in your rose culture, and in all your plans, in fact, but it was exactly the interest I could have in a brother, and it was nothing else. I'm astonished and distressed, Ben, that you have indulged such fancies ; they are not in keeping with your usual good sense. Do you know, I have always been proud of your good sense. Do make haste to tell me that this is only a wild little streak of sentimentality that has just come to you, and over which we can laugh together, presently."

She talked on rapidly, scarce knowing what



she was saying, but bent on forestalling more words from him that would but add to his embarrassment afterward. She need not have been afraid of words; Ben had not many more to say.

“Just let me ask you this, Eunice,” he interrupted. “Suppose I should promise not to say another word of this kind to you for five years, or ten years, if you would rather have it ten, and suppose I have what people call success, would you—couldn’t you—I don’t mean wait for me—I don’t want to bind you in any way—all that I mean is, at the end of that time, whatever time you have a mind to set, if I am the man I think I shall be, and you are free, may I tell you again about the hopes on which I have lived ever since I can remember? And may I think of you in the meantime as one who may perhaps, some day, be able to give me what I ask?”

“No,” she said firmly. “You must not do anything of the kind. Though you should wait a hundred years, and become the greatest man in the world, my feeling for you could never be different. The very best that you can do for yourself, and for me, is to put such thoughts from your mind as fast and as far as possible. Don’t spoil your life with silly notions about falling in love. I am dreadfully disappointed, or should be, if I did not know this state of mind would not last. When you



get married, Ben, I expect to be very much interested in your wife, and I will be a good friend to her, as soon as you have chosen her ; but I don't want you to think about it for years yet ; you are much too young."

She talked on eagerly, still anxious to save him from further demonstration, but he did not try to interrupt her. He held open the gate for her to pass, said good night in a tone that to a listener would have sounded much as usual, and without waiting for her reply, went swiftly on toward home. Ben had made his venture and had failed.

### III.

#### *A TEXT AND A PRETEXT.*

**E**UNICE HOLLISTER looked after the young man until his swift feet carried him beyond her vision, then with an expression of mingled regret and annoyance on her usually quiet face went slowly into the house. The uppermost feeling just then was annoyance. It was so trying in Ben to disturb the friendly relations that had always existed between the two families; so silly in the boy to fancy himself in love with her! If it had been one of any half dozen other boys in the neighborhood she would not have felt so much astonished. "Boys of a certain age are given to imaginary experiences of this sort, just as children are to the measles and other epidemics," this wise young woman told herself as she went restlessly about her room, but Ben had seemed to have so much more sense than most of them. She wondered how long it would take him to get over the fancy, and be able to act as usual. It was very trying to have such a thing occur just



as the long pleasant summer was beginning, and she had planned to claim his friendly services in numberless ways. She assured herself that she would not say a word about it to anybody ; it was not like a serious matter that father and mother ought to know, but just a piece of folly. Then she went straight to her mother's room, and while Dr. Hollister rested with his youngest daughter on the piazza below, knelt by the side window in the moonlight with her arm on her mother's knee, and told what to her was a queer little story. She had not been trained to keep things from her mother.

Mrs. Hollister, as she listened, smiled serenely.

“ Poor, foolish boy ! ” she said. “ Still, I am not greatly surprised ; indeed, I may say I had a fear that something of the sort would happen. Ben has been getting a little too exclusive in his inquiries and plans for some time. I thought of giving you a hint before you came home, but decided that it would be better not to do so. Don't worry, dear, you are not in any sense to blame, and with a boy of Ben's age such fancies are soon over, without evil effects if they are judiciously managed. It is much better that the silly fellow chose you instead of some simpleton of a girl ready to meet him halfway. I don't believe I would mention it to your father ; he would be so sorry for Ben that I am afraid the sympathy he would lavish



upon him would make it embarrassing for us all."

Both ladies laughed at this thought, a gentle laugh that had not a touch of unkindness in it for the foolish boy who was at that moment striding over the dusty road, seeing no beauty in the perfect June night.

Thus lightly were mother and daughter able to dismiss Ben Kendall from their world. To Mrs. Hollister he seemed at twenty so much younger than her girl of nineteen, that she felt she could afford to smile at his folly. And even Eunice was but a child. She forgot that Ben Kendall had never had a chance to be a boy; that he had done a man's work in the world, and assumed some of the responsibilities of manhood ever since he was fourteen.

Mr. Burton Landis sat in his room at the hotel with his feet on the window-seat, and his cigar smoke choking the air, while he thought his perplexed thoughts. It was Monday morning, and the express train that he had expected to take had been long gone. It had suited the iron magnate to fix a certain hour of the afternoon as the earliest in which he could give him audience. He must therefore be stayed all day in Brantford, — a fate at which he would not complain if he could contrive a way to make the acquaintance of the girl with the exquisite profile. He had asked what questions he could



of the hotel clerk, and learned that the young women who sang so well were the daughters of "the preacher, Dr. Hollister. Just as pretty girls and as smart girls," the clerk believed, "as could be found anywhere in this world." He seemed to know much about them, but Mr. Landis thought that it would hardly do to ask for a letter of introduction! Still, he was not used to being foiled in his wishes, and every hour of waiting increased his desire to make the acquaintance of the girl whose face and voice had charmed him.

He had that morning bought a mass of glowing roses from a young fellow who had been called "Ben," simply because he had thought how charming they would look about that white dress whose exquisite simplicity had pleased him. Not that he had a hope of seeing any of those roses in her hair or belt, or that he had any idea as to what he should do with the lovely blooms after they became his. They were bought simply because this man had a habit of following out his fancies as far as possible, and the fancy connected with those roses had pleased him. He could not know, of course, that Ben Kendall would rather any man on earth handled his roses than that particular one; Ben could not have put into words his reason for so feeling. He made no sign as he exchanged for money the rare blooms that had always made him think of Eunice,



and turned away, leaving their new owner to wonder impatiently what he would do with them now that they were his. He sat and stared at the roses through the medium of cigar smoke as he revolved his problem. It was their perfume, he assured himself, that made him think of the girl; it was so delicate, and exquisite. How should he manage to meet her?

Suddenly an idea occurred to him. If he could only recall the text of the good doctor's sermon and a point or two that had been made, or even without the points, armed only with the text, he believed he might be trusted to be obtuse enough about understanding it to lead well on toward the dinner hour. Then, with true country hospitality of course the gratified preacher would ask him to stay to dinner.

"In that case the fair charmer would be visible, I should think," he said thoughtfully, "and the rest of the way would be easy."

But what was the text? He looked about the large, plain room, very neatly furnished for a country hotel, but a Bible was not among its belongings. He racked his brains in vain; he could not so much as remember that the sermon had a text. At last he went down to the piazza in the hope of seeing somebody or something that could help him. Fortune favored him. Tilted back in one of the easy chairs with the morning paper in his hands was old Dr. Keene, who had been pointed out the



day before as a man who used to be one of the great city preachers, and who now spent his summers in Brantford, his boyhood's home. Mr. Landis had noted and commented upon his venerable appearance as he saw him in church. What more reasonable than that a man who had lived his daily life in the atmosphere of texts should remember yesterday's? It was worth trying.

"Good morning," he said respectfully, watching his chance as the paper began to lose its interest; "this is a fine June day."

"Charming day, sir, charming," said the old doctor, briskly. "It would take an infidel not to see the Creator's hand on such a day as this; and I take it you are not that; if I mistake not, I saw you yesterday among the worshippers?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Landis, briskly; "I always seek out a church to attend wherever I am. We had a good sermon, I thought."

"Excellent, sir, excellent; Dr. Hollister is a fine preacher; much finer than is generally found in places of this size; but Brantford has been an unusual town in its day. Several men of world-wide fame own it as their birth-place."

"That may account for the character of its pulpit to-day," said Mr. Landis, anxious not to get away from the subject. "The sermon I heard yesterday held my special attention. Wasn't the text handled in an unusually vigor-



ous manner, sir?" He had resolved upon making this venture.

"Well, as to that," said Dr. Keene, drawing his wrinkled white hand reflectively down his white beard, "as to that, I shall have to confess that I did not like his text. I mean, of course, his way of handling it. Now if I had been going to preach a sermon on the doctrine of inherent sin, as I have done many times in my life, there are a dozen, yes, a hundred texts that I would have chosen sooner than the one he used. Didn't it occur to you, young man, that that text taught several other truths much more clearly than it did the one to which the doctor confined his argument? Just consider it for a moment. 'I, the Lord, search the heart, I try the reins even to give to every man according to the fruit of his doings.' I take it that you are not a student of theology, sir, but quite without that, guided only by sound judgment if you had been called upon to preach a sermon from that text, what would have been your theme?"

"My dear sir, you appall me! I called upon to preach a sermon! I assure you that my imagination is not equal to such a strain!" and Mr. Landis laughed genially.

"Ah, well," said the veteran preacher, with a condescending smile, "I suppose it does seem formidable to you; but how many sermons I have preached! my, MY! But I was always



very particular about texts. I wanted to get at the kernel, as one might say, and I believe that to be the true way to preach. Dr. Hollister is not a young man, it is true, but he is much younger than I am, and if I had opportunity to talk it over with him, I believe I could prove to him that he made a mistake in the selection of yesterday's text. Now just look at it—”

The newspaper dropped away entirely, and the man who had made sermons for sixty years squared himself to the conflict and poured out more theology during the next half hour than Mr. Landis had ever listened to in his life. More than he listened to then; he gave himself to the business of fixing that criticised text in his memory.

As soon as circumstances would admit, he got himself away from Dr. Keene's sermon, and made an elaborately careless toilet, that he might look as fine as the morning, and yet wear an air of graceful indifference toward matters so commonplace as dress.

Dr. Hollister was in his study with a Monday morning weariness upon him, and a feeling that although he ought to look over his mail carefully and write a few letters, he would welcome almost anything in the shape of a legitimate interruption. What better interruption could a clergyman desire than the opportunity to explain away perplexities that his own ser-



mon had awakened? Dr. Hollister was distinctly flattered that a young man of Mr. Landis's type, evidently from the city, where he had opportunity each Sabbath to hear great pulpit orators, should have become so deeply interested in his sermon as to seek him out for further light. The good man was much more than flattered, he was encouraged. The visitor, although a church member, was manifestly in need of help, his ideas concerning vital questions being by no means so clear as could be desired. Early in the conversation the theologian saw what Mr. Landis meant he should see, the need for a prolonged interview. The undertone question in the mind of the guest was, could he possibly sustain his share in the conversation until high noon? He wished he had delayed his call until a later hour. But he rallied all his forces, and gave himself to the business of being obtuse and athirst for light, with all the energy that he was wont to give to the securing of a heavy customer for his firm. What Mr. Landis undertook with all his heart he was in the habit of accomplishing. The well-bred start with which he suddenly arose, and the manner in which he expressed his apologies, were inimitable.

“I beg ten thousand pardons, Dr. Hollister! Here I have stolen your entire morning, when of course a hundred duties await you. I had no thought of trespassing to this extent. It



overwhelms me to discover that it is actually twelve o'clock."

The theologian was genial in the extreme. He assured his guest that the morning had been delightful to him, really rested him. He confessed that it was unusual for him to have a chance to converse on such lofty themes with an interested young man. The young men in his church were, some of them, as good as gold, but as a rule, satisfied with a very low plane of thought as to matters theological. And then, at last, came the remark toward which the young man who was living on a high plane had been bending all his energies: "Is it noon, did you say? Dear me! the morning has gone fast, certainly. Won't you stay and dine with us, Mr. Landis? It will be a sort of Monday dinner, I presume, but I can insure you a hearty welcome."

Never was guest more ready to respond to hospitality. He could scarcely make the show of hesitancy which he considered necessary to good form, so eager was he to be welcomed to this family table. Had he been as reverently inclined as the good pastor believed he was, he would have said that Providence favored him throughout that day and the days which followed. The young woman with the exquisite profile, who was introduced as "My daughter Eunice," sat opposite him at table, and proved that she could talk as well as she could sing.



Early in his call Mr. Landis had presented his roses to the doctor, apologizing for their presence with the remark that their beauty had tempted him to the purchase on the street.

Dr. Hollister, a lover of all flowers, had been pleased with the courtesy, and had brought the vase in which he had bestowed them to the dining room.

“We are indebted to our guest for these roses,” he said; “they look like Ben’s, don’t they, daughter? We have a worthy young fellow in our congregation, Mr. Landis, who interests us all very much. He is bent on securing an education under difficulties that would discourage most boys. One of his ways of earning money is the cultivation of flowers, and he is making a success of it. I think you must have patronized him this morning. There are no roses in this region like unto Ben’s.”

Mr. Landis promptly interested himself in Ben, and asked many questions, while his thoughts were puzzling over the rich glow that suffused Eunice Hollister’s face at the mention of the young fellow’s name. How could it be possible that this lovely creature should have a thought in common with that blundering country boy with whom he had dealt? A thought at least that could make the roses bloom on her cheeks. He told himself that it was preposterous! But his anxiety to press his acquaintance increased.



As for Eunice, the consciousness that she had blushed at the mention of Ben's name made the blush deepen. It was dreadful to be so sensitive over the fact that Ben had been an idiot! If she must show her annoyance in this absurd way whenever he was spoken of, what would people think? She had not been able to get away from her annoyance and distress all the morning. She had dismissed the subject lightly the night before, but it would not stay dismissed. Ben had spoiled the summer. She wished the long vacation over, so she could go away and give the boy a chance to forget his folly. She began to think that there was evident reason why she should get away for her own sake. She could not escape the feeling that everybody who spoke of the boy knew how silly he had been, and would associate her name with his folly. At the same time she resented indignantly the thought of ridiculing the poor fellow, and would have been fierce in his behalf had it been attempted. No one did attempt it, least of all Mr. Landis. He won Dorothy's good graces during that first interview by exhibiting the most active interest in Ben, recurring to the subject again and again, and asking such close questions, that before they arose from the dinner table he knew all that Dr. Hollister at least could tell him of the boy and his opportunities and ambitions.

"Such a young man ought to be helped,"



he said with heartiness. "I must see what I can do in his behalf in town; I know men who are especially interested in fellows of his stamp." And he did not know whether to feel repaid or vexed over the flash of pleasure in Eunice's eyes. Why did she care so much? He could not know, of course, that to Eunice this seemed like an opportunity for Ben to recover his self-respect.

As Mr. Landis walked away from the manse that afternoon, he told himself that if that superb creature had become involved in any way with the interests of a country clodhopper, it was his duty as a gentleman to help rescue her.

## IV.

### *AN APPETITE FOR THEOLOGY.*

**I**T has been intimated that whatever Mr. Landis undertook with energy he was given to accomplishing. The vigor with which he set about accomplishing the desire of his heart astonished even himself. Before many days he began to be quite certain that his heart was very much involved in the undertaking.

Mr. Cairnsworth, the iron king whom he had come to woo, was slow in reaching decisions, and this became to Mr. Landis an eminent satisfaction. He was willing to be delayed, to be patient, to go over the ground again and again. He even reached the point where he advised Mr. Cairnsworth not to be in any haste, but to take time to assure himself that everything connected with the matter they were considering was as it should be. Of course while he waited, time was supposed to hang somewhat heavily on the young man's hands, and it seemed to Dr. Hollister only hospitable to urge him to feel at home at the



manse. It came to pass, also, that an invalid in the parish grew suddenly worse and demanded much of the pastor's time. It devolved upon the ladies, therefore, to entertain their guest, and Eunice was the eldest daughter. When at last Mr. Landis journeyed homeward, it was with the feeling that if some pretext did not arise for a speedy return, it should not be his fault. Nor was it. He interested himself so fully and so intelligently in the matters pending between Mr. Cairnsworth and his own chiefs, that the said chiefs promptly agreed that Mr. Landis was the very person to conduct the negotiations to a successful issue. He was sent back to Brantford, and arrived there, as he had meant to do, two days before Mr. Cairnsworth returned from a business trip. When the interview finally took place, Mr. Landis discovered obstacles in the way of a speedy settlement. They were of such a character that they could not well be managed by telegraph, but involved correspondence and waiting. The waiting time was spent chiefly at the manse. Mr. Landis believed that his interest in theological questions grew, rather than abated; at least Dr. Hollister believed this. He affirmed that he had never met a young man with a keener mind, nor one more hungry for the truth. During the summer, other points not before thought of came to the surface in connection with the business, involv-



ing yet another trip to Brantford and more waiting. Before everything was finally settled, Mrs. Hollister began to ask questions that seemed to the good doctor irrelevant. Such, for instance, as What did her husband know about Mr. Landis in addition to his appetite for theology? Was he of good family? Was his reputation in his own city, for honor and righteousness, all that could be desired?

Dr. Hollister answered frankly that of course he knew nothing whatever about the young man, save that he was an inquirer after truth. Once he could not help insinuating a delicate rebuke.

“Why do you ask, my dear? Isn’t it enough for us that he is one who realizes that he has a soul, and that food for it is as important as food for the body? That he is in need of spiritual instruction is a sufficient passport to our interest, I am sure.”

His wife regarded him with what might be called compassionate admiration as she said, “Is it possible, Edward, that you do not see that his interest is in our Eunice?”

“In our Eunice!” the father repeated the words incredulously. “Why do you think that? He has hardly seen the child, has he? Oh, I think you are utterly mistaken. The young man has been sitting under preaching that has kept him in fog; and now that he sees light ahead he wants to keep pushing on.”

“He sees a young woman ahead,” said the

mother, with a sagacious nod, "and her name is Eunice, if I am not greatly deceived. I think it becomes us to have a care."

Mr. Landis did not leave them long in doubt; he was a man who hated delays that did not further his interests.

Eunice had begun her summer vacation with an embarrassment connected with her old friend Ben Kendall; an embarrassment so great as to make her wish that the long vacation were over and she were going away again, so that he might have opportunity to recover from his folly. She forgot all about this after a while; she almost forgot Ben Kendall: there were days together when she did not remember his existence. She stepped with more speed than does the average young woman from the wholesome commonplaces of an earnest happy girl-life into the rose-colored atmosphere of a new experience. She became a woman, with a woman's heart aglow with love and anticipation. Within six weeks of the time when Mrs. Hollister had looked upon her eldest daughter with keen mother-eyes that searched her heart, and thanked God that she was still heart-free, Eunice Hollister was engaged to be married.

The young man pressed his suit with an eagerness that almost took the breath away from the startled father. Wasn't it only yesterday that the stranger was apologizing for his intrusion, intent only upon being guided aright,



and to-day he was asking to become his son-in-law! His little Eunice wanting to be married! It seemed stranger to the father than to the mother. She, woman-like, had revolved in her mind such possibilities ever since she had shortened her eldest daughter's baby dresses. He, absorbed in other duties, had thought of the two always as his "little girls." He looked at Dorothy with a new feeling tugging at his heart, and wondered if she too were growing up.

And then, Burton Landis having secured the daughter's heart, discovered that he could not be happy away from her. He grew insistent about this. Why should they not be married at once? They could not know their own minds better if they waited a century. What need for Eunice to return to school? Suppose she were sure of taking the prize for mathematics? He was not in search of a teacher of mathematics! Dr. Hollister thought himself firm in this regard. For at least ten years he and his wife had been economizing with a view to giving his "little girls" all the advantages of a liberal education. He had meant to give them both opportunities for doing graduate work when they should have secured their first diplomas. He had been a star scholar himself, and had meant, if God had given him a son, to see to it that he had every opportunity for doing better work than his father had done. Since, instead of a son, it was two lovely



daughters, he had become an ardent advocate for the higher education of woman. His article in the last *Quarterly Review* had proved conclusively that the mistake which was being made in American homes was the permitting of too early marriages; was the taking it for granted that the daughters had no interest in the advanced studies which in these days scholarly men were reaching after as a matter of course. Portions of this article had been read to Mr. Landis early in their acquaintance, and that gentleman had expressed his hearty sympathy with the logic advanced, and his belief in its convincing quality. Yet it had failed to convince him.

“Circumstances alter cases,” he had replied, laughing, when reminded of his words. “Your logic is unanswerable, but when applied to Eunice she is the brilliant exception which proves the rule. The truth is, I do not want Eunice to know more than she does now. Two years more added to her honors would leave me utterly in the lurch, don’t you see?”

In ways like these were the father’s earnest protests turned aside. The mother was the first to yield.

“We may as well give it up, Edward,” she said with a sigh. “He is bent on having his way, and Eunice seems to be in full sympathy with him. I cannot understand the child; so eager as she was for college! Now she seems



to have lost all desire to graduate. And yet I can understand it, too, —” this last with another sigh. Her husband smiled on her tenderly. “It is ‘the expulsive power of a new affection,’” he said. “I remember that you and I were willing to forego a good deal for the sake of being together.”

“That is true,” said the mother; “but I wasn’t a schoolgirl: and Eunice is so young.”

Young as she was, they prevailed. Mr. Landis represented in glowing terms the loneliness of his life; the trial it was to come home after a hard day of business to the society of uncongenial fellow-boarders. To listen to him was to be convinced that never man needed wife as badly as he needed Eunice. Moreover, he reminded them that he was three hundred miles away from Eunice’s home, and although Providence had favored him thus far, it was not reasonable to suppose that even Mr. Cairnsworth’s obstinacy could hold out much longer. Could he be expected to endure entire separation for any great length of time?

The conclusion was that in September Dorothy went back to school alone, with the understanding that she was to return for the holidays in order to see her sister married.

Of course the father and mother did not permit matters to reach this stage without having exercised due precaution. Dr. Hollister journeyed to the distant city where the young



man lived, and consulted with the pastor of the church in which he held his membership, and with the heads of the firm where he was employed. He heard only good words from them all. The great house of McAllison Grainger & Co. expressed their hearty satisfaction in the business ability of Mr. Landis. Within the past year, especially, he had shown the most flattering interest in their affairs, and had carried to a successful issue certain business negotiations in a way to reflect great credit upon himself, and augur well for his future. Outsiders with whom Dr. Hollister came in contact had much the same testimony to offer. It was believed by some of them that Mr. Burton Landis already had a small share in the great business firm that employed him. At any rate, he stood well with them, and to stand well with a house like that of McAllison Grainger & Co. was to insure a young man's business career.

Dr. Sargent Butler, the pastor of the largest and finest church of his denomination in the city, had also pleasant words to speak. Dr. Butler counted his members by the thousands, so Mr. Landis was but one of many, yet his pastor affirmed that he knew him well. He was not so aggressive, perhaps, in his Christian life as could be wished, but the same, unfortunately, might be said of most young men of to-day; still, one must not expect too



much of the young. Mr. Landis shared with most others who were away from their own homes and in large cities, the habit of wandering about a good deal to other churches in search of fine music and so forth, to the distinct loss of his own church, but this was a habit easily laid aside as soon as a man had a settled home. "It takes a wife to correct all these little matters," Dr. Butler said genially.

On the whole, Dr. Hollister came home, if not elated, certainly not depressed. Mr. Landis, he affirmed, had kept quite within bounds in representing his own affairs. He had spoken modestly of his connection with the great firm; and as for more important matters, had frankly stated that he was not such a Christian as he could wish he were. Indeed, he had said that it was the feeling that Eunice could be an uplifting power to him in this direction that had drawn him to her. Concerning money matters, Dr. Hollister being definitely questioned by his wife, admitted that he was not clear as to what salary the young man received. He had not thought of asking, and would not have liked to do it if he had thought; it might have appeared indelicate. His impression was that Mr. Landis had means, or at least expectations, of his own, independent of the firm. He was not sure how he received these impressions; it might have been something that Mr. Landis had himself said in the course of conversation.



Dr. Hollister was not anxious over these matters. He reminded his wife that they had never been ambitious that their children should marry money. Given the fact that Eunice's suitor had health and brains, and was willing to assume the responsibility of caring for a wife, it was all that they need to ask. They themselves had been very happy without much money.

Mrs. Hollister acquiesced heartily in this unworldly view of the case, but in her secret heart told herself that her Eunice would know how to use money as it should be used, and she was not sorry that there would probably be a chance to prove it. Mrs. Hollister also had her impressions that Mr. Landis had "means," and she knew that these impressions had been given her by words of his own. Not that he had boasted, or, indeed, had said anything definite. His manner of speaking of these things had proved that he shared her own and her husband's views of life which made all such matters secondary. Nevertheless, it was pleasant to think of Eunice as lifted above the cares and anxieties growing out of a straitened purse.

It was a pretty wedding. Everybody said that there had never been a prettier one, even in that fine old town, with its aristocratic history. Certainly, it would have been difficult to have furnished a more beautiful bride. It



had been agreed from her childhood that Eunice Hollister was a remarkably pretty girl, and in her bridal robes, with her fair pale face looking out at them from behind a cloud of illusion, the general verdict was that she was "perfectly lovely!" Mr. Landis was able in appearance to justify her choice. The local press commented freely the morning after the wedding on the evident appropriateness of the union. It even hinted at the atmosphere which surrounded him as "that indescribable but distinctly felt something which marks the man of culture, who knows the world, and is at ease in its presence." Brantford, generally, agreed with this verdict. Ben Kendall's Uncle Jared expressed his idea of the aforesaid atmosphere after this manner:—

"A body would know with their eyes shut jest hearin' him say 'Ahem!' that he was born and brought up in a city."

Dr. Hollister's large church had never been more closely packed than it was on that clear, crisp, winter evening when the pastor with a fine tremor in his voice that but added to the interest, pronounced the words that gave his daughter another name than his.

"Poor Dr. Hollister!" said the sympathetic. "It was quite an ordeal for him. It seemed at one time as though he could not get through the ceremony." But the multitude said that Dr. Hollister might congratulate himself. It



was not every pretty daughter of a country pastor who was able to make so brilliant a match. On all sides it was agreed that the union was "brilliant." Nobody quite knew how they knew the fact, but all knew it for a fact.

The wise ones may well have said "poor Dr. Hollister!" In truth, his heart was heavy that night. He had gone about with a graver face than was natural to him ever since this marriage was an assured thing. He had even allowed himself some hours of foreboding; although he had said to his wife, on his return from his tour of investigation, "On the whole, Mary, there is everything to be thankful for," yet he had said it with a sigh.

Did he like his new acquaintance better as a seeker after theological truth than a seeker after his daughter? He chided himself for his foreboding hours, and said sternly that his heart ought to be filled with gratitude because of the pleasant paths in which he and his were being led. He incorporated this thought in his prayer at the marriage service; it was then that his voice had trembled most, and once he made a distinct pause, so long that his daughter Dorothy's heart beat fast in sympathy for him.

The invitations to the wedding had been very general, and at the reception which followed the ceremony the spacious rooms of the



old-fashioned manse were thronged. But among them all was no Ben Kendall. Eunice had herself addressed the envelope that placed him among the elect, and rejoiced as she did so that Ben had been sensible after all. Neither by word nor sign had he disturbed her happy dream during these months of preparation. He had come to Dr. Hollister as usual twice a week for lessons, and had steadily continued the numberless little kindnesses that it had been his habit to bestow upon the family at the manse. The only difference in his ways, and of course this was an eminently sensible difference, was that he did not bring roses exclusively for Eunice, nor walk with her from evening service, nor obtrude himself in any way upon her notice. Eunice told her mother, in strict confidence, that Ben could not have conducted himself better had he been a real gentleman. And then had added loyally that he was one at heart. But Ben Kendall did not come to the wedding. Anything more utterly commonplace than the excuse he made could not well be imagined. A valuable horse had been injured and was under treatment, and Ben told his mother gravely that he must be at home every minute that day to see that nothing went wrong with Selim. His Uncle Jared had been willing to sacrifice himself and stay with the horse, and his word about it to the mother was: —



“Sho! that boy of yours thinks he knows so much more about horses than anybody living that he won’t even trust Selim with me! Something will have to happen to take the conceit out of that fellow.”

The mother expressed her hearty sympathy to her boy. “It is too bad, Ben, that you can’t go, but I know how it is; when a man can’t leave his work, why he can’t.”

To the bride she said: “Wasn’t it too bad that Ben couldn’t get away to see you married? Such good friends as you and he have always been! If it had been any other horse he might have managed it; but he feels kind of responsible for Selim, you know.”

No other word did she add, but well she knew why Selim kept her son at home that night! Trust mothers for understanding, and for keeping their own counsel. No brains can be duller than theirs, on occasion.

## V.

### *NEW ENVIRONMENT.*

THEY went away in state, this newly made husband and wife, to the city that was to be their home. Mr. Landis frankly explained that he had spent so much time in going back and forth that he must now give strict attention to business; therefore the wedding journey proper must be postponed until summer. He knew just where he wanted to take Eunice as soon as the summer opened. Oh, of course they would come back to the old home for a few days; but they would have their "honeymoon" nevertheless, and enjoy it all the more for having spent six months in town together. The father and mother had talked these and other matters over in the long, lonely evening after the children were gone: Dorothy back to school, and Eunice to her new home.

"I liked Burton's way of looking at it," Mrs. Hollister said. "It showed that he real-



ized the fact that married life was not a matter of a month or two of enjoyment. He is looking forward to their wedding journey six months ahead. I should not be surprised if they would enjoy it better than now; the strangeness will have worn off by that time. It was certainly very sensible in him to be willing to go directly back to his work; it shows that he is a thoughtful business man, instead of a careless boy. Don't you think so?" She asked the question almost anxiously, for Dr. Hollister was unusually silent, and wore a grave face. He had generally been the one to see the bright side of all experiences. He was still silent for a little, and when he spoke, his words were prefaced with a sigh.

"Why yes, Mary. I have no reason to think the contrary. There seems to be no cause for anxieties, and I hardly know why I am a bit depressed, except that it has all been very sudden, and I cannot get used to thinking of our Eunice as other than a child in the home, to be taken care of by just us."

"I know," said the mother, hastily. "We must not think of that side of it any more. Let us think of our blessings."

It was an imposing-looking house to which Mr. Landis carried his bride. Many storied, and furnished throughout with what to Eunice's quiet tastes seemed like elegance. Their rooms, a suite, had been newly furnished "in honor of



a bride," her husband told her as he kissed her blushing face.

"Why did you let them do that?" she demurred. "The old furnishings would surely have been fine enough for me, and the expense must have been heavy."

"Never mind the expense," he said gayly. "They foot the bills, you know, and they charge enough for board to relieve our consciences from all anxiety on that ground."

"What do they charge, Burton?" Eunice asked the question curiously, adding that she had thought from the general appearance that it must be a very expensive place. Had he not been tempted on her account to be a little too fine? He must remember how very simply she had been reared, and how unnecessary to her comfort such luxury was.

For answer, he kissed her again, and laughed at her, and pinched her ear, and told her not to go to financiering and looking anxious. Did she think he was going to carry away a singing bird in gay plumage, without planning as pretty a cage for it as he could? Moreover, the house was by no means so fine as she fancied. Wait until she saw his friend Merivale's rooms! As for board, never mind what he paid. It was not for her to be concerned about such matters. She had not secured that mathematical prize, remember, for which she was to have worked this winter, and must not bother her pretty



head with figures. She might be sure that it was all right; she could trust him, couldn't she?

Trust him! Yes, to the end of time. No happy young wife ever felt more sure of this than did Eunice Landis. She let the gladness show in her face as she returned his caresses. The light born of happiness lingered in her eyes after he had gone away to business. It was blessed that she had a right to trust implicitly. What did women do who found, after marriage, that they could not? She had read of such; she had known them, indeed, two deceived, unhappy women who were members of her father's church, and came so often to him with their burdens that he never spoke of them without a cloud of pity on his sympathetic face. Eunice had not heard the story of their woes in detail, — she had been shielded from trouble as much as possible, — but she had heard her mother say, "They married unhappily, poor creatures, and need our sympathy and pity." And Eunice, the married woman, could feel in a new sense that they did. Marriage was in any case a solemn matter. To go away from the home nest and the sheltering love of father and mother, and realize that one must be a woman now, and assume a woman's responsibilities. But oh! to take this step without being sure that there was one to lean upon, to rest one's faith in utterly. How



could women ever do it? She went to her knees presently, this happy wife, to thank God that the new life had opened to her as a golden morning, that her husband was just what he was. After that, she went about her rooms for a more detailed inspection than she had been able to give with her husband watching her. She opened her drawers and closets, and surveyed her rows of empty shelves with the keenest interest. They were all empty, waiting for her belongings. *Their* belongings! A lovely flush spread over her face as she remembered that she must say "our" hereafter, even about such commonplace things as shelves and drawers. It was all very complete, this "nest" of theirs; evidences of what she believed was her husband's thoughtfulness for her comfort met her on every side. It was roomier, too, than this girl, fresh from boarding-school and small quarters shared with Dorothy, had expected to find.

"Burton calls it our nest," she wrote to her mother in her first long letter home; "but I am sure there was never a bird who set up house-keeping in such royal fashion. Compared with our room at school, these are both ridiculously large, and they are elegantly furnished. I tried at first to worry a little lest my dear boy had been tempted to extravagance on my account. I reminded him how unnecessary it was to set me in the midst of all this splendor, so simply



as I had been reared. But he only laughs at me for calling it splendor, and says that everything is really very simple. I can well imagine that what looks fine to me is simplicity to him — he has been used to such a different life, you know. Still, I am going to be very wise and prudent. Burton will not tell me about prices now; he says he prevented my getting that mathematical prize, and so I must not be bothered with figures. But I don't intend to pose as the comfortable little simpleton that he imagines I am about practical matters. After a little I mean to learn all about incomes, and prices, and all sorts of business arrangements, and make Burton understand that now while we are young and strong is the time for us to be saving up for the future. He doesn't realize, you see, what a dear, wise father and mother I have, and how carefully they have trained me. Oh, mother dear, I am glad that I need not try to tell you how good and tender and thoughtful of me he is. You know him, don't you? You saw it all in him. He will grow, I suppose, — all lives must, — but it is truly very difficult for me to see how Burton can possibly be a better man in any way than he is this minute. You will want to laugh at that, and to remind me that I have not yet been six days married; and father will quote, 'Young folks think old folks fools, and old folks know young folks are;' and it won't be one bit true, and



father will know that it isn't. I don't mean to be silly, but I promised, you know, to tell you all about these first days. And Burton is so — there! I am not going to talk about him another speck."

But she did. The letter was long, it being the first one that went into details that she had been able to settle herself to write, and every paragraph, and many lines in the paragraph, began or ended with "Burton."

They were glad that it was so. The mother's face was bright with smiles as she read, and her thankful heart swelled with joy over the thought that this nestling, just flown from the old home, had mated royally and found a nest of down. Dr. Hollister's prayer that night thanked God anew because their dear child had gone to make home with one who was of the royal family, and that together they would journey to their Father's house, where by and by there would be reunions and no more separations.

The first Sunday in her new home was a day to which Eunice had looked forward with peculiar interest. Church life had been so entirely a part of her world — perhaps it might even be said to have been so entirely her world in the past — that it could not but loom up before her in importance now. She was eager to see the church and the pastor that were Burton's own. She was eager to identify herself with



his life there as early and as fully as possible. There came, therefore, a slight, a very slight shade of disappointment to her face over her husband's words as they went down together to the late breakfast that Sunday morning.

"I'm especially glad of the fine morning, darling. I want to take you over to Dr. Dawes's church to-day. They have a special musical service, and Trelawney is to sing. It will be a fine opportunity to hear the great basso and see the élite at the same time. No more fashionable church-going crowd can be found in the city than gather at Dr. Dawes's. Just the place for a bride, you see; so plan to look your prettiest."

She protested a little. She was so anxious to see his church and hear his pastor, and get in touch with it all. Did he care very much for the great basso?

Very much indeed, he assured her, and she must, also. Her father would be ashamed of him if he allowed her to miss so exceptional an opportunity to hear good music.

"Our church will keep, dearest; it is the same thing month in and month out. Dr. Butler is very popular, but he is not remarkable in any way, and we never have any sensations; move right along, you know, in the established order. There is no convenient cross line of cars from this end of the town, so we will have to take a carriage, which is just as

well. It will give you a chance to see a very aristocratic portion of the city, and keep you from mixing your bridal robes with those of the 'common herd.'"

The sentence ended in a genial laugh, but Eunice's face was still grave. She asked if a carriage in town was not an expensive luxury; she had always heard that it was. It would make her miserable if she thought his care for her was tempting him to be extravagant; and it was quite unnecessary; she was used to walking, he must remember, and enjoyed it. Was he sure he could afford a carriage?

"Hush!" he said, and there was a wrinkle between his eyes that she had never seen before. "Don't talk so much about economy, dear; at least, not while we are passing through the halls. These chambermaids have very keen ears. And don't worry about such matters in the least. Remember that you do not understand city life, and I do. I know, of course, better than you can, what expenditures are necessary to a proper appearance. You promised to trust me."

There was almost reproach in his tone, and there were almost tears in his wife's eyes. She drove them back. She hated tears. Above all things she hated the thought of their being brought forward as weapons of defence on the slightest provocation. She need not be surprised that Burton was a little annoyed at her



seeming to question his judgment. No man liked that. She must get over fancying that the scale of expenditure used by a young man in business in a great city must needs be the same as that used by a minister in a country town. She put away her discomfort and her sense of disappointment with resolute hand, and arrayed herself for church in a costume that judged by Brantford rules would have been quite too fine. She wore a shimmering gray silk, rather elaborately trimmed with white lace. Her "party dress" Dorothy had called it; but Mr. Landis promptly chose it from her wardrobe, and laughed at his wife's fears that it was too fine.

"Nonsense! you blessed little Puritan. What can be more subdued than gray? A regular Quaker color, but I am willing to admit that it is very becoming to you, when properly set off with white. My friends, the Merivales, attend Dr. Dawes's church; we shall probably be invited to take seats with them, and I want to have my pearl in proper setting the first time she is seen by them. I have often thought what an excellent contrast you would make to Miss Julia's style of beauty."

"Who is Miss Julia?" His wife asked the question while she was arranging the laces at her throat, and wondering if mother would think her foolish to wear that dress to church.



It was finer than she could often be. Then she remembered, with a little feeling of comfort, that she must probably reconstruct her ideas of dress also, to fit her husband's position. Certainly she must dress to please him. What else were clothes for, now?

"Why, she is my friend Merivale's sister. It pleased her to be wandering around in the Rocky Mountains somewhere on the date of our wedding, or at least on the way home. She has but just arrived. She thinks herself a beauty, and in a certain way she is, though she isn't exactly my style, as you will observe when you note the contrast between yourself and her."

"But, Burton,—” And Mrs. Landis turned from the mirror to emphasize her words with her earnest face. It troubled her to hear her husband imply that she was beautiful. Nothing, she was sure, could be farther from the truth, and it made her feel that some strange blindness had him in temporary possession, from which there would be an awakening and a disappointment.

He laughed lightly. "All right," he said. "I am as blind as a bat, if you choose to have it so; and there is no hope of my ever recovering. Fact is, I'm well satisfied with blindness. What is it, Joe? All right, we'll be down in a minute. Come, Mrs. Landis, our carriage is waiting, and, being the plain woman that you are, you are looking very well indeed. That little



jacket exactly fits your style of— plainness. When my ship comes in it shall be of seal, however.”

The Merivales were at church. That is, the husband and wife were. They had been present at the wedding. They welcomed Eunice genially, and greeted her husband as if he were a brother.

“Come home with us,” Mrs. Merivale said, her voice almost chiming in with the benediction. “I told Julia I would kidnap you for dinner, if I could.”

“Where is Miss Julia to-day?” Mr. Landis asked as Mrs. Merivale turned to press her invitation upon his wife.

“She is lounging at home,” explained her brother. “Couldn’t get the consent of herself to go to church this morning. We were out late last night, and she is tired; or else she didn’t get up in time to make a church toilet—I don’t know which. You will not refuse us, surely, Mrs. Landis. We are used to carrying your husband off on short notice.”

“Are you willing to go, dear?” Mr. Landis bent to speak this confidential word. “It isn’t ordinary Sunday visiting, you know; Merivale and I are like brothers. But if you would rather not, say the word, and we will go back to our boarding-house.”

How did he convey to her the feeling that he would like very much to go home with the



*UNTO THE END.*



Merivales? His wife asked herself that question afterwards, and could not be sure of the answer. At Brantford it was not the custom to pay Sunday visits, but of course, as her husband said, this was not visiting. She must not be foolish. And they went.

## VI.

### *ADJUSTING ONE'S SELF.*

**I**T was a lovely home to which Mrs. Landis was introduced. Her husband called her attention to the furnishings when they were alone for a few minutes. "When do you suppose you and I will be able to set up an establishment like this?" he asked her gayly. "That would be living, wouldn't it? Merivale is a lucky fellow; he married a rich woman. Not that I care to exchange with him, you understand," with an amused laugh at his own carelessness; "but if one were compelled to marry that woman, it would be well to have the money thrown in as an inducement."

"Don't you like Mrs. Merivale?" his wife asked softly. "I thought you were intimate friends."

"So we are, in a way. At least Ben and I are intimate. Oh, she is well enough; not my style of woman, that's all."

At dinner the bride was seated across from



Miss Julia Merivale, a young woman who obliged one to give immediate attention to her exceeding black eyes that had almost the glitter of beads. Eunice had never before seen such eyes; they had for her a strange fascination so that she felt compelled to gaze at them, while at the same time they repelled her. Their owner was exceedingly vivacious. She kept up a running fire of talk with Mr. Landis. Eunice thought that it could not be called conversation; it consisted chiefly in mysterious references to former experiences, and had dashes of sharpness sometimes in the line of puns, and sometimes of unveiled sarcasm. Once or twice the lady appealed to Eunice to corroborate her statements.

“Isn't it true, Mrs. Landis, that your husband has a treacherous memory? Ah, I forget, you are probably not a competent judge as yet; doubtless he will remember for several weeks to come what he has said to you; but wait awhile. When you are as well acquainted with him as we are, you will learn to make allowances for defective memory or else for consistency, which is it, Burton? I beg a thousand pardons! I ought to have said ‘Mr. Landis’ to a dignified married man. Isn't it odd? Do you suppose we shall ever get used to it? There are times when it seems simply ridiculous to think of you as married.”

There was that in the tone which made



Eunice feel herself left out, and she knew that she was not expected to reply to Miss Merivale's question. The talk jarred upon her; she resented the implication that this young woman was better acquainted with her husband than she was herself; that, of course, was absurd, but why did the woman feel at liberty to say so many rude things to him? She was almost glad that she seemed not to be expected to join in their conversation; she was not versed in that kind of talk. She had been reared in a different atmosphere, having had chiefly to do with people who used nonsense much as they used relishes, and condiments generally, — a dash here and there, instead of making of them a full meal. Especially were all these brilliant nothings foreign to her experiences connected with the Sabbath; she could not help letting this, too, jar a little, notwithstanding the fact that she had fortified herself with the thought that she must not expect to meet everywhere the atmosphere of her father's house. They were never gloomy there; and there had never been what even in their childhood was felt as restraint; on the contrary, Eunice and Dorothy had been brought up to feel that Sunday was the happiest day of the week; the air had been full of cheer, with just enough of the atmosphere of a special day about it to give the young wife a tender memory, and help her to feel that this Sunday scene did not fit in pleasantly.



She stole occasional glances at her husband's face, and wondered how he could endure so patiently Miss Julia's vapidness. Not that the other table talk was greatly superior. This family seemed not to know how to do other than rally one another in a semi-sarcastic manner. Mrs. Merivale accused her husband of taking a nap in church, and declared that if she had not kept him within bounds with numberless nudges, he would actually have snored! He was loud in his denials. He had not thought of such a thing as sleeping! On the contrary, he had been compelled on three separate occasions ostensibly to arrange his wife's furs about her shoulders, in order to get her wide awake. After there had been exclamatory denials of this charge, and much laughter and appeals to Mrs. Landis to prove sleepiness on the part of both, Mr. Merivale said it was no wonder they were sleepy, it was an unusually dull sermon.

"Dawes was really stupid to-day. Fact is, he has not been up to his mettle in some time. I believe he is degenerating. Haven't you noticed it, Landis?"

"I beg pardon," said Mr. Landis, recalled for the moment from Miss Julia's attentions, "haven't I noticed what?"

"Why, that Dawes is going back on his record. He can't preach as he used to. I think he is getting to be a good deal of a bore."



“He noticed nothing,” said Miss Julia, before Mr. Landis could reply; “nothing whatever. I am as sure of it as if I had watched him. I’ll venture to say that he does not even know whether Dr. Dawes preached at all this morning. What could you expect of a married man? He was completely absorbed in thoughts of his wife, or else in dreams of his lost freedom. Which do you suppose it was, Mrs. Landis?”

“On the contrary,” said Mr. Landis, smiling, “I was absorbed in studying the utterly discomfited face of a certain person who shall be nameless, after he made the discovery that he had wasted an entire morning in church, and all for nothing, the fair vision of his dreams having failed to materialize. I assure you it was a moving sight, and so roused my sympathies that I may not have given my usual attention to the sermon.”

Every one present save Mrs. Landis seemed to understand this: Miss Julia blushed consciously as her brother and sister laughed, and Mr. Merivale said, “Better score him one, Jule!” Then the talk became general and floated along on the merest froth, “Dawes” and his dull sermon being forgotten. “Dawes,” indeed! Eunice felt indignant for him. She was not used to hearing clergymen so mentioned. She had quickened into interest when her husband was appealed to, being eager to



know what he could say in reply. She had not approved of the sermon in the least, but had considered it far from dull. On the contrary, it had startled her with flights of what seemed to her rank heresy. She wondered if the Merivales held such views as had been advanced, and, if so, would courtesy seal her husband's lips? It was not pleasant to her to think that he had no way of evading the question, save by launching them once more upon silly personalities. But she told herself that the situation was of course embarrassing if his friends held such radically different views from himself on important subjects. In that case it seemed almost strange that the friendship between them had been so close. Or were men unlike women in that there did not need to be strong points of congeniality on vital questions?

On the whole, Mrs. Landis found at the Merivales' dinner table food for some puzzling thoughts. She was distinctly glad when the hour came in which her husband seemed to consider that they might be excused.

They went no more to church that day. Mr. Landis said that he was tired; business had been unusually pressing all the week and had taken his vitality; he believed he had a headache. If he could put himself on the couch with his head in his wife's lap and feel the touch of her fingers in his hair, it would do



him more good than a dozen sermons. His wife was nothing loath. She was tenderly sympathetic over the headache, and was sure he was overtaxing himself at the store. The touch of her cool, caressing hand on his forehead was like balm, he told her, and he kissed her hand whenever it strayed in the direction of his lips, while he explained how bored he had been by having to waste so much of their Sunday at the *Merivales'*. He had begrudged every moment of it, but had not known how to avoid it. The *Merivales* had been good friends of his in his lonely bachelorhood, and of course it would not do to cut them now. Still, he must confess he had been tried. Miss Julia was really growing almost rude! or else she had always been so, and he had never noticed it until he began to contrast her with a certain little lady who was in every respect her opposite.

Something recalled to Eunice his words at the dinner table that she had not understood, and she asked an explanation.

"Oh, that," he said, "was a family joke; did she notice a man just in front of the *Merivale* pew, across the aisle, a man with heavy mustache and deep-set eyes?" Yes, she had noticed him especially, because he reminded her of one of her old professors. Well, that was a man who used to be very attentive to Miss Julia; in fact, he was still decidedly interested



in her, and her brother and friends were always teasing her about him. Then Eunice asked who was the small, pale lady sitting beside him, and exclaimed over the reply:—

“His wife! why, Burton, is he a married man? Then how could Miss Merivale be teased about him?”

“Oh, that made no sort of difference,” her husband said, laughing. But finding that his wife did not join in the laugh, he explained. “Of course it is all the merest nonsense, Eunice; nobody means anything.”

They had a delightful evening together. Mr. Landis received in full measure the petting of which he declared himself in need, and time passed so swiftly that before either was aware the hour was late, and the day of privilege, so eagerly looked forward to by Eunice, was gone. When she went over it all in memory next day, she found that the Sabbath had left an unwholesome flavor.

It had not been in the least like any to which she had been accustomed. Not that she must expect that, she told herself gravely. It would be folly for her to hope to find things as they had been in her dear home. There were few men like her father. Moreover, she must remember that she had not yet heard Burton's pastor, nor seen the people with whom he chiefly mingled. Yet in her inmost heart she knew that she was not touching at all her troub-



led thought. Leaving out church and contact with other people, and considering only her husband and herself, it had not been a helpful day. They had risen later than usual, and this she admitted might be necessary: Mr. Landis seemed to be in need of his Sunday rest. Then they had dallied over their breakfast until there was barely time to dress for church. That family altar that she had so desired to have set up had been passed over again. And when they were at home together for the evening, why had their talk flowed continually in such distinctly worldly lines? Neither of them had seemed able to break away from the light, almost frivolous commonplaces that had filled the day; and at last her husband had sprung up from his couch with an astonished: "Bless me! how late it is! I had no idea of it. We must fly around now or it will be time to go to that inevitable store before we have had our first nap out."

As she gravely considered it, Eunice told herself that they must certainly have different Sabbaths from these. Sabbaths, such as she had heard her father talk about, that would help a man who was of necessity immersed in business all the week, to feel that he had reached an upland where soul and body were being refreshed for the next week's turmoil. The conclusion she reached was that they would pass that day by in silence and consider

that they had not yet begun their real life together. When she wrote her weekly letter to father and mother, she held her pen to consider, and then put the day's story briefly: "As for Sunday, of course we went to church. Father would have been interested in the sermon we heard, but would not have approved of all of it, nor did we. We were not at Burton's own church; there were reasons why he felt it important to go elsewhere last Sunday, so we do not count ourselves as having begun that part of our life. I have not even met our pastor yet. Oh, father, can you think how strangely that sentence sounds to me? Can I ever get used to having any other pastor than my blessed father? Yet I am going to begin just as you said, and like him at once for your sake."

She had her other little disappointments which she did not allow herself to call by that name. Various functions taken for granted by her did not seem to be matters of course to her husband. She found herself continually obliged to make mental explanations of the difference between their early environments. Notable among these functions was the mid-week prayer meeting. In her life hitherto it had been planned for as a matter of course.

"Here's a treat for you," Mr. Landis said as they lingered at the breakfast table, and between his sips of coffee he glanced at the morning paper. "The Handel Club is to



sing here on Wednesday. They are worth hearing, I assure you. I must see about tickets immediately. It is just your style of music, dear."

"But it is on Wednesday, you say. Isn't that your regular prayer meeting evening, Burton?"

He laughed lightly. "My prayer meeting evenings haven't been very regular of late years, little Puritan. There are a thousand interruptions to regularity in city living that country people know nothing about. You mustn't cultivate a sober face, Kitty, it isn't becoming to you, except in church when one can get just your profile, then it is; I am a standing witness to that. It suggests the angels. I have never told you just how it impressed me that first morning, have I?"

She laughed at his nonsense, but would not thus be turned from her thought. She knew, of course, she told him, that in city life there were interruptions to routine; but as a rule he went to the mid-week meeting, did he not?

"Well, I go quite frequently, or used to. During the last year or two business matters have prevented anything like regularity. Oh, we'll go, Kitty, whenever we can, of course. But for this week it would be manifestly absurd to attempt it. The Handel Club doesn't regulate its engagements with reference to prayer meetings. You don't mean that you really



object to the concert, Eunice, under such circumstances! My beloved Kitty, I mustn't let you be the least bit narrow, must I? That, you know, is said to be the tendency in rural districts, especially, of course, in ministers' families. Quite natural you see for loyal daughters, for instance, to attach undue importance to everything connected with their father's profession. Bless me! there goes the car I ought to have taken. You are a precious little temptation, darling; I mustn't lose the next one on any account. I'm afraid, too, that I shall have to be late to-night. Mr. Graves has sent word that he must see me on important business after the store has closed. It is a way that man has of eternally poking business into hours that ought to be free from it. Never mind, wife, we'll have a piece of an evening together, anyway."

She watched him until, as he caught his car, he turned and lifted his hat to her for good-by, then she went to her room with a somewhat sobered face. The day stretched out before her drearily. She was unused to being alone and unemployed. It was difficult to keep her thoughts from the dear home at Brantford and the work awaiting her mother's busy hands — work in which her oldest daughter had been an efficient helper.

## VII.

### *NARROW LINES.*

**I**T was not that Mrs. Landis was homesick, nor had she so much as a sigh for lost opportunities. She was sure that it would have been cruel to have kept Burton waiting in boarding-house dreariness while she completed her education. Since he was willing to take her as she was, there was no cause for regret.

Yet the thought that the time might come when he would regret her not completing her course, sometimes obtruded itself. That disagreeable Julia Merivale was a graduate of Melrose Collegiate Institute, and the knowledge of this fact floated dimly in her memory in connection with the thought of regret. She shook off these obtruding fancies as promptly as she could, and told herself that it was because she had nothing to do that they troubled her at all. Her careful mother had seen to it that nothing which could be done with that feminine refuge,



the needle, was at hand to help her; unless, indeed, she got some bright-colored wools and joined the ladies in the parlor with their endless fancy work and small talk. She sighed a little over the dreariness of that thought; she had not taken kindly to fancy work in the past, her life having been too full of real work to allow much opportunity for it, and there were no ladies in the house who especially attracted her to their society. She thought they showed positive talent in the art of saying nothing, and saying it a great deal. No sooner had she allowed this thought room than she began to be ashamed of it. Perhaps it was a proof of the narrowness of her nature at which Burton had hinted, that she could not find any common ground with these people. She frankly admitted that her husband was probably right, and she was narrow; her life had of necessity heretofore been cast in somewhat narrow grooves. She must try to broaden out for his sake. Then she compelled herself to look steadily at the thought that was really troubling her. There was no denying that she was a little disappointed about that prayer meeting. She had been looking forward to attending it. The evening was the same as that which was observed in the dear home church, and she had had a feeling that she would find a bit of home there. Moreover, she knew better than Burton could possibly how the souls of pastors



were tried by the people who chose concerts and lectures and what not, instead of the mid-week service. Still, she assured herself that she was being unreasonable. There were exceptions to all rules, of course. She knew very well the reputation of the Handel Club, and did not wish her husband to miss the treat that an evening of such music would give him. It was really babyish in her to be in such frantic haste to fall into routine life. It must be that she, as Burton had almost hinted, was trammelled a little by form and ceremony. Religion, he had reminded her, did not consist merely in bowing together for prayer, or in attending set services. And of course it did not. No one had labored harder than her father to have his young people understand that. This remark had been intended by Mr. Landis as a bit of comfort for his wife, because it had been found impossible to plan for morning prayers together. Not that he did not entirely approve of all such forms; when they had a home of their own, he assured her, and were able to order their hours to suit themselves, family worship would be a service quite in keeping with his tastes; but she did not need to have him point out its present inconvenience. And that was true; she did not. Mr. Landis was due at his place of business at a given hour, and was nearly always a car or two behind the one that ought to have been taken. How could she expect



him to be willing to delay for family worship? In truth, it would not be right for him to do so. She desired above all things to be reasonable. She reminded herself continually that she was young and had lived a sheltered life, and that her husband who was eight years her senior had been out in the world planning for himself at an earlier age than most young men were compelled to. She ought to defer to his judgment, and she must hold herself sternly away from the fancy that because he differed from her in some matters, he was not therefore as vitally interested as she was herself to make their life together a success in the truest sense of the word.

She was ready for the concert on Wednesday evening, in a toilet that it pleased her husband to approve, and was as appreciative of the music and of his efforts to please her as he could possibly desire.

On the following Wednesday they went to the mid-week service, and the heart of the young wife swelled within her in joy and gratitude when she heard her husband pray. The most critical would have been compelled to admit that his prayer was beautiful, and his voice reverent and sympathetic. The tenderness with which he remembered the pastor's little daughter, who was ill, brought tears to his wife's eyes, and his words must have fallen like balm, she thought, on the anxious father's heart.



“Burton,” she said, as she leaned on his arm, while they walked home together in the starlight, “I have been very happy this evening. To hear you pray is better to me than any music.”

He had laughed and drawn her closer to him, and pressed her hand as he said, “What a delicious little fanatic it is!” and they had been very happy indeed. Yet the very next evening she had been sorely tried. It is true that Mr. Bronson chose an unfortunate hour for his call. Mr. Landis had just settled himself in becoming study gown and slippers, new book in hand, and with the words on his lips that here was comfort indeed after a weary day. To leave such comfort and get himself into conventional dress again, and descend to the boarding-house parlor was not agreeable. It may have been that which helped to make him so emphatic. Mr. Bronson was the superintendent of Dr. Butler’s Sabbath school, and was in search of a Bible class teacher. Mrs. Landis listened with interest. The Sabbath school was familiar ground to her. She had had visions of Burton and herself speeding that way together, sitting at their respective classes doing earnest work, conferring together on the way home and much through the week as to methods of work. Some of these visions had paled in the light of recent facts, but she was unprepared for her husband’s persistent refusal to give heed to Mr. Bronson’s petition.



“You really must not urge Mrs. Landis to such a work, Mr. Bronson. I am sorry that my admission that she was a Sabbath-school teacher at home should have awakened false hopes, but you see she has already taken a class of one member. My education along those lines has been sadly neglected, and I need all the skill she has. — My dear, positively I must withhold my consent. Justice to your father and the promises I made to him compel me to do so. — You have no idea, Mr. Bronson, what a busy day Sunday is. We have to make frantic haste in the morning to get to church before Dr. Butler is fairly under way; and if one must give up the afternoon as well to the church, I see no opportunity whatever for rest. Sunday is getting to be a day of religious dissipation to a large number of good Christian people. What is to become of family life, do you suppose, if this sort of thing continues?”

Mr. Bronson had not come to argue; he looked his perplexity. “But you believe in Sunday schools?” he said at last, “and there must be teachers.”

“Yes, certainly,” Mr. Landis said cheerily, they all believed in Sunday schools and in martyrs; the only point with him was that he was not willing to sacrifice his wife. “She is a recent acquisition, remember,” he added gayly, and seemed to consider the subject dismissed, for



he launched Mr. Bronson at once upon a known hobby and kept him interested until he felt compelled by the lateness of the hour to depart. Then Mr. Landis yawned and wished that the good man had been in Jericho instead of where he could spoil their entire evening. If he knew that his wife was disappointed, he neither then nor afterward gave a hint of it. She puzzled over the subject a little. Ought she to have insisted, she wondered, that the place of her father's daughter was in the Sabbath school; that she recognized in it an opportunity for usefulness of which she wanted to avail herself? Yet how could she go directly contrary to her husband's wishes so distinctly expressed? Of course she must not place his wishes before an actual call to service; he would be the last person to ask this of her, yet it must be right to defer to his judgment. Finally she dismissed the subject with the comforting reflection that Burton would probably grow used to her, in time, and realize that she was not so frail a possession as he now insisted upon thinking her. Resolutely she put that Sunday-school picture away, along with certain others that must not be thought about. She wrote her weekly letters home, making them always full of cheer. She got herself some worsteds and asked Miss Le Farrand to teach her the stitch for a much-admired afghan, selecting that particular teacher because she



was the least agreeable of the worsted workers, and the young matron had set herself the task of overcoming her instinctive shrinking from her fellow-boarders. She explained to Mr. Landis the intricacy of the afghan stitch and the alarming appetite it had for worsteds and the number of shades she must have, in order to make for him the thing of beauty that his soul desired. He was flatteringly interested. He commended her resolution, and admired her work; he assured her he would be more than glad to buy for her as many shades as she chose to select. She need not be appalled over the cost. What an economical little kitten it was, to be sure! And he made her feel as he had done a dozen times before, that in the matter of expenditure also she had been educated along narrow lines.

With all her efforts at self-improvement there was one respect in which Mrs. Landis felt that she did not gain. She was not learning to like her husband's friends any better than she had at first. Mr. Merivale was by far the least objectionable member of that family; and when the ladies had been obnoxious to her, she comforted herself with the reflection that it was, after all, Mr. Merivale who was the chosen friend. Of course it was not Burton's fault that his friend had a disagreeable wife and a more disagreeable sister. She was, nevertheless, compelled to see these ladies quite



often. Apparently they did not share her feelings, for they were most persistent in their courtesies, and she was mortified to discover that frequent association with them deepened rather than lessened her dislike.

It was not often that she mentioned them to her husband, but one evening having been especially tried, she told him that it was hardly worth while for Miss Julia to waste further attention upon her. When he asked her why, she found that she was not ready to put her reasons into words.

“My old friend Ben Kendall had a queer conceit of which I often think,” she said, by way of evasion; “he used to say that people had been made in strips, and that one had to see to it that the strips they got together ‘matched’ if they expected them to have a good time in each other’s company. The truth is, Burton, Miss Merivale’s ‘strip’ and mine do not match.”

Eunice had long ago forgotten the thought of embarrassment in connection with Ben Kendall. That little episode with him which had made her at the same moment laugh at and blush for his folly, had been looked upon as the passing silliness of a mere boy, and was almost forgotten. Ben was once more the playmate of her childhood and the good and faithful friend of her girlhood. She found herself often quoting his quaint sayings that were

almost aphorisms. Ben was making a success with his roses and his studies, and his old-time friend often sent him, through her home letters, a message of good cheer. Mr. Landis had not yet found time to try to set in motion any of the wheels that were to have been helpful to Ben, much to his wife's regret. She had never told him about the episode of folly. She had been on the verge of it once; it could do no harm, surely, to let Burton enjoy a good-natured laugh at the boy's expense; but before the story had been told, she had risen above the idea, and determined to shield the friend of her youth from all ridicule, however good-natured.

Mr. Landis laughed over Ben's conceit, and admitted that Miss Merivale was undoubtedly not of his wife's "strip."

"At the same time," he said, "you are too hard on the girl. She means well enough, and has been very good to me. I can imagine her as a person well able to hold her own, on occasion; but she had certainly been very kind indeed to your humble servant, and performed many a friendly office for me in my days of bachelorhood."

"Then I will try to like her," Eunice said resolutely, "out of gratitude; but it will not be the least little bit for her own sake."

He had laughed then, and pinched her ear, and told her she was a fierce little pigeon and



he was afraid of her. And it had been good for the young wife to remember that her husband did not seem to care whether or not she succeeded in liking Miss Merivale.

One morning, a rare morning in which he had to wait a few minutes for his car instead of rushing breathlessly after it, Mr. Landis told his wife that he meant to bring a friend home to dine with them that evening.

"That is, I shall if I can get hold of him," he added. "He is in great demand, the most popular fellow in our set just now. It's Farnsworth, you know. Haven't I ever told you about him? That is extraordinary! Don't breathe a word of such a thing to him; he would never forgive me. He was in Europe when we were married; that is what made me forget him. Why, he and I were chums at college, and he is a capital fellow. I am not by any means sure that he is of your 'strip,' Kitty, but nevertheless I want you to like him. Look your prettiest, darling, to-night, in honor of my choice. He is very fastidious with regard to ladies. I knew him to break off a fellow's engagement at one time because he did not like the lady's style of dress."

"Well, he can't break off ours," said Eunice, gayly, "so what does it signify what he thinks of me?"

"It signifies," he said, holding her face with both his hands and studying it with smiling



eyes, "that I intend he shall be fascinated with my wife, and grow green with envy over the fact that she is beyond his reach. I shall bring up roses for you to wear, pale yellow roses, my charmer, so dress accordingly."

She obeyed him, choosing a dress of intense black relieved by touches of vivid yellow shining under lace. Black became her well, and she knew that she had chosen what her husband would admire. In her girlhood she had had no conception of what a pleasure it could become to dress for a single pair of eyes. She had been innocently fond all her life of pretty things, and yet her training had been such that but slight importance had been attached to them. Now it pleased her much to have her husband care what she wore and how she wore it. He gave her a swift critical survey that evening, his eyes lighting as they did when he was pleased, and himself pinned the spray of lovely roses in place.

"You'll do," he said, intense satisfaction in his tone as he stepped back to note the effect. "The roses are just the added touch that you needed."

## VIII.

### *HYPER-CRITICAL.*

**M**R. FARNSWORTH would evidently have agreed with this verdict. As the evening progressed he made it more distinctly apparent that such was his feeling. Eunice had flushed under his steady stare — she had felt that that was the word to describe his gaze — and had compelled herself to remember that he was her husband's old friend, and that she was being critically studied for his sake. This kept her from growing haughty under what, with other conditions, would have been insulting in its directness. She had to hold herself well in check during the evening. There were other callers, but Mr. Farnsworth monopolized her attention as fully as he could, and every moment her annoyance deepened. It was not so much what he said, as the tone in which he said it and the look that accompanied it; both were new to her, and gave her, at times, a feeling of almost self-contempt in that she per-



mitted them. Yet how could she escape them? She soothed herself by imagining the promptness with which she would have turned from him and put the length of the room between them, had the room not been her own, and he her guest. From time to time she sent furtive glances toward her husband, wishing that he might come to her rescue; but the Merivales were among the callers, and it occurred to her more than once that Mr. Landis was suffering at the hands of Miss Julia somewhat as she was with Mr. Farnsworth; but he, being a man, probably did not realize it.

No sooner had Mr. Landis returned from attending his friend—who was the last to depart—to the door, than she gave vent to her long-restrained feelings.

“I shall have to confess, Burton, that I detest your friend! What an extraordinary friendship! I cannot imagine you and he having a thought in common.”

Her husband whistled softly before he said:—

“Halloo! What has ruffled my kitten now? Poor Farnsworth! I saw that he was more than green, simply black with envy. I pitied him, as you should have done. A fellow cannot help feeling it when he discovers that the only perfect woman in the world has been appropriated, and that, too, by his old-time friend. It seems to add to the sense of injury, don't you see?”



“Please don’t talk nonsense just now, Burton. I have been too thoroughly indignant to rally immediately. Did not you see how insufferable he was? For the first time in my life I feel as though I had been insulted. If he had been anywhere but in our own home, I should certainly have told him that I must be relieved of his society. I was tempted to do so, as it was.”

“Nonsense!” Mr. Landis’s tones were a trifle sharp. “What on earth can you mean, Kitty? You cannot mean, of course, that the man insulted you! Tell me exactly what he said.”

“Oh, he *said* nothing; a series of nothings; small talk, froth, whatever you are pleased to call it; just as the Merivales go on, only in this case it took the guise of compliment instead of banter, and was therefore far more disagreeable. Still, it was not what he said, Burton, but his tone and manner. I was never so treated before; I assure you I mean it.”

“Nonsense!” said Mr. Landis again, this time speaking lightly. “I’m immensely relieved; I thought for the moment that poor Farnsworth must have lost his senses. But you are only doing high tragedy, it seems, and I’ll own that the rôle is becoming. My darling, the poor fellow cannot help complimenting; he was born in an atmosphere charged with it, and took to it naturally. He admires



women with all his heart and soul, and he adores the beauty of beautiful women, is intoxicated with it in a sense, and cannot help letting his adoration shine in his eyes and melt in his voice. And you are beautiful, my beloved; you are even more so to-night than usual. I have not before thought of you as a princess, but I believe I shall have to change my pet name. 'Kitty' doesn't do you justice. How would 'Trix' answer, I wonder? Meaning the short for empress, you know."

The flash in his wife's eyes took another form, and there was a strange new feeling throbbing within her. Was it possible that her husband did not care that other men looked at and spoke to her in such a manner! He noted the change and exerted himself to satisfy her demand.

"Confound the fellow!" he said, raising himself from the lounging attitude that he had assumed, "I shall quarrel with him at once if he annoys you. I know he doesn't mean anything in the world; it is simply a way he has. The ladies adore him, and he knows it, and is accustomed to being petted. He would not say or do what he fancied was offensive for the world, but he has been spoiled, you see; most women like it—this throwing volumes that might be spoken, but never shall be, into the lift of an eyebrow or the curve of a lip. He could not know that you were different



from other women. I understand the situation perfectly, my empress, and can assure you on the word of a gentleman that nothing was farther from poor Farnsworth's mind than intentional rudeness. He is not of your world, dear, that is all. Now, since we are on the subject, let me confess that I am sometimes afraid you are inclined to be too — what shall I call it? 'Reserved'? No, for you are not reserved unless you choose to be; but — well, shall we say hyper-critical? There is, my darling, a difference between country life and city life that pervades every department. Society small talk in the country is not, I fancy, of a much higher grade than it is in town, but I grant you that it is a different grade; and in your sheltered life, heretofore, you have been kept from hearing much of any sort. Here in town, where men have to grind all day, pushed by a thousand business cares and perplexities, rushed in a way that the quiet country knows nothing about, there is a sort of reaction that comes upon them when they get free from business trammels, and they say a thousand things and look a million more that mean simply 'froth,' as you have aptly called it. They don't expect to meet their words or looks again, or to have anybody remember them. It is just a let-up from routine life, don't you understand? You mustn't hold people to earnestness all the time, nor call them to too rigid



account for stray glances. Farnsworth is the best fellow in the world, as you will find when you know him better, and learn to discount the part of him that he doesn't remember two minutes after he has shown it. I can imagine myself trying to call him to account for annoying you, and feeling like a fool as he looked at me out of his perplexed eyes and asked if I had suddenly gone daft!" And Mr. Landis leaned back in his easy chair and laughed.

Eunice could not laugh, not yet. Her experience was too recent, and her disgust too real for the glances and tones that did not mean anything. But she told herself that her husband did not understand her feeling, because he was himself too thoroughly noble, too pure-hearted, to realize how offensive such demonstrations could be made. She felt that in some respects she actually knew the world better than did this man who had for so many years been a part of it. Not for nothing had she been the eldest daughter of a faithful country pastor, into whose sympathetic ears had been poured the tales of woes and sorrows and sins that had fallen upon members of his flock through the years. Her life had been sheltered, indeed, and more than was necessary of this world's sin and suffering had not been spread before her. Yet, being the intelligent and thoughtful young woman that she was, much had been necessary; and knowing life as she did, her



question was, how was she to continue in familiar social contact with a man like Mr. Farnsworth? If she could but make Burton understand that no pure-hearted woman ought to be compelled to endure those "meaningless" ways! Just then her husband sat up again and gave voice to his thought:—

"I tell you what it is, Kitty, Farnsworth ought to have a good wife. He needs one more than I did, and that is saying a great deal. I would give much to see him settled down with a real princess who could keep his eyes where they belonged. Look here! I have a bright thought. Let's get Dolly down here for the Easter vacation. Dolly is exactly the girl for Farnsworth. He has never been serious for three consecutive hours in his life, along such lines at least, but it is time that he was, and Dolly is the very girl to help him."

He did not see the horror in his wife's eyes; she did not mean that he should; she was learning rapidly that there were feelings that he did not understand. She turned abruptly from him and kept her thought to herself. But there was a sudden setting of her lips and a peculiar uplift of her shapely head, such as used to call from her school-girl friends the statement that "Eunice Hollister had her 'Don't-you-dare-to-do-it' fit on," and she told herself that Dorothy, her fair, pure sister, should never, NEVER come in contact with a man like Mr.

Farnsworth! Could her mother ever forgive her, she wondered, if by any effort of hers Dorothy should be placed for a single hour in the social atmosphere of a man who could look at a married woman as she had been looked at that night! Her husband might not understand, but her mother would.

Whether, despite his protests and explanations, Mr. Landis saw fit to give his friend a hint, or whether it was the freezing dignity of his new acquaintance that forced the hint upon him, cannot be proved, but certain it is that Mr. Farnsworth improved in manner. Eunice was compelled to own that had he appeared at their first meeting as he did afterwards, she would have classed him with the other society men, with whom she seemed to have not an idea in common, and who were simply to be tolerated because they belonged to a world in which she for a time must move. Continually she thought of that little home which she and Burton were one day to set up, as belonging to another world; a world with an atmosphere more like the sweet and wholesome one that she had breathed in her father's house. By some process which she did not attempt to fully outline, all present hindrances were to be removed from their lives. Time was to be made for those coveted seasons together that she had named "family worship," and Burton was somehow to be sufficiently rested to become



reasonably regular in his attendance at the mid-week services of the church. And above all things else the Merivales were to be much too far away to be seen frequently. She had made no attempt to locate the little house that was to be transformed into a home, other than that. She began to revolve thoughtfully another query. Could the house be so located that it would become inconvenient for Mr. Farnsworth to be a frequent guest? Then her face grew red at the thought that she seemed to be planning to separate her husband from all his former friends! How strange it seemed that his friendships should have been among those who were so utterly uncongenial to herself! Still, in this latter instance she was not thinking of herself, but Dorothy. Since she had advanced to the dignity of a matron, she had fallen into the habit of thinking of Dorothy in a tender, protecting way, and had been glad of her husband's evident interest in "Dolly," as he persisted in calling her fair young sister. Mr. Landis's fondness for pet names had often amused and occasionally almost annoyed this young woman who had been reared in an atmosphere where they never thought of saying "Dolly" for Dorothy, and would never have dreamed that the fine old-fashioned name "Eunice" could be degraded into "Kitty," but it had been a distinct pleasure to see that her husband was fond of "Dolly" and ready to



plan for her interests. When she should have been graduated, it was planned that she was to be with them for an indefinite period, and was to have advantages, especially in music, that Mr. Landis was sure a dull old town like Brantford could never afford her. His schemes, albeit some of them looked to Eunice's graver judgment a trifle visionary, had nevertheless been pleasant to dwell upon, until Mr. Farnsworth's advent. Then, although Eunice said no more against him, and even admitted, under questioning, that he was less offensive by far than at first, yet in her heart she dropped not one thread of her determination to keep him and Dorothy as wide apart as the poles. Her husband had said that the trouble with Farnsworth was, he was not of her world; and he should never be of Dorothy's world.

Spring came early that year. Summer foreshadowed itself in April; and the earth, made beautiful by recent rains, took on, even in the city, — the favored part of it where Mr. and Mrs. Landis lived, — the loveliness of grass and flowers, and all the sweet breaths of the season. Eunice, yielding herself to the wooings of the spring, had charmed her husband by a dress of pure white, and with spring violets at her breast, looked not unlike what he had called her — a lovely prophecy of summer. The violets were her first that season, and had been sent back to her that morning by her husband,



while still in their dewy freshness. Their subtle, yet powerful fragrance pervaded the room and were forever afterwards associated in Eunice's mind with the experiences that became hers that fair spring morning. She held a business card in her hand and was studying it. Was he sure, she asked the elevator boy, that the bearer wanted to see her and not Mr. Landis? Oh, yes, the boy was sure; he added the information that he guessed the young fellow was nothing but a clerk. He proved to be a very polite "clerk," quite youthful, and with an embarrassed flush on his face as he apologized for intruding. He had been so unsuccessful in his efforts to find Mr. Landis, and his little account had been running on so long, that he had at last made bold to ask for the lady, hoping that she would be so kind as to speak to her husband about it. Eunice reached forth her hand for the paper, beginning to comprehend that it was an unsettled bill that was being brought to her notice. It was of some length, and she could not help noting that the first charge was for orange blossoms. And the date affixed was the one preceding her marriage! The flowers had reached her by express just in time. "Mr. Landis must have entirely forgotten this account," she said, the color mounting into her face as she spoke, though she could not have told why. She glanced down the long array of items, always flowers. Roses, rare ones, evi-



dently, and expensive. She had not realized how often she had worn them, and how strange it seemed that they represented money! How many Ben had lavished upon her! The poor boy ought to have known what market value they represented. Here was a heavy charge for a potted fern which waved in beauty in her window at that moment. No wonder it was choice! To her country-educated eyes the price was alarming. Twenty-seven dollars, simply for flowers! It was well that her husband had not to calculate from the standpoint of her father's salary. They of the manse, at Brantford, would have been appalled over such a bill. Or indeed, for that matter, over any bill. She repeated her statement that this must have slipped from her husband's memory, especially as there had been no recent charge. Unwittingly she had touched upon a grievance, and the young florist gathered courage to explain.

"No, there is no recent charge; if there had been, I wouldn't have troubled you; because, while an account is open, it's different, don't you know? But he saw fit to leave me and patronize a rival place, though I have done my best to fill his orders, and put myself out to please him. I know what the trouble was—he didn't like my sending a bill. I know gentlemen like him don't like bills, and I held off as long as I could; but I'm just a beginner, and florists don't carry very long accounts,—



they can't. I needed some money badly that day and I made bold to present my bill, and he hasn't been near me since. If you could explain, madam, that I was in special need just then, and that if he would continue his custom, I would try to wait on him as long as anybody, why then —"

The color on Eunice's face would have vied with any of the roses Ben used to bring; this seemed to her humiliating.

## IX.

### *FIGURES AND FACTS.*

“ I WILL speak to him,” she said, her tones unwittingly growing haughty. “ Mean-time, this bill must be settled. I have no doubt but that it has passed from his mind; he has been unusually busy of late. Wait here a moment.” It was good to remember just then one of her wedding presents — five ten-dollar gold pieces from a wealthy member of her father’s church.

“ Keep it for pin money, darling,” her husband had said when she consulted him as to the disposal of it, and she had answered gleefully that she would keep it for nest money; that when they feathered their own little home nest there would be tufts needed here and there that the gold pieces could furnish. She went swiftly and brought three of them for flowers! The young man made the change and receipted the bill, all the time talking eagerly. He was so much obliged, and sorry to have troubled her with so small a bill! If only he had a



little more capital he need not do this sort of thing; he was but a beginner, trying to build up a business, and he had been so exceedingly grateful for Mr. Landis's patronage! He was never skimping in his orders and always wanted the best. Mrs. Landis could well believe it. In her haste to be rid of him she made a rash promise about future orders, and knew that the sweetness had some way gone out of the violets at her breast. Left alone, she laid her arms on the little table where a single rare rose, yesterday's offering, breathed perfume on her from a costly vase, and then laid her head on her arms and cried a little. Why? She could not have told. What had happened? Certainly nothing very terrible. It is true she had been brought up to have a horror of bills, but her husband had already laughed at her queer ideas in this regard. He had assured her that business men always lived a credit life — had to; there could be no such thing as business, in any extended sense, without credit. Still — could it be necessary to live a credit life with roses and lilies and violets?

She was instantly ashamed of this question. She told herself that she must be very small-minded to allow a mental commotion about so small a matter. Of course Burton had forgotten the bill, it was such a trifle to him. If he would but let her look after the trifles, and so relieve himself of these petty cares! Yet it



might be unpleasant to him to have her look after bills for flowers that were to be lavished on herself. Once more it floated through her mind as a surprise that she had had so many flowers. Not many tears were shed; her wholesome nature realized their folly. Moreover, the bringing in of the morning mail interrupted her, and gave her a dear, thick letter from Dorothy, that had to wait until she had devoured that other one, in her mother's writing. It was after both had been disposed of that she took note of one for her husband, and remembered that he would not be at home until night. He had himself to thank for what followed. Only the day before a letter had waited for him until evening, and as he glanced at it he had given a disappointed exclamation, followed by —

“Kitty, why on earth didn't you look at this letter? It is from my old friend, Harper; he and his wife were at the Court Street station this afternoon for more than twenty minutes, and expected me to meet them there. If you had opened the letter you could have sent a messenger to the store, and I could have had a visit with them. They are en route for California, and there is no telling when I shall see them again.”

She had come swiftly out to him from their dressing room, and had taken a seat on the arm of his chair, and expressed her sorrow and re-



gret with so many tender and quaint caresses that he had laughed, and kissed her, and told her she might do it again if she would atone for it so charmingly ; but why hadn't she read the letter? All his life he had heard about woman's curiosity. How could a woman let a letter lie unread on her table all day ! And he had laughed immoderately over her confessed scruples about opening another person's letters.

"Another person's letters!" he had mimicked, and then stopped to kiss her. "Your name on the envelope ! Confess that you had forgotten it was your name. My darling, is that your idea of the degree of confidence that should exist between husband and wife? If you have any secrets from me, you must guard them carefully from your correspondents, for I warn you that I shall never dream of letting a letter bearing your name lie on my table waiting for a reader. Seriously, dearest, I wish you would look after all mail that comes to the house address. Business letters come to the store, of course, but anything bearing my home address is likely to be from a friend, and might need prompt attention."

Mindful of this, Eunice turned from Dorothy's letter to look after her husband's. Certainly it needed attention. It was a bill for carriage hire, itemized, and of some length. And the lines accompanying it were brief and to the point.



“As this is the third time the enclosed bill has been rendered, we shall have to remind you that it is imperatively necessary that it receive prompt consideration.” The word “prompt” was underscored. The amount was a trifle over two hundred dollars. Eunice stood before it amazed, appalled. It was not simply that her education had made her afraid of bills, it was not because a bill for two hundred dollars for *anything* would have been looked upon as a calamity in the manse at Brantford, it was a feeling lying back of all this to which she did not wish to give a name. Some of the charges were dated months back, and this was the third rendering. What did it all mean? Why should Burton be so careless about his personal accounts? Could it be that he was so overburdened at the store as to have no time for his own affairs? Ah, if he would but let her help him! And yet there pushed, or tried to push, to the front that feeling growing out of the knowledge that a bill rendered required but a moment of time to pay, if there was that with which to pay it, and that business men were not in the habit of waiting for second and third renderings of personal bills. The men in her father’s congregation who had such records were spoken of as “involved,” and she knew that her father was always troubled for them. Was it not possible that Burton, since his marriage, perhaps, had been tempted into expenses



that his income would not warrant? A wife must, of necessity, be a heavy additional expense. Having been accustomed for so many years to think of only one, perhaps her husband had not sufficiently considered the sum required for two to live.

For perhaps the hundredth time she wished she knew just what they were paying for board, and just what her husband's salary was. Ought a young man who had his way to make in the world to keep his wife in ignorance of his resources? Without intelligent coöperation in this, as in other matters, how could they make their life together what it should be?

Long afterward when she went over in detail every inch of this perilous way, she realized afresh how strange it was that the facts so earnestly coveted should have been thrust upon her in quick succession that spring morning.

There came another interruption to her troubled thoughts. This time it was their hostess. This important personage Mrs. Landis had rarely seen. She knew of her as a widow in middle life who understood the art of keeping a boarding-house, and who had been eminently successful in the work. It was rumored in the house that the lady kept her hand upon every detail of the extensive business, and knew to a penny every expenditure; that, in short, though rarely seen, she was the central force that kept the well-regulated machinery of the establish-



ment in order. On the rare occasions in which Eunice had come in contact with her, she had been dressed as well and had looked as much the lady as any of her boarders. In fact, Eunice had confided to her husband that she stood somewhat in awe of their chief, and hoped that she would never have to confront her in the rôle of an offender. Behold, here she was in severely plain morning dress, and with business written upon every line of her face.

“Good morning, Mrs. Landis. May I claim five minutes of your time? I have spoken to Mr. Landis several times, but he and I are very busy people in business hours and do not often come in contact, so I think I will leave a message with you for him, as a surer way of his getting it at an hour when he can give it attention. I feel sure that he doesn't realize that it is two months and more since he paid his bill. Time passes so rapidly with busy and happy people, especially if they are newly married, that it is not at all strange he should overlook it. It is a rule of our house not to let bills go over from month to month; it complicates bookkeeping to do so; our bookkeeper has spoken to me about this a number of times, but I have been careless. Now, however, as we are entering upon the third month, I thought I would ask his prompt attention to the matter. I am sure you, Mrs. Landis, will understand how necessary it is for



me, a woman with none but hirelings to help me, to be very systematic."

"Certainly," said Eunice, trying to keep face and voice from betraying the dismay she felt. "Mr. Landis has been unusually pressed for time lately, and has let several matters pass that needed his attention. What is the amount, please?"

A swift regret came to her that she had squandered those gold pieces on the young florist. It could not have injured him to have waited one more day, and it would have been such a satisfaction to be able to place the money in this disagreeable woman's hands at once. She had thirty dollars in her pocket-book that Burton had given her for a spring wrap which he had himself selected, and there were small bills enough to make nearly ten dollars more. Ninety dollars ought to do much toward settling for two months' board. It would not be enough, of course, to meet the bill, though five dollars a week secured fair board in Brantford. But city prices were undoubtedly much higher, and then they had two rooms. Deep in her heart was the fear that prices might be double what was paid in Brantford; and that, with swift calculation, she discovered might make the bill perhaps as much as a hundred and fifty dollars! Even in that case it would be a comfort to be able to say with dignity, "I have but ninety dollars by me just now; by all means take that,



and as soon as Mr. Landis returns to-night, he will see to it that you have the remainder." Well, she might do it with fifty dollars. That amount would serve to show the woman how insufferable her rudeness had been. It was during the business woman's moment of delay while she glanced at a small note-book she carried in her hand, that Eunice held this swift conference with herself. She did not realize how haughty her tones had become when she repeated her question:—

"What is the exact amount, please?"

"Well," said Mrs. Pierce, "it is nine weeks and five days since he has paid me. Nine weeks at forty dollars a week would be just three hundred and sixty dollars."

It was impossible for Eunice to suppress in time her exclamation of dismay. "Are you sure?" her lips faltered, before she could realize how absurd the question was.

"Why, of course," said the business woman, briskly. "It is easily calculated. Four times nine are thirty-six."

"I know," said her victim, hastily. "I did not mean that. I mean— Did you say the price was forty dollars a week?"

"I certainly did. And at that price they are cheaper in proportion than any other rooms in my house. This room alone has heretofore brought me in thirty dollars a week, and the smaller one fifteen. But I made spe-

cial terms for Mr. Landis, since he wanted two rooms. Why, I am sure, Mrs. Landis, you cannot think my terms are high. If you are at all accustomed to city prices, you must know that I have been very reasonable indeed. I assure you there are persons who would be glad to get the accommodations I furnish at a considerable advance on the sum I have named."

"I know nothing about prices," said Eunice, holding her excitement well in check and speaking with gentle dignity. "I have not happened to hear Mr. Landis mention what terms he had made with you. Kindly leave the bill with me, and I will call my husband's attention to it this evening. He will be sorry that he has inconvenienced you by delay."

Certainly Eunice knew how to be dignified when she felt that the occasion demanded it. Mrs. Pierce, practical business woman that she was, accustomed to dealing with all classes of boarders, felt herself dismissed. Courteously indeed, but still dismissed, without opportunity for further word.

Eunice's first swift thought, as the door closed after her caller, was that it must be good business to keep a fashionable boarding-house in a city. Her mathematical brain, not knowing that it did so, began a swift count of the many boarders filling the large house, and made a mental estimate of what Mrs. Pierce's income



must be each week. Not knowing much about the necessary expenditures, the result seemed enormous. All the while, however, she was aware that this was not the matter to be considered. There was a stricture across her chest and an ugly feeling in her throat, and an impression that if she could cry with all her might it would help her, and a determination to do no such thing. It was time for thought, not tears. She must know and know to a certainty the meaning of all this. However calmly she might say it to Mr. Landis's creditors, it was impossible to make herself believe that pressure of business could account for such a state of things. Neither, it seemed to her, could carelessness. If her husband had had in his pocket, or in a bank subject to his order, the money with which to pay these bills when presented, surely they would have been paid at once as the easiest way of disposing of them. If he had not the money, did it not prove that he was living beyond his means? Or was he, possibly, making business ventures that were absorbing his surplus money? She had heard that business men were often temporarily embarrassed. Still, it could not be right deliberately to place one's self in such a position that people dependent upon their earnings from week to week should have to wait for their pay. She seemed to gain nothing by thought; she realized that her knowledge was still too limited. She went back, and picked



up a few facts to dwell upon. She had learned at last what they were paying for board. Forty dollars a week seemed to her absurdly unnecessary. It was true, as had been hinted to her, that she knew nothing about city prices; but common sense told her that there must be hundreds of respectable people living in cities without sufficient income to warrant such an expenditure. And at least they could do without carriage hire and flowers! One thing she thought out, and settled. She must know, and know at once from her husband, just what they had to depend upon. She accused herself of folly in having allowed him to put her off thus far with whimsical evasions. She assured herself indignantly that it was in ways like these that silly wives helped to ruin their husbands. She affirmed resolutely that not another night should pass without her being in full possession of the situation.

## X.

### *A MODERN MICAWBER.*

“**W**HAT is all this?” Mr. Landis had the bill for carriage hire and his landlady’s statement in his hands as he spoke. His wife had kept them out of sight until after dinner, but had placed them conspicuously near to the magazine that he would be likely to take up as soon as they were settled for the evening.

“A bill, I declare! How in thunder did it get into your hands? And this—really! Has that intolerable woman dared to come to you with her board bill?”

“She meant no offence, Burton. She said she did not often have opportunity to see you, and thought if she left the bill with me it would serve the same purpose.”

“Oh, she did! I think I shall let her know that my wife is not a confidential clerk who is to be pestered with accounts. How did this livery bill get on our parlor table? Did the



livery man call in person and ask you to present it?"

"It came by mail. You remember you asked me to look at any mail that came to the house in your absence."

"I see. I confess I was expecting you to discriminate between communications from friends and pieces of business impertinence; but no matter. I shall teach the impudent scoundrel courtesy in a practical way; no more patronage does he get from me. How many more of these precious documents are there? Upon my word, you must have had a pleasant day!"

"There is a receipted bill," said Mrs. Landis, quietly, and she laid before him the florist's account. "I thought I might save you a little trouble by paying the small bill at once. The young man who brought it had not a thought of being rude; he was simply in need of money. He has not sufficient capital to be kept waiting, Burton. He is a manly young fellow, and I was interested in him. I promised to speak a word in his favor for the future. But just now I am interested in our own affairs. I confess that the price we are paying for board dismays me. It surely cannot be necessary for you and me to be paying, just for board, what in a year would amount to several hundred dollars more than my father's entire salary!"

Mr. Landis made a movement of impatience. "I wish you were not always trying to com-



pare us with a country parson and his family !” he said. “ Cannot you see that the conditions are very different ? There is a certain amount of appearance that has to be made by people in town that is never called for in the country. Besides, there is absolutely no analogy between your father and myself ; we have always belonged to different worlds.”

Mrs. Landis’s eyes, that were the admiration of her husband, flashed then with a light that he had not often seen in them, and she spoke with evident feeling.

“ I understand that perfectly ; but my father belongs to a strictly honorable world that pays its bills the day they are due, and does not allow an expenditure that it is not sure of being able to meet.”

Said Mr. Landis : “ Halloo, Kitty ! you and I mustn’t quarrel, especially about such a sordid matter as money ; I never cared much for the stuff myself, and don’t consider it worth making any fuss about. I’m a careless chap, I must admit. I suppose I’ve thought of the old lady’s board bill a hundred times in the last few weeks, but never at a time when it happened to be convenient to draw a check for the amount. And I can’t do it to-night, worse luck ! it will have to wait until I get to the store and my check book. I should like to take it down to her at once and throw it at her and say, ‘ There is your money and be hanged to



you!' I'm really indignant, Kitty, downright angry, to think that she should have dared to invade your private paradise and talk shop to you."

Mrs. Landis came over to her husband's chair, took a favorite seat on its broad arm, and laid a caressing hand on his shoulder as she said:—

"Please, Burton, don't talk that sort of nonsense to me to-night. I don't want to be done up in cotton as a useless toy and laid on ever so pretty a shelf in paradise. I want to be in very truth a helpmate to you, as the good old-fashioned word puts it. I want to understand about things; it is eminently sensible that I should; in fact, it is necessary. Don't you know that I can get you into all sorts of financial embarrassments by careless expenditures, so long as I do not know what I ought to spend? It is really ridiculous that I do not, for instance, know what my husband's salary is. Let us have a real business talk, dearest, and get our bearings. These petty bills that you forget, and that you ought not to be troubled with, how easily I could look after them if you would trust me." She spoke in the cheeriest, most soothing of tones. The momentary flash of indignation had passed. She thought she saw that there was honor enough and money enough, but that her husband was, as he said, careless; being hard-



pressed with the business of others he had fallen into the habit of neglecting his own, and giving himself when at home to rest and enjoyment. Rest was what he ought to have, and she ought to be his helper. Therefore the tone in which she said, "Please tell me all about it," was most winsome, and her face was close to his lips as she spoke.

He kissed her several times before he said: "What a little woman of business she is! Perhaps she will make my fortune; in fact, she has already. Very well, the stupendous figures shall be set before you. I get the enormous sum of eighteen hundred dollars a year, in return for as hard work as a fellow ever did."

The woman who would have taken the mathematical prize at school that year made her swift mental calculation, and could not keep her dismay quite out of her voice as she said:—

"But there are other things,—interest, or dividends, or whatever they call them? I mean, Burton, what have we to depend upon?"

"A miser!" he said, pretending to be shocked. "Who would have imagined it? And I thought she was such a dependent little mouse that I should have to count her pin money for her!"

She begged him not to frolic; she assured him that she was in earnest and wanted to understand all that there was to understand.



“Do you?” he said, kissing her lips; “then I assure you that the solemn facts are before you. There are no dividends, no *anything*, but that lonesome one hundred and fifty dollars a month. Is she sorry that she ever left her father’s house, and afraid that she will have to go cold and hungry and barefoot?” As he spoke, he pinched her ear, and flattened her nose, and bestowed other favorite tortures upon her in the name of caresses. Mrs. Landis sat upright at last and looked at him earnestly.

“Burton, why will you not be serious? You know I am afraid of nothing with you; but it seems to me necessary that we should both fully understand the situation. For instance, have you thought that eighteen hundred dollars a year will not pay our present rate of board?”

Then he also sat up straight and frowned a little.

“Upon my word!” he said. “You are going into matters, I think! Cannot you trust me, Eunice?”

“Yes, if you can trust yourself. I am asking only that I may understand, as a wife should, her husband’s financial affairs, if she is not to be his ruin. I am not a child, Burton; I have been used to considering and economizing all my life. Eighteen hundred dollars does not seem a small sum to me. It is more than my father used to have, with children to support and educate. But when I find that we are liv-



ing at the rate of two thousand dollars a year for mere board, and using carriages, for instance, at the rate of several hundred more, and have but eighteen hundred dollars with which to meet these and other expenses, should I not be an idiot if I did not ask your method of calculation?"

Mr. Landis looked excessively annoyed, but at least he was serious.

"Since you will compel me to talk business during my brief hour of rest," he said, "I will explain that our present rate of expenditure cannot, of course, go on; but for years I have worked like a dog, and it seemed to me that for a few months of our married life we might afford to live as people of our cultivation would be expected to live."

His wife meant business now to the core. "Do you mean," she asked, "that you have been saving money through the years with a view to living expensively for my sake while the hoard lasted? Oh, Burton! I wish you had trusted me more fully. Would it not have been better to have started as we must go on, and saved the extra money for future needs? I have been afraid all the time that your love was tempting you to lavish upon me what you would miss later. Don't do it any more, dear. Let us find at once a cheaper boarding-house, and do without carriages and — *roses* for a while."



She had grown cheerful as she talked, having fully adopted her theory. This did not mean dishonorable debt, it was simply an excusable folly for which he had planned. In truth it was her fault, not his ; and it was she who ought to right it. A man could be economical for himself, but of course he liked to lavish upon his wife. She continued in eager tones.

“ If we could only find a little bit of a house, or even a few rooms in a big house, and get to housekeeping ! I am sure we could have the comforts of home at much less expense than it is to board.” And then she could not help thinking regretfully of those wasted dollars. “ Still, if we must board for a while, there are surely less expensive places. I will begin to-morrow to look for them. You will let me, won’t you ? I must be a helpmate to you, remember, not in any sense a burden. I cannot tell you how much happier it will make me to be doing my part, even if it is such a tiny part compared with yours.”

The sentence closed with most winsome caresses, but her husband’s face did not brighten. He had colored under her prompt interpretation of his words, yet he did not feel called upon to explain that during the days of his bachelorhood he had not only lived up to every penny of his income, but, in the few months preceding his marriage, had exceeded it, and that



there was not one cent ahead with which to pay those outlying debts. He had not told her that there was ; he argued with his manhood that if she chose to deceive herself with such a fancy, it could do no harm ; but he could not help looking his discontent with things in general.

“ I am not going to have you made into a drudge,” he said. “ The idea that you cannot have even a few roses occasionally ! you might better have married that rose-growing country clodhopper who was so devoted to you. At least he could have given you flowers, which it seems I must not do. I did not promise your father any such life for you as you are mapping out.”

Was it something in his tone, or was it that a sense of unrest had taken possession of her which she could not shake off ? She could not have told why a great fear suddenly seized upon her that her theory did not fit the facts.

“ Burton,” she said earnestly, “ you will let me understand all about it now, once for all, will you not ? Have you money enough saved to meet these and other bills ? Are there other bills ? You are not troubled about them, are you ? ”

“ No, and yes, and no,” he said, laughing ; he could not look gloomy over anything but a few moments at a time. “ There are your three questions answered. Can you distribute



the answers? I haven't a penny saved up in the world ; never had a penny ahead in my life ; you shall have the minutest details now, since nothing less will please you. There are other bills, quite a number of them ; I am not anxious about them in the least. These are the remarks accompanying the answers, you understand. I never allow myself to be anxious. It is against my principles. Things will turn out all right if we let them alone and don't worry : that's my creed. Something will be sure to turn up ; something always has ; I've been in tight places before. Once I was at my wits' ends for the want of ten dollars, and behold, an old aunt of mine that I thought was dead, wrote to me on her birthday and enclosed a ten-dollar bill. I believe in trusting, and not taking anxious thought. Don't you, Kitty? What has become of your faith?"

If it had been other than her husband speaking, Mrs. Landis could not have withheld a slight curl of her sensitive lip over this travesty of faith. As it was, she rose up from that conference a wiser woman. She had removed herself from the arm of her husband's chair a short time before this, and taken a seat just in front of him where he could not escape the questioning of her eyes. Neither could he escape from her persistence. She held him steadily to business when he would have slipped into the evening paper, or the last magazine — into anything



to escape from distasteful topics. Certain things Mrs. Landis determined should be settled that evening, and she would not leave them until they were. For very weariness at last he yielded a reluctant consent that she should at once begin her search for cheaper rooms; that she should countermand certain orders involving unnecessary expense; that she should in various other ways, which she definitely mentioned, proceed to bring their living into line with their income. Over the debts, which Mr. Landis, much against his will, was compelled to calculate on paper and to declare that "a paltry five hundred would cover them all," the young wife grew pale. She had had no experience in coping with debt. She could not see how it could ever be met. Her husband agreed gloomily that the present bill for board must be settled before they could remove their trunks, and even gave this as a reason why they should continue on indefinitely waiting for "something to turn up"! In truth, before the evening was over, Mrs. Landis had reason to feel that she was in the power of a second "Micawber," so persistent was her husband's belief that if things were simply let alone something would happen, in time, to right them. Seeing no other way out of continually increasing embarrassment, she was compelled at last to yield a reluctant consent to his asking Merivale to advance him "a paltry three hundred" to meet their landlady's demands. Having settled



that, he immediately felt rich, and laughed immoderately over his wife's statement that what would remain of the month's salary now due must support them until the next instalment. She had to take pencil and paper and make many figures to convince him that it was nearly all they could afford to pay at any time, merely for board. There were left other bills that she foresaw would haunt her. She made a timid proposition to sell some of their wedding gifts to meet present emergencies, but this was negatived in haughty surprise that she had no higher sense of their sacredness than that. However, Mr. Landis did not stay indignant, but waxed merry over his fancy of what their new boarding-house was to be, making such a capital caricature of the supposed new landlady and the traditional slatternly maid that he shouted over them. So the evening closed merrily, after all.

## XI.

### *DEVICES.*

**L**ONG after Mr. Landis was sleeping the deep and quiet sleep of a man at peace with himself, his wife lay beside him with wide-open, though unseeing, eyes, and went over in minutest detail the events of the day and the conversation of the evening ; and tried to get away from it all, and persistently shut her heart to the creeping sense of disappointment in the man whom she had been glad to promise to love and honor. How was a man to be honored who was willing to contract needless debts, not knowing any way in which they could honorably be paid ? Not that she allowed herself to ask any such question plainly, but she knew it was there by the pitiful excuses hovering on the edges of her thoughts. Burton had been brought up so differently from herself ! He was the merest boy when his father's death had thrust responsibility upon him, before he had been trained for it. As for his mother, she must be very different from hers ! In the darkness the young wife allowed her lip to curl just once over the

thought of that mother whom she had never seen. Hints that Burton had let drop, a word or a phrase unawares, had led her to feel that his mother and sister could relieve him from all financial embarrassments if they chose.

“If I had my rights,” he had said gloomily once, in connection with their names, and then had seemed to stop himself as though he did not care to say what might be said. “Oh, they don’t care about money!” he had said again, “neither mother nor Jane, especially Jane. Money is of no sort of consequence!” “Jane” was his maiden sister. She and the mother were still living in Colorado, where they had been when the father died. They had chosen to remain there, instead of coming East to make home for the son and brother. They had not cared even to come to his wedding! Did not such love as that from one’s nearest demand a curling lip? His wife had ceased to mention their names to him; she had fancied that it hurt. He had carefully guarded their letters from her sight—she thought because they contained unflattering reference to herself. There was evidently little to be gained in thinking about them, except as it helped to make her pitiful over her husband’s early environment.

For the next few weeks she was very busy. She spent much money in car-fare, and learned much about the city that was now her home. She accomplished results. Within three weeks



of the evening in which she had forced her husband into confidence as to their finances, they were moved and settled in entirely respectable quarters that reduced their expenses rather more than half. It is true they had but one room, with a very tiny dressing room opening from it, and the furniture was extremely plain; but the street was wide and quiet, and there was more sunlight and air than had reached them in the uptown house. Nothing could exceed Mr. Landis's disgust with it all, at first; but his unfailing good humor had come to the rescue. Before he had spent two days in his new abode he had succeeded in making such a capital caricature of their surroundings, that he was inclined to view it all as a huge joke; especially as he was undeniably comfortable. A distinct advance had been made as regarded the table. The dishes were fewer in number and were served in less style than at Mrs. Pierce's house, but the cookery was homelike, and the service neat and quiet.

"Don't you think, we have moved!" wrote Eunice in the next letter home. "I found what Burton was paying for board and I simply wouldn't let him continue it. It was enough in itself to keep a young man poor. I found this place myself. The house is kept by a pleasant-faced woman and her three daughters. They do most of the work themselves, and while not so grand it is ever so much more



homelike than the other was. I know Burton will like it better when he gets used to it ; just now, he amuses himself by making fun of everything. There are seven other boarders, all quite pleasant ; and we are no farther away from the store than we were before."

This was all that the people at home were to know about the change. They thought, those dear people, that they read between the lines.

The father held the letter in his hand as he mused, and finally spoke : " Our little girl is being true to her mother's teachings, if she did go away from the home nest before we thought she was ready to fly. She will be the best blessing that young man ever had come into his life, if I am not mistaken."

Then the mother : " Eunice was always an unusual child. I never had to bring her up. People who see only on the surface think that Dorothy is more self-reliant than she ; it isn't so at all. Dorothy can be influenced by the passing fancy, where Eunice will stand firm and let it float by her. I am glad that she can influence Burton ; I was afraid he would be inclined to be obstinate in little things."

" Yes," said Dr. Hollister, with a twinkle in his handsome eyes, " it is the making of a man to be under the thumb of a good wife ; here am I a living illustration of its benefits."

Then they laughed, those old lovers ; and the wife pretended to pull her husband's hair, and



he pulled her down to him and kissed her in spite of herself; and both thanked God that the precious daughter, gone from them to make home for another, bade fair to have as blessed a life with the husband of her choice as theirs had been.

Certain other things Mrs. Landis quietly accomplished as the weeks went by. For instance, she tided her sister Dorothy safely through the Easter holidays without having her invited to visit them. Not without heart-burnings on the part of Dorothy, who had hoped and believed that she would be sent for to spend the week in her sister's newly set-up paradise, and who found it difficult to understand how Eunice could forget what a joy it would be to her to come. Marriage, she reflected, must make people selfish; certainly Eunice used to be quick to think of others. And she never knew how hard it was for Eunice to quietly negative her husband's plans for "Dolly."

Every plan had included Mr. Farnsworth. Mr. Landis was bent on bringing the two together.

"You don't know what you are about!" he said half angrily to Eunice. "I tell you I am almost certain that Farnsworth would fancy her; seriously, I mean. He is tired of bachelorhood and wants to settle down, and Dolly is just the one to settle him. It would be some-



thing worth while, I can tell you. Farnsworth isn't like your drudge of a husband, dependent on a wretched salary. He has a very good fortune, now, and a much larger one in prospect. I shouldn't think you would want to stand in your own sister's light !”

Six weeks before, Eunice would have said passionately that she would not lift a finger to bring Farnsworth and her sister together for all the wealth that the world contained. She did not say it now. She was growing less outspoken. She did not say even to herself that her husband could not understand the recoil of a pure nature from such a man as Farnsworth ; she refused to give herself any reason whatever for their difference of opinion on this and a hundred other points ; she simply said quietly :—

“ We cannot afford to have Dorothy come now ; it would increase our weekly expenses very materially, and we haven't the money to spend.”

“ Nonsense !” he answered angrily, after she had met all his arguments with this persistent reminder. “ How long do you suppose a man can stand it to have his poverty continually thrown in his face in this fashion ? If you thought money so important, I wonder that you ever married me. I am sure I never told you that I had any to spare. It is too absurd in you, Eunice, to keep harping on that strain ; don't you ever mean to have company, pray ?”



But a very short time before, his wife would have paled over words like those, spoken in the tone that was used; now she answered gently:—

“We will have company, Burton, when we can do so honorably. Just now we are in debt, you know, and are economizing in order to get free. After that, we can manage better. Dorothy would have but a few days to stay now.”

“Honorably!” he grumbled. “I shall grow tired of the changes on that word. You might as well tell me that before I married you I had no honor! I had a good deal more than you give me credit for, I can tell you. Suppose I had married a fortune, as hundreds of men have done before me, in order to have an easy time? I had an excellent chance to do it, instead of choosing a wife as poor as myself.”

Certainly Eunice was changing! Her face neither flushed nor paled; her voice was still quiet, even cheerful.

“That was so we could have a chance to climb together, Burton. Did you notice those cream fritters we had to-night? They were made on purpose for you. Mrs. Bateson tries very hard to please us.”

“She ought to,” her husband said gloomily. “I’ll venture that she never had boarders of our class to please before. On the whole, it is just as well, perhaps, that you are determined



not to let Dolly come ; we are not living in the style that she would expect to find us."

At midsummer there was a month's vacation, and they went home to the manse at Brantford. This was not in accord with Mr. Landis's views. He had planned for the White Mountains, and knew just the spots that he wished to revisit with his wife. He asked her reproachfully how she could be so selfish as to wish to deprive him of that long-planned pleasure, especially as the plans included Dolly, who never had a chance to go anywhere, and his friend Farnsworth, who always spent part of his summer among the White Mountains.

Eunice, the inexorable, took pencil and paper and showed him by a few minutes of swift figuring that the White Mountain trip for themselves, leaving Dorothy out, would exceed by nearly a hundred dollars the sum that they were able to spend on vacation.

"Nonsense!" he said gloomily. That was his one unanswerable argument.

The month at home was one of almost unmixed pleasure to Eunice. Mr. Landis, compelled to yield his plans, yielded gracefully, and charmed not only his wife's relatives, but the entire social world, having the manse for its centre, with his genial ways. He entered with heartiness into all sorts of pleasant plans, and was the life of every social gathering made in their honor. The children of the neighbor-



hood adored him. His pockets were always filled with toothsome dainties the like of which their country-bred eyes had never before beheld. The boys liked nothing better than to secure him as a companion for a day's outing, and told, for years afterward, how royally he treated them, taking the entire party to the Glen House, or the Hillside Inn, or some other resort of local fame, for luncheon, or dinner, and in other expensive ways making a red-letter day for them. He himself heartily enjoyed posing as a man of wealth and leisure, and distributing his bounties lavishly.

He told Eunice genially after one of these days that he was not sure but it was better than the White Mountains. Having saved so much by leaving that trip out of their plans, he could afford to give the youngsters what they considered princely times. He had never before realized how much good a man could do with a little money.

His wife gave him a sympathetic smile, which had in it a touch of anxiety. This was by no means the first time that she had heard her husband plan for a ten-dollar expenditure, because he had, by some fortunate happening, saved a dollar!

The sense of uneasiness increased as she watched. One day she captured a boy who had been of the latest party, and by skilful questions and an exhibition of very marked interest



in all details secured a fairly accurate idea of the expenditures. Soon afterward she announced herself as eager to make one in those excursions.

"Why, my dear," asked her husband, "are you sure you would enjoy the trip? I fancied that such hopelessly masculine excursions would bore you; there are no girls going this time; it is an out-and-out boys' performance. I am renewing my youth, but I am afraid you would be worn out, and perhaps a trifle disgusted."

Eunice smiled serenely. She was not easily worn out, she told him. He forgot that these hills were her native soil; and she added winsomely, "Do take me with you, Burton; I want to know how you acted when you were a boy."

He laughed indulgently; this had in it the element of admiration which his soul craved. Mrs. Landis accomplished the yet harder task of interesting the boys in the plan of taking luncheons with them and having a picnic dinner on the rocks, with herself to roast the corn and potatoes and cook the fish they might catch. Mr. Landis had intended to take the entire party to a famous Log Cabin Restaurant, and grumbled much over his wife's plans. It would be no end of a nuisance, he said, to carry so many baskets, and would make a tiresome day for her. Good-humored persistence won the day; and the schemer contrived to make the fish and the corn so appetizing that, when she had surprised them all by producing a delicious



dessert brought along in some unknown manner, Mr. Landis, as he sat eating it with a sterling silver spoon, which one mindful of his weakness had taken care to provide, gave forth this verdict:—

“Upon my word! this is a decided improvement on the greasy soup and leathery pie that we had last week; don’t you think so, boys?” And every boy of them voted “Ay.”

Mrs. Landis, who had already rescued her husband from paying several dollars for Indian curios with the prosaic announcement that they were not “Indian” at all, but were manufactured in a town only ten miles removed, where they could be had at a heavy reduction from the Indian prices, and had safely tided him past a street vender of specky lemonade at ten cents a thick glass, with the promise of any number of glasses presently, made from the water of Colebrook spring, clear as crystal and nearly as cold as ice, and had forestalled a heavy outlay for bad peanut candy by surfeiting her company with delicious homemade “fudge,” returned home a tired but victorious woman. There had been seven boys in their party; she could not help knowing that her presence had saved her husband five dollars at the lowest estimate. Thereafter she quietly arranged that by tacit consent, if not by actual invitation, she should be included in every scheme that her husband devised “especially for the boys.”

## XII.

*JANE.*

**H**OWEVER satisfactory this state of things may have been to Eunice, her sister Dorothy was far from pleased.

“What a thing it is to be married!” she said to her mother on one of those excursion days. “Here is Eunice, who used to say that she always felt uncomfortable with a party of children, because she did not know how to entertain them, trapesing off with them for the day, when she might have a lovely, quiet day with us, all because the man she has married chooses to devote some of his leisure to them! Why can’t Eunice let him be unselfish once in a while? It isn’t because Burton urges her to go; I heard him tell her this morning that she would better not join them, because they were going farther than would be pleasant for her.”

The mother smiled in quiet content. “The ‘forsaking all others, cleave only to him’ of the marriage service meant much to Eunice,” she said, “and I’m not sorry. I have my doubts as to whether an absolutely true mar-



riage is not always just so inclusive ; you will understand it better, some day, perhaps."

But Dorothy grumbled, and affirmed that when she married, if she ever did, she hadn't the slightest intention of setting her husband on a pedestal to be worshipped, nor of forgetting all other ties in her enslavement to him. Dorothy was a little sore of heart. It was not merely her disappointment in that Easter vacation — it had not been possible not to notice that the one who spoke oftenest of having her with them, and of her spending indefinite time with them after she was graduated, was her brother-in-law, and not her sister. One day she gave vent to the feeling which this engendered, to her mother.

"I don't believe I shall ever visit Eunice, mother ; I don't think she cares to have me ; Eunice doesn't love me as she used to."

The mother spoke more sternly in reply than she often did to this cherished daughter, assuring her that her sister had her best interests at heart, and reminding her that Eunice was not a mere girl any more, but was growing into a wise and thoughtful woman. And Dorothy had turned away with the pettish exclamation that she had liked her sister better when she was a girl.

The truth was that the mother believed she had been taken into confidence.

"I don't fancy some of Burton's old college



friends," her oldest daughter had explained. "There is one especially of whom we have to see a great deal, and I would as soon have our Dorothy come in contact with a brilliant poisonous serpent as with him! Burton doesn't feel so; they have been friends since childhood, and he does not see the blemishes. Pure-hearted men are not naturally as observing in certain directions as women are, I believe."

Mrs. Hollister had smiled in response, a fond, proud smile that had in it a touch of amusement. She was still inclined to be astonished when this young daughter put on the language of mature womanhood.

"Eunice is a daily wonder," she said to her husband that evening. "It surprises and touches me to see what a shielding care she has for Dorothy. Don't you think, she did without her sister through the spring vacation because she did not like to have her meet some of Burton's friends! There is one in particular whom Eunice dislikes, and she says Burton is blind to his faults and would like to see him and Dorothy together. Don't you think it is unusual in one so young to be thoughtful for her sister to such an extent?" And mother and father together thanked God for the development of their daughter's character, and the peace and beauty of her life. There were phases of it that the daughter took care they should not know.



Still, as has been said, this visit home was, on the whole, a time of rest and refreshment to Eunice Landis. There were some delightful experiences. Her husband continued to be distinctly popular with the church people generally. He went with her regularly to the mid-week services, and took prompt and satisfactory part in them.

"Your husband is gifted in prayer," her father said to Eunice one evening when they were alone together. "It refreshes me to hear him pray, and he talks on religious themes wonderfully well. I could not but notice it this evening; it is unusual for a business man to be so ready. He ought to have been a minister."

"I wish he were a minister!" Eunice said, with a fervor that her father was quick to notice. It had been her own thought that evening. If it were only Burton's duty to spend his life in a distinctly religious atmosphere, surrounded by people who would have the right to look to him for spiritual guidance, and environed by whole-souled, self-sacrificing ministers like her father, with whom it would be natural and wise for him to counsel, what a power he would be sure to become! He was so popular with young people that as a pastor he could lead them whither he would.

The wise father studied his daughter's face and sought to speak the word of comfort and of caution that he believed was needed.



“It isn’t simply in the ministry, daughter, that earnest lives are needed and that influence tells. I spoke the passing thought of the moment because Burton’s fluency in talking on religious themes impressed me; but I am far from minimizing the influence of a thoroughly consecrated business man. I have sometimes thought that his opportunities for usefulness are greater than those of the minister; so much that *he* does can be considered as belonging to his profession, while the business man can be understood as speaking from the heart, and never simply because he must.”

“I know that is so,” said Eunice, “but, father, business men have so little time, and their lives are of necessity so filled with other things.”

“That is true, daughter, and should be taken into consideration. It is possible that you may have to reconstruct your ideas a little, to fit the needs of a different life than the one to which you have been accustomed. Ministers’ families get into the habit of shaping all their engagements, as a matter of course, to fit the appointments of the church; but business men who are not their own masters cannot always do this. Your mother thinks you may be a bit troubled because you have sometimes to miss the mid-week service. You need to remember, dear, that it may occasionally be a Christian duty for a man who has been hard



pressed all day with work for others to lie on a couch and be read to, or talked to, instead of going to prayer meeting. Such an hour may even be more profitable to his Christian life, if he has been overstrained and needs the rest. I can fancy my Eunice, with the education she has had and the desire that she feels to appear consistent, being a little too strenuous possibly for the outward form. I do not know that this is ever the case, daughter; I am merely giving you a hint for possible future use."

She kissed him for thanks and turned quickly away, knowing that her eyes had filled and that her lips were quivering. Was she a hypocrite that she said no word to her father about the fact that her husband very rarely had time or strength for the mid-week devotional meetings of his church, but was always ready for a concert or indeed a social evening of any sort? She was sure that she was not. This was one of her sacred secrets. Such a condition of things, she felt certain, was the natural outgrowth of habits contracted by a homeless and homesick young man. If his mother and sister had come East when he had, and made home for him, everything would have been different. Everything was going to be different one of these days; her influence in the end would tell. She got great comfort, after a little, from her father's words. She meant to take to heart his hints. Perhaps she had been over-anxious about the



forms ; it might be that she had almost nagged her husband ! She would never do so again. Who should know about such things so well as her blessed father ?

The winter in town began much as the last one had, save that they saw less of the Merivales. As the mid-year drew near, business cares all but overwhelmed Mr. Landis, absorbing even some of his evenings. Occasionally Eunice sat alone and wondered why, since her husband was so important a factor in the great business firm, his salary was not raised. However, the question of salary was not causing her much anxiety. She was keeping careful surveillance over expenses, and steadily reducing their indebtedness. She had succeeded in convincing her husband that she had no use for certain dresses and wraps and bonnets that he would else have bought. She assured him that she liked the cars in crowded streets better than she did carriages, and that she did not care very much for hothouse blooms, but would rather wait until spring, and get her roses fresh from the gardens. She had even begun to exercise a wife's privilege, and object to some expenditures for masculine attire. She labored to convince her husband of the value that lay in tailor mending and sponging of garments that he had tossed aside as useless. Altogether the young wife felt that in the direction where lay her heaviest fears there had been at least

steps toward reform ; but she recognized the need for eternal vigilance. Her husband would still bring her home, too frequently, a box of French bonbons of ridiculous size and ruinous price, or a basket of strawberries while they were still, as the fruit vender phrased it, "A dollar a sight, and cheap at that!" He would occasionally revel in flowers of the rarest varieties, and these outbreaks were sure to occur at the most expensive seasons of the year ; nevertheless there had been improvement.

Matters were in this state when Mrs. Landis was called upon to endure their first overnight separation.

"Now you see how your plans work," her husband said reproachfully. "If I had had my way about this vacation, Dolly would have been here, and I should not have had to leave you alone in a stupid boarding-house. Better let me wire her to come down for a day or two, at least. Farnsworth is in Auburndale, and is coming home to-morrow night ; he could stop for her as well as not. I declare that's a capital idea!"

It took Eunice an hour to argue him away from the idea, and the exhausting effort left her fearful lest, after all, when morning came and he was away from her influence, he might return to it. But the next morning he was late and hurried, and thought only of his own affairs. Among the many directions given his wife was one about his mail.



“Look out for letters, Eunice. I’m expecting one from Dunning, telling me just where to meet him on my return trip. I’ve arranged for my mail at the store, but Dunning’s letter would be addressed to the house. Open it at once, please, and wire me the address he gives. He is an awful nuisance. If he had answered promptly, I shouldn’t have had all this bother.”

Since her one unpleasant experience and her husband’s frown, Eunice had carefully avoided opening any letters addressed to him; but now she must be on the alert. The first mail following his departure brought a letter for him that might be from the troublesome Dunning, since no clew as to his whereabouts had been given her. Therefore she broke the seal and read this:—

“DEAR BURTON: I am sorry to come to you with a tale of woe when you say that your own life is heavily burdened, but the truth must be told. We have reached the end of our resources. Indeed, that is putting it mildly. In plain words, we have neither coal nor food; and the last penny I had in the world is gone. I am well enough to sew, once more, but my place in the shop was filled while I was sick, and I have not been able to find a day’s work even as yet.

“Mother’s cough is worse, but she will not have the doctor, because his last bill has not



been paid. Burton, I know you have a wife to support, and that you say you cannot live on what you earn; but I cannot help thinking that a young man with health and work ought not to let his mother either starve or beg. For myself I would do both before appealing to you again. I have not forgotten your assurance that it was my business to support our mother! I have certainly tried to do it, and but for my illness could have fed and clothed her at least. But three months on my back have used up the last penny. Do Burton, for mother's sake, send me five dollars to help me tide over this terrible time. Mother needs nourishing food, and she cannot have it. She does not know I am writing to you. Indeed, she utterly refused to have her 'poor boy' burdened with thoughts of her, but I resolved that at least you should be told, once more, how near we are to beggary.

“Your sister JANE.”

Like one in the grasp of a nightmare, scarce knowing what she did, and not able to stop doing it, Eunice read to the end of this terrible letter; then read it again, and yet again. Could the writer be sane? His mother, her husband's mother, ill and in such dire poverty that she had no physician to prescribe for her and no medicine to take! She had not even fire to keep her warm in the severe March weather. And her son had bought, but yesterday, a fur-



lined travelling rug! He had justified the expenditure by saying that a man could not be expected to go shivering through the world, at least. And his *mother* had no coal!

The atmosphere in which Eunice Hollister had been reared included action. It was not her nature to sit and brood. Her second thought in any emergency had always been, "What can be done?" She asked herself that question now. The brooding might and doubtless would come afterward, and last all night; but before that Burton's mother must have food and fire and medicine. In her pocket-book were twenty-five dollars, eighteen of which must be paid that morning to their landlady. That would leave only seven. Stay — there was a five-dollar bill laid aside for the Woman's Missionary collection, due that week. She must borrow from it. The missionary collection could wait better than an old woman could wait for food and warmth. She felt that she could not eat again until help for the immediate needs of Burton's mother had started westward. Within two hours ten dollars had been exchanged for a money order, which was enclosed with a letter that read as follows: —

"DEAR SISTER JANE: Burton is absent on a business trip that will take several days. Meantime, your letter has come, and I hasten to send you ten dollars to meet immediate



needs. I wish I had more. Do you think you did well to keep your brother in ignorance of the true situation? It is true he is a young man, living on a salary, but you cannot think that we would not both have shared most gladly with you if we had understood. Of course he will write you as soon as he returns, and make some provision for your further help; but in the meantime I am sure you will see to it that his mother does not suffer.

“Your sister,

“EUNICE HOLLISTER LANDIS.”

## XIII.

### *ROSES AND THORNS.*

HAVING accomplished so much, Eunice felt that she had time to think, which she did to such purpose that before the next morning she believed that she fully understood the situation. This "Jane," of whom her husband could not speak without a tinge of bitterness, was a self-sufficient person who had undoubtedly resented Burton's assistance or even advice as regarded his mother; the probability was that she was jealous of him. This state of things would account for her utter silence, so long as silence was possible. She was ashamed to confess failure and appeal for aid, and had waited until driven to it by necessity. Go over it as often as she would, no other explanation than this was possible to Eunice. That Burton could have dreamed that his mother was or might be in straits, was an idea not to be tolerated for a moment. He was careless about money matters; he was even reckless, sometimes, as to his own expenditures — this she compelled herself to admit, assuring herself that she had heard before of business



men of great ability who seemed unable to be methodical over small personal matters; but to suppose him to have the faintest conception of such a state of things as this, was to insult him.

The problem now before them was, how to plan for the mother and sister? Undoubtedly Jane must have managed to lose the money left in her care; from the tone of the letter, she must have been trying for some time to support her mother by her needle. Mrs. Landis tried to measure her contempt for a nature so mean that it was unwilling to confess failure even to a brother! She filled her hours and wearied her brain with rows of figures, trying to calculate just what sum they could spare weekly to the mother. It ought to be a definite sum sent systematically; nothing less than that could satisfy honor, to say nothing of love. She foresaw endless difficulties in getting Burton to be systematic, and in getting him to control his tastes and whims so as to have the wherewith to send; unless, indeed, this revelation should have the effect of rousing him to rigid self-sacrifice for his mother's sake. She dwelt over this last hope until she felt sure of it, and was impatient for his return. Then, womanlike, she began as soon as he was in the house, before he had had time to rest or refresh himself with breakfast. Still, it was he who opened the way.



“Were there no letters, darling?” he called out from the dressing room. “I waited at the telegraph office yesterday for two hours, expecting every minute some word from or about Dunning. I wonder what has become of the scamp?”

Eunice came to the door of the dressing room. “There was but one letter, Burton, but that was very important. It was from your sister.”

“From Jane!” He turned from the mirror and a refractory necktie to look his astonishment. “How do you know it is from Jane?”

“I opened it, Burton, as you directed. Of course I could not know but it was from your Mr. Dunning. It brought bad news. They are in trouble, Burton, your mother and sister. They have neither food nor coal; and your mother will not have a doctor, though she is ill, because they cannot pay his bill.” She felt that she was being cruel; but her husband had bought a ten-dollar bag on the last stages of his journey, in which to pack a few trifles that had accumulated, because he could not be “bothered with carrying them.” It seemed to her that plain language was necessary. But she made haste with her touch of balm.

“Of course I sent them money at once. Ten dollars was all I had to spare; but that will meet immediate needs, and I assured her that you would give her further attention as soon as you returned.” He glared at her then out



of angry eyes that she thought were frightened ones for his mother.

“You sent money to Jane!” Those were his words.

“Of course, Burton, without an hour’s delay. She has it by this time, and they surely have neighbors who would not let them suffer while they were waiting.”

“Then,” said Mr. Landis, flinging his necktie angrily on the dressing table, “I think you have been a consummate idiot. It is a piece of utter folly. Jane is a whining hypocrite, who has always thought that I ought to let her fold her hands and play lady, while I worked myself to death to take care of them. I know just what a tale of woe she can write; she ought to have been a novelist! I send money to my mother when I have any to spare, and I haven’t the least idea that they are in such a pitiful state as she has made you believe. If they are in trouble, Jane has herself to thank for it. There was enough money, if she hadn’t thrown it away.”

“How did she throw it away, Burton?” His wife’s voice was hard; his words and manner had not aroused her sympathy.

“Exactly as you would have done, I presume; in some respects you and Jane are alike.” Mr. Landis was still angry. “There was a drivelling creditor who could have waited an eternity and never have felt it, and who



couldn't have compelled my mother to pay him in any case ; but she and Jane insisted that he be paid then and there. Jane put her up to it ; I could have talked my mother into common sense if it had not been for Jane. So she paid him, and has taken the consequences. She richly deserves them. Now, thanks to you, she thinks she has found somebody whom she can bleed. You see if she won't be writing to you every three weeks that she has a toothache, or a pain in her little finger, or something, and has got behind. She is always getting behind, and always whining to me. I should think I would be the last person she would want to appeal to, when I reasoned with her by the hour as to the folly of her course. I have no patience with her ; besides — ”

His wife interrupted him. “ Burton, the breakfast bell has rung twice since you came ; everything will be cold.” Her voice had a note in it that was new to him. It recalled Mr. Landis to his senses.

“ Of course you thought you were doing right, little wife,” he said in his kindest manner ; “ I presume I should have done exactly the same if I had been here and could have got hold of the money. But it's confoundedly hard, all the same, especially just now when money is scarcer with me than usual.”

She made no reply, but held open the door for him to pass. He tried to draw her hand



through his arm as they went down the hall, but she held it back and appeared to be busy arranging her skirts. There were strangers at the breakfast table, with whom Mr. Landis entered into conversation, and his wife overheard one of them say, later, that he was a delightful conversationalist.

Breakfast over, he made his usual dash for his car, having time only to give his wife a very hasty farewell. Within the next hour there was brought to Eunice a bouquet of the rarest roses. Tied to the ribbon that confined them was a sealed note in her husband's hand. It read: "This is for regrets, darling. I was annoyed, and wearied, and I'm afraid was a bit cross. Let the sweet breath of the roses tell you how much I love you, and how surely I cannot mean anything but sweetness to you, however I may appear. We'll make it all up to-night, my dearest."

Eunice caught her breath; the roses seemed to choke her. They were very sweet, and they had been chosen by a lavish hand. They must have cost at least a dollar. And his mother had no coal!

She dressed, presently, and went out. She had some important shopping to attend to for her mother and Dorothy. Besides, the air of the room oppressed her. She must get away from her thoughts, and from the smell of those roses.



The thoughts followed her ; kept her steadily at work on an explanation of Jane's letter. She must try to fit her theories to what facts she had, and keep firmly in the background the haunting feeling that her theories were untenable.

She was delayed in her shopping, and was not sorry to find that she would not be able to return home for luncheon. Entirely strange surroundings fitted her present mood better than the familiar loneliness of her boarding-house. Her husband never lunched with her. She had an afternoon engagement that would take much time. At the Old Ladies' Home, miles away, was an old, old woman who lived from week to week on her visits. It came to the troubled heart like balm that at least she could comfort this old lady who was very near her final home. What if she were Burton's mother ! The word "mother" meant more to this young woman than it does to some.

With the thought of the old lady came the remembrance of an errand that must be done for her. She had been promised a spray of clove pinks, like those which grew in her mother's garden at home sixty years before, when she went out from that home, a bride. "I carried them in my hand that day, Mrs. Landis, a bunch of clove pinks. And I ain't seen one in seven years !"

Mrs. Landis had promised to bring some the next time she came ; and as she looked for a



florist she wondered, with a strange, unreasoning pain at her heart, what it felt like to have worn marriage vows for sixty years! She passed Harter's Floral Rooms, and went on to the next square. She did not let herself think why she did it, but she knew that her own roses came that morning from Harter's. She selected her modest spray of pinks, — the old lady would not expect many, — and as she gave her order the clerk surprised her by asking if he should charge them to the account.

"I have no account here," she said quickly, and was annoyed to feel that her face was flushing; she hated that word "account."

"I beg your pardon," said the clerk; "this is Mrs. Burton Landis, is it not? Your husband did us the honor to open an account with us some time ago. I thought it might save you trouble to add this little item to the bill."

Mrs. Landis rallied her dazed senses. "Is this McCallum's?" she asked, glancing about her; "I had not noticed where I was. But I will not trouble you to make so small a charge." Then she passed in the quarter due, and turned to go; but an irresistible impulse moved her, and she came back, trying to speak with ease.

"You mentioned a bill; have you Mr. Landis's bill made out? I might take it with me. Mr. Landis has been out of town for a few days, but he returned this morning, and will be looking up these little matters soon."



The clerk was courteous in the extreme. They could not think of troubling Mrs. Landis. Why, yes, they had the bill ready — were to send it out that day, in fact, in company with others. When she insisted, he ran rapidly through a file of bills, and gave her one bearing her husband's name. It was marked "Duplicate," and her recently acquired knowledge in these matters told her that that meant a second rendering.

She went out and walked three squares before she opened that paper and looked first at the sum and then at the items. Thirty-five dollars, and all for flowers! She had not known of a bill at any florist's. This at least must be a mistake. Could there be another Burton Landis in the city? But no; here was his middle name and the correct business address. And there were roses and pansies and lilies and all sweet and lovely blooms, with the dates affixed, and *very few of them indeed had ever come to her!*

A kind of faintness seized her, which yet was not faintness, but some strange feeling. She felt herself almost staggering. She summoned all her self-control, and told herself that she was faint for want of food; her breakfast that morning had been a mere pretence, and it was long past the luncheon hour. She must find a restaurant at once. In truth, she was quite near one, and made her way to the ladies' entrance. The room was nearly filled with



*"I saw her at the Schubert rehearsal the other night  
with Burton Landis."*





women. There seemed to be but one vacant seat at a table, where were two showily dressed women who stared a good deal and talked together in loud tones. She ordered a cup of bouillon with the feeling that she was chilled and must have something warm. While she waited, the conversation between the loud-voiced women continued.

“Who was that girl with the big hat and lots of plumes who flirted with the head waiter? Haven’t I seen her somewhere?”

“Of course you have. She is a clerk at Mc-Allister, Grainger and Co.’s. A bold piece as ever was! She would flirt with a stone pillar, I believe, if it was carved in the shape of a man.”

“She’s kind of pretty,” said the other, half apologetically.

“Yes, she is, especially when she’s fixed up; but so awfully bold! I saw her at the Schubert rehearsal the other night with Burton Landis, and she went on in a way that was just shocking. If she had been a daughter of mine, I declare I would have locked her up for a month!”

“You don’t say Burton Landis brought her to the rehearsal!”

“Oh, no, he didn’t bring her. He wasn’t there himself but a little while. But he came over and sat by her, and met her a good deal more than halfway, just as he always does.



Everybody knows Burton Landis. He is an awful flirt! Don't you remember how he used to carry on with that Johnson girl before she was married? and afterward, too, for that matter. And that Miss Merivale and he were so ridiculous together that people who didn't know him thought surely it was to be a match. Burton Landis can't help flirting, whether it is Miss Merivale or the daughter of his washerwoman who happens to be around. I must say I detest a married flirt, of all persons! They say he has married a nice, pretty wife, too; poor thing!"

Mrs. Landis's bouillon had been served, but she made no attempt to taste it, and the attention of one of the loud-voiced women was turned to her; she leaned over and offered her a bottle of salts of ammonia, with the information that it was "real good for a faint spell."

"This room is too close!" said the other woman, in a sudden burst of indignation. "It is enough to make a cat faint! I feel bad myself."

Then Mrs. Landis rose up and thanked her gently, and said she would get into the fresh air. While she paid her bill the head waiter was watching her closely. He followed her to the door, and asked if there was anything he could do for her. Should he call a carriage? Was she sure she felt well enough to go on? What car should he signal for her? He waited



*UNTO THE END.*



for the one she named, and helped her into it, and shook his head after it as it slipped away. He told the policeman on the corner that he had never seen a woman walk before who was as pale as that one.

## XIV.

### “IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.”

ONCE seated in the car she rode on and on, unmindful of her route, until the conductor asked if she meant to make the return trip with him. Then she left the car and walked, and *walked*. At first, slowly, then with the rapid step that had marked her girlhood, in the days when she took long walks with father and Dorothy. Was she thinking? Afterward she found that she was not sure what her mind was about during that long ride and walk. She knew that she went back to her girlhood, even to her happy childhood; but that she returned constantly to the florist's bill, and to the fact that roses and lilies and other choice blooms had been bought — of course for her — and not paid for. Then, on from that, from the flowers that had never reached her, to the vision of those terrible women with their stabbing tongues. At last she roused to the fact that she was in a part of the city utterly unknown to her, and that the carnations she still grasped were feeling the effect of



the long journey. She must inquire her way and get back to the Old Ladies' Home.

It took time and care to undo what had been done so heedlessly. She was miles away from the particular Home she sought. There were cross lines of cars to be taken, and to be waited for, and there were long walks between. When at last, after many delays, she reached the Home, it was after visiting hours; when she petitioned that she might be allowed just to leave her offering in person, the attendant shook his head, but he spoke cheerfully.

"You're too late, Mrs. Landis, the old lady died just about an hour ago."

Mrs. Landis was conscious of an instant thrill of thankfulness; one woman less to suffer; one more triumph over human woe.

"I am sorry about the pinks," she said gently, "she wanted them very much. Do you think they might be given to her now?"

"Oh, yes," he said, still very cheerfully, "put them on her coffin, you know. Or in her hand if you think she would like it better, though I don't suppose they care about such things now; maybe they do."

The matron heard that Mrs. Landis was in the house, and sent word that she would like to confer with her. Mrs. Landis represented the church to which the old lady belonged, and knew that she must force herself to listen to particulars and give directions.



It was late when she got away, and a long ride was before her. Her first thought when she was once more in a car, was that Burton would reach home first and be frightened over her absence; she had left no word for him. Then swiftly there followed a strange choking feeling, and thoughts that were new to her. What was she to say to her husband? Could she tell him about that bill for flowers? Would it be possible ever to tell him of those awful women with their hateful tongues? False tongues! Of course they were false; and yet — where had those flowers gone? Who had worn them? Had he possibly some poor old lady not yet gone to heaven to whom he sent Maréchal Niel roses and Easter lilies? But his mother was without food and coal! Perhaps — and then she resolutely put aside all conjecture and gave herself to the business of getting home.

There were delays again; one street car line had been blocked by a fire, and on the cross line there had been an accident. It was more than dusk when she applied her latch key at their own door. Mr. Landis, she felt, would have reason to be thoroughly frightened. The dinner bell was sounding through the halls as she entered. Since it was as late as that, perhaps Burton had come down to the parlor to wait there for her. She felt that she wanted this to be the case. She shrank from meeting



him quite alone ; she was not ready for it, yet. Deep in her heart was a consuming desire to get to their room and put away those roses before he came ; it seemed to her that their breath might strangle her. She paused at the parlor door. The room was vacant, but in the music room at the piano sat a woman, and a man was bending over her with more attention than the mere act of turning the music required. He was fastening a spray of roses on her dress ; she was looking up at him ; there was a language in the eyes of both that needed no interpreting. The man's eyes, especially, said volumes : regret, pain, repressed longing, what did they not convey ? Nor were words lacking. As the observer stood and gazed, having walked quite to the half-drawn portière that separated the two rooms, to make sure of her vision, the man said in tones throbbing with feeling : " Oh, Julia ! of all sad words of tongue or pen — ' " The woman put up her hand with a deprecating gesture and all her soul in her eyes, and said, " Burton, don't ! you are cruel ! "

And Mrs. Landis turned and fled from the room.

She went upstairs quietly, as though nothing had happened, laid aside her wraps, and standing before the mirror, mechanically smoothed her hair. Before this work was completed she crossed the room to the vase of roses, and gath-



ering the mass of blooms in her hands threw them into the grate, where a brisk fire was glowing. There was no excitement about the movement; she did no connected thinking about roses or anything else; she simply yielded to the feeling that the flowers were choking her and she must get rid of them; then she went back to the mirror and her hair.

Her husband came in swiftly and gave her an eager kiss.

"I'm awfully glad you have come, Eunice. I'll own to you that I was just a trifle worried, even though I boasted to Julia Merivale that there was no cause for fear, because when I chose a wife I chose one capable of being trusted with herself. Julia is downstairs waiting for you. She has been here for some time; Merivale was to call for her, but he hasn't come, and the dinner bell has rung. Will you go down ahead, dearest, and see about a seat for Julia at our table? What detained you so, Kitty? Where have you been?"

"To the Home," she said, "there was a block on the West Side line."

"I supposed it was something of that sort; but really, darling, you should not start out so late for a journey to the Home. One is always liable to have detentions on that route, and I don't quite fancy your being on the street so late, alone, despite my boastings. How is your old lady?"



"She is dead," said Eunice. They were in the hall now, and remarking that she would go down and attend to the seating of their guest, she passed him. Her husband looked after her admiringly. Her distinctly felt, yet indescribable change of manner, and the gravity accompanying it, now that he thought he knew their cause, were, he decided, exceedingly becoming to her. He spoke of it to Merivale later in the evening. "She is all heart," he said. "An old lady at the West Side Home who has been her special charge died to-day; see how it has affected her! She hasn't known the woman very long, and, so far as I can learn, she wasn't an especially prepossessing old person, but people of a sympathetic nature respond to the slightest touch. I confess I admire it in them."—"That is to say you admire your wife," replied Merivale, laughing, "and are prepared to indorse whatever she says or does or feels. You are a married lover, Landis. When Jule is in cynical mood her favorite name for you two is The Turtle Doves."

The grave and quiet manner which Mr. Landis believed he approved, continued through the evening. The Merivales stayed late, and they and their host were merry together, but Mrs. Landis, who remained with the circle, impressed them all as not of it. After their guests were gone, her husband essayed to comfort her.



“I wouldn’t feel sad about the old lady, darling, there is no question but that she is better off.” His wife turned toward him with a look of inquiry that he did not notice. There was but one old lady to her — his mother — needing food and care. He went on in lofty strain: —

“I have often tried to imagine what the first glimpse of heaven must be like to poor, worn-out lives like hers, who have lost all their earthly treasures and ambitions, and been simply waiting. It must be a glorious moment for them when they change worlds.”

His wife was tempted to ask him if he thought that his mother was “simply waiting” for that glorious moment, but she did not. She could not talk. In utmost quiet she made ready for rest, receiving passively her husband’s caresses, and making no reply when he told her that Julia had laughed at him for being anxious over her absence, assuring him that she saw through his pretence of confidence, and knew that he was burning with anxiety all the while. Finally he told her to go to sleep and get rested as fast as possible; he had a charming surprise for her to-morrow, and wanted her to look her loveliest in its honor. She lay perfectly still beside him with closed eyes, until assured by his breathing that he was sound asleep. Then she rose up softly, slipped into the wrapper that she had laid at hand, and



went on tip-toe into their dressing-room, closing and locking the door behind her. The gas turned low in the hall made a vision of shadows in the room, and enabled her to find and drop into the one chair that it contained. She was alone at last, where she could let the pent-up torrent of thought rush in upon her. Certain hard facts stared her in the face, nor was there any use in trying longer to gloss them over or shrink from their conclusions. She was the wife of a man in whose character she had been deceived. It was not simply that he had been born, apparently, without any conscience as regarded the use of money, or that he had cultivated a faculty that enabled him to appropriate freely and cheerfully that which belonged to others, for his own fancies—not needs—when his mother was suffering for the necessities of life; the poor young wife who bowed her head over her clasped hands knew that there were lower depths than this. Those awful women! what had they said? and what left unsaid that glances and exclamations emphasized for them?

With that question came a momentary gleam of self-scorn. Had she sunk so low that she gave heed to the tongues of strangers who talked loud enough to be overheard in a public eating-house, and maligned the character of her husband! Ah, but her own eyes, her own ears! What had his looks said when he bent over



Julia Merivale? What had he meant when he quoted in tones that throbbed with suppressed feeling, "Of all sad words of tongue or pen!" And he had pinned roses to the breast of that woman — *her* roses! And oh! those flowers! That long list of costly hot-house blooms. Where had they gone? How many of them had he pinned in place? The poor wife's frame shook with agony, though her lips made no sound. Other awful questions confronted her. What was to be done? What *could* be done? Was it possible for her to continue the wife of such a man? "Until death do you part;" she could hear her father's voice repeating the solemn pledge. Had her father understood, *her father*, the man who gave himself daily for others and counted it joy to be permitted to do so, the man who believed in honor and integrity as he believed in God, would he not rather have buried her than have married her to a man who could be false to his own mother? Ay, and false to her, his wife! Who but a false man could have spoken the words she had heard that evening? What eyes but false ones could have looked at other woman than his wife as he had looked at Julia Merivale that evening? Could she live on forever with a man who, whatever he might have been about in the past, knew now that his marriage was a mistake, and longed daily for the voice and the touch of another



woman? Ah, she could not bear it! she would not! she would go at once to her childhood's home and bury her disgraced head in her mother's breast and weep her life away. Oh, if she only could! If she could die and be buried, quietly, like that old woman who had that day "exchanged worlds." Then he could go to his Julia without public disgrace, and that which but for her "might have been," could be. It was not simply the old who had lost all their earthly treasure! "And forsaking all others cleave only to him;" the solemn roll of the marriage service seemed to fill the room. She could hear her own sustained tones, which they had told her seemed to ring through the hushed church when she said "I do." How glad she had been to promise! *Could* she go home to mother and father and hide away from him forever? Was she to be false to marriage pledges because she had been deceived? Had the promise meant that she was to cleave to him so long as the sun shone and her heart was satisfied? "In joy and in sorrow, in sunshine and in darkness"—she had long known word for word her father's form of the marriage service—what was she that she could cast off vows like these because her heart was ashes?

Over and over, through the interminable hours of that awful night, went this dialogue between a heart and a conscience. "Ought



I?" on the one side, "I cannot!" on the other.

She settled it irrevocably. She would fly that night. She could not wait until morning, she could not run the risk of meeting him again. She must put miles between them before another morning dawned. No matter what the amazed world said, no matter whose heart was broken, no other course was possible to her. See his face again, hear his voice she could not. Never mind marriage vows: "until death do you part" they had read. Well, let them, he was dead—the man whom she had married—this that was left was but an awful caricature of him—she was a widow. She had a right to go home with her widowed heart and bury it among those who had been true to her ever since she drew her first breath. No sooner was it settled than that solemn "OUGHT I?" which is stronger than life or pain or death itself to souls like hers, seemed to take visible shape, and come and stand like a grave angel beside her, waiting.

She slipped away from her chair and was on her knees, uttering no word, making no sound, yet knowing herself to be in the presence of God. There came to her a realizing sense of the fact that she was a child of God. And this was her hour of mortal pain; if ever child needed the Father's voice, she needed it now.

The gray dawn of another morning was at



the door ; there was a flush in the east giving sure promise of coming sunshine. Mrs. Landis saw it from the window as she passed. She slipped off her wrapper and laid herself very gently beside her sleeping husband. Her face was the face of one over whom had swept a storm making wrecks, but followed by a calm.

## XV.

### *WHAT'S IN A NAME?*

“DON'T forget the roses, Ben dear.”  
“Ben never forgets roses,” said his sister. “If it were bread, for instance, we might wait in vain, but roses!”

The handsome boy thus traduced gave a swift smiling glance toward his sister that said as plainly as words that he was so sure of his place in her estimation that he could afford to smile at her thrusts, then let his eyes travel back to the object that had held them, and spoke his thought.

“Father is the finest-looking man on this square.” It was at that moment that the man he had been watching turned with a wave of the hand for his children and a lifted hat for their mother as he disappeared within his car.

“That is a very mild statement, Ben; mother and I think he is the handsomest man in this city—don't we, mother?” The mother smiled on them both, and the son added: “Or in any



city. While you are about it, why not challenge the world? I shouldn't be afraid."

They were standing on the piazza of their own home. It was surrounded by choice grounds in what had once been the suburbs of the city, but was now counted as one of its choicest corners. The persons were Mrs. Burton Landis and her daughter and son.

The years had not touched Eunice Landis lightly. She looked fully her age, and yet was, as strangers and acquaintances alike agreed, a very handsome woman. Her children admired her as unstintedly as they did their father, and Burton Landis himself was given to expressing his views.

"Upon my word, Kitty, I knew I married a pretty girl; but I'll own that I hadn't the least idea she would develop into the magnificent woman that she has! You are simply queenly, Eunice. I am consumed with vanity whenever I walk the streets by your side, and watch strangers turning to look after you."

When her children praised her, Mrs. Landis sometimes blushed as she laughed, and called them foolish; and always she felt a warm, grateful glow at her heart, as a true mother must when her children rise up to honor her, even though it be only physical beauty they are noting. For her husband she had only a quiet smile, and the look on her face might have been called indifferent. Mr.



Landis recognized it, but was not disturbed. "I never knew a woman so indifferent to admiration as your mother," he would say to his daughter, on occasion; "but it is extremely taking, and you would do well to copy her in that, as in everything else. Your mother is unique, my dear. My old friend Farnsworth said the other day that she was the most remarkable woman of his acquaintance; and Farnsworth is a judge of women — he knows all who are worth knowing."

Mother and daughter waited until Ben had signalled his car, which was going in an opposite direction from his father's, and received from him a bow and smile that were as much like his father's as he could make them; then they turned to enter the house, with their arms twined about each other's waists, more after the fashion of girl friends than of mother and daughter. They two were very intimate.

"Father is so courteous to you," said the daughter, as they moved slowly down the wide hall. "I like to see him look back and lift his hat to you, just as he must have done when you were first married. Most men who have been married for more than twenty years seem to forget all about such things. Father must have been charming as a young man, wasn't he?"

"What do you suppose I thought about it, daughter?"



The daughter laughed. "Of course you thought he was perfect, as he must have been. You are so silent about those first years, mother — like a bride who keeps her sweet little secrets all to herself. I don't think I shall be so. If ever I marry, and I don't see how I ever can, because I am afraid there are no men left in the world like father — but if ever I find one, I'm afraid I shall talk about him all the while, as Mrs. Benham does, for instance." She laughed merrily over the memory of an effusive acquaintance, and assured her mother that after all she was glad she was not like Mrs. Benham. Then she broke off to say: —

"There is going to be one man like father; what a pity that I cannot marry him! Don't you think Ben grows like him, mother?"

Mrs. Landis withdrew her arm suddenly from her daughter's waist and bent down, as if in search of something. The movement hid her face for a moment from view. Then she said, giving over the search for the pin that was not there, "I see radical differences in them, daughter, that are more strongly marked each day."

"Oh, of course," said the daughter, with a pretty toss of her head, "nobody can be quite like father to you, not even Ben; but I think there is a very striking resemblance. If I could only have looked as much like you, instead of being almost a counterpart of Aunt



Dorothy! Not that it isn't nice to be like Aunt Dorothy; but then, as father says, what is she compared to you? I think it is lovely in father to admire you so much, and not be afraid to have people know it."

"What is the matter with the child this morning?" asked Mrs. Landis, holding her off at arm's length and pretending a critical survey, "she finds it impossible to get away from personalities, and as for flattery! your father and I are in danger of being submerged in it." Grace Landis laughed and kissed her mother on her cheeks, on her chin, on her hair, even on her nose — a form of caress that she had learned from her father, — before she danced away to her morning duties.

Mrs. Landis stopped at the door of her own room and stood quite still, conscious that her heart was beating faster than was natural, and realizing with a strange feeling of disappointment that it had for some reason been stirred to its depths that morning. She had supposed her mask of self-control too perfect to be penetrated by trifles. Yet was it a trifle to be told that her boy was strikingly like his father?

Mrs. Landis's acquaintances believed her a woman to be not only admired, but envied. Her handsome face was unmarred by wrinkles, and her abundant brown hair had as yet no threads of gray. She might look her age, but she looked it well. She was the mistress of a



lovely home, with a husband who delighted in her, and children who almost bowed down to her in worship; and they were themselves as nearly perfect as children could be. Without a care or an anxiety in the world, why should not Mrs. Landis be an enviable woman? Why did the lines of some lives fall in such absolutely lovely places, while other lives were seamed and scarred by constant trials? Problems like these filled the minds of some of her friends. When she was challenged by the more intimate as to the impossibility of her knowing anything about the trials of life, she smiled and answered cheerfully, yet with unerring sympathy, and kept her own counsel.

It was nearly twenty years since the night that she had held vigil with her heart and conscience, and the conscience had come off victor. On that night she had entered into compact with her will, her conscience bearing her witness. She was Burton Landis's wife, pledged in the sight of God and men to cleave to him until death parted them, and she would be true to her pledge. Respect was dead, love was dead, in the sense that she had meant it when she made the pledge; but duty and honor lived. She would be to him everything that she could. She would count his honor dearer to her than her own life; she would guard it with jealous care. She would, as far as was within human power, shield him from stabbing tongues, and



keep him as much as in her lay from giving occasion for the stabs. She had been faithful. The years had passed, and youth with its dreams and hopes was over. During their passage, Mrs. Landis had had experiences, some of which, had she been able to look ahead and foresee them, she would have felt sure that she could not endure, and live. Yet she lived; and though her married life was not in any sense what, at its dawning, she had believed it would be, she had not been, in the common acceptance of that term, an unhappy woman. No one who lives in daily peace with his conscience, and in the recognized presence of God as his Father, can be unhappy. Some, not all, of the joys of motherhood had been hers. There cannot be perfect joy in motherhood, unless the two natures, husband and wife, are so blended that they seem almost one. Yet Mrs. Landis thanked God daily that he had given to her a daughter and a son. It was but a few months after that night vigil that the daughter came. And then soon afterward had come up the momentous question of a name for the fair newcomer. Mr. Landis had at least three favorites, all of which he was resolved his daughter should bear. While he was trying to make himself willing to compromise and drop one of them, the voice of the mother was heard, low, but assured. "Her name is Grace."

"Why, Eunice," came from her husband



in expostulation, "you cannot surely mean that! It is not in either family, and it is certainly not pretty enough in itself to be chosen. It always had a lugubrious sound to me, as when one speaks of something he has had grace enough to endure, instead of speaking of a crowning blessing. I wouldn't name a pet cat 'Grace'! If you had said 'Dorothy,' I wouldn't have been surprised, and I should be almost willing for that; only I don't like 'Dolly' as a nickname for my daughter, and she would be sure to be called that. Your mother would like Eunice; but that is so wretchedly old-fashioned! besides, we don't want to repeat names in our family; I never liked that. The more I think of it, the more I incline to Elinore; it is a stately name, and one not tossed about in common use. Elinore Landis sounds extremely well. I think it shall be that. I am sure you will like it, dearest."

Mrs. Landis's voice gathered firmness. She was still very weak, but there was decision in the tones.

"Burton, her name is *Grace*. I want that, and no other."

Mrs. Landis was but just come back from the very verge of the other country,—indeed, it had been thought at one time that she had slipped away to it,—and the head nurse was still a potent force in the house. She spoke then with authority.



“Mrs. Landis must not talk, and she must not be worried by trifles. If a woman has any rights in this world, I should think she ought to have a right to name her own baby!”

Mrs. Landis had her rights, and the baby's name was Grace Hollister Landis. Her husband told Dr. Hollister that it was an indication of his wife's weak condition that she clung obstinately to that stupid name; he had never before known her to be so persistent. It almost seemed like obstinacy even to her mother. She could not be told, none of them could ever be told, that the name was to Eunice a monument of the grace that had kept her through those awful weeks, when everything that she held dear in life seemed to have been stripped from her.

When her boy was born, she said to her husband, speaking gently, as one who knew that she had insisted upon something for which she could not give a reason, “You may give him any name you choose, Burton; I had my way with the little girl.” Mr. Landis laughed and declared that he had no pet name for boys; he supposed it would not do to call him Elinore. But he named and renamed him, something new each week, until the perplexed family, being never certain which was in the ascendency, confined themselves to “Baby.” When he was nearly a year old, he had still no definite name. Once, Mr. Landis asked his wife



if she would like to call the boy Burton. She had waited so long before replying, that he thought she had not heard him. Then she said, "There must not be another Burton Landis." He thought he understood, and bent to kiss her as he said that he had felt in that way about the name Eunice. Just after that there came to them a sudden experience of terror. Baby, who had been the healthiest and happiest of babies, fell ill, and lay, one day, so near the borderland between worlds that everybody but Eunice lost hope. She clung, as mothers will.

"His mother simply would not let him go," said Dr. Porter to the father, the morning that he pronounced the baby out of danger. "She held on, and worked, and believed, after the rest of us had given up. She is a wonderful woman."

"She is all that," said the happy father; "trust her for holding on, when she makes up her mind to it."

When Eunice begged for another call from the doctor that night, he said he was afraid he couldn't get around there again, since there was really no occasion. He had neglected certain patients already, in favor of that precious atom, and must now atone.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," he added, as he saw the shadow of anxiety on her face, "I'll send my assistant round this evening to see



that everything is going on as well as I know it will be. Did you know I had treated myself to another assistant? A splendid fellow! knows as much about medicine this minute as half the regular practitioners. I am proud of him, and expect to be prouder; I should like you to know him, he has a career before him."

Mrs. Landis, who could not feel that she cared what the assistant had before him, was compelled to be content with the promise of his coming. He came, at the appointed moment.

"The young man from Dr. Porter's," was the way the nurse announced him, and the mother, glancing up quickly, had exclaimed, her face lighting with recognition and pleasure, "Ben Kendall!"

Afterward, she said it was surprising that she had recognized him. She certainly had never known a few years to make such changes in a person.

"Ben was always a fine-looking boy," she wrote to Dorothy. "Don't you remember we used to say he would be a good-looking man if he ever learned what to do with his feet and hands? You used to add that he never would; but he has, he isn't in the least awkward. I think he has forgotten all about his hands and feet, and is absorbed in his work. Isn't it grand that he is making a success of life, as father always prophesied that he would? We are glad that he is with Dr. Porter, who stands



quite at the head of his profession. Baby takes to Ben wonderfully, and instead of being awkward and half ashamed of it, as so young a man might be, he is just as interested in the little fellow as he can be. Nurse says he stops his carriage on the street almost every day, and has a frolic with him. Tell father we shall remember that Ben is his protégé, and shall try to make our house a home for him."

## XVI.

### *THE PASSING YEARS.*

**A**MONG those much interested in Dr. Porter's assistant was Mr. Landis. He distinctly remembered Ben Kendall, and could not be sufficiently surprised over his transformation.

"Who would have supposed that that country rose-grower would ever have attained to so much style!" he said to Eunice. "What a difference clothes make, to be sure!"

"And brains," said Eunice, quietly.

"Oh, my dear, it won't do to give all the credit to those. I presume the fellow had brains back there in the country; but see what a few years of city life and the wearing of clothes made by a city tailor have done for him! It is culture, I tell you, polish. He has taken to it readily, I will admit, faster than some would. What a capital advertisement of the advantages of city life his two photographs would make: one taken in the rig he wore that day when I bought his roses in the wild hope of getting them, somehow, to you,



and the other taken yesterday, for instance! Why wouldn't it be a good scheme to get up some kind of a school for turning out that sort of thing, and advertise with photographs? The 'Look-on-this-picture-and-then-on-that' style, you know. You and I could do it capitably. You could take the boys and I would look after the girls. I could lay on the culture, I am sure, and it would be much more interesting than the mercantile business."

The patient smile on his wife's face had its pathetic side, or would have had, for one who understood. It was her way of responding to much of Mr. Landis's conversation, and had been adopted after careful thought. Suddenly came a new idea.

"Eunice, let us name the boy Ben Kendall. It is a sort of family name; my great grandmother was a Kendall, and your grandfather was Benjamin, was he not? That's a capital idea. Benjamin Kendall Landis isn't bad at all. The Landis redeems it from commonness, you see. Porter says Dr. Ben Kendall has a brilliant future before him; so our little chap may be proud, some day, of bearing his name. In any case, it amuses me to call the boy after a youthful admirer of his mother; it is quite romantic. Moreover, I have a fancy for seeing how soon and how far our little fellow will outstrip the other, who has nearly a quarter of a century the start. Beginning the race with



such a mother, and, begging your pardon for the necessary egotism, such a father as we have been able to give him, and his earliest days being spent in an atmosphere of culture, it will be an excellent study in heredity and environment, and all that sort of thing, to watch the progress of the two. Let's do it, Eunice."

Mrs. Landis had no objection to make. Her father would like it that she had remembered her grandfather, and he was, besides, deeply interested in and proud of his protégé, Ben Kendall; and Ben himself could not fail to be pleased with the courtesy. Scarcely a remembrance of that episode of folly lingered in the matron's mind. She was a married woman, who felt, at times, as though she were much more than middle-aged and had been married for an eternity; and Ben Kendall was the playmate of her long-ago childhood, in whom she had a friendly interest. So it came to pass that Eunice's boy was named Benjamin Kendall Landis.

The years went by, and Mrs. Landis adhered steadily to the rôle that she had laid out for herself. She was called by lookers-on a devoted wife. While the age of her daughter Grace was still told by weeks that numbered very few, she began to appear in public with her husband. He was not exacting, and would cheerfully have excused her from certain society



functions, but she quietly declined to be excused. Even her mother, who was spending a few weeks with her, was troubled by her persistence.

“I would not go out to-night, if I were you, Eunice,” she said on one occasion. “It is raining hard, and Burton is quite willing to excuse you. He said that he thought you would be imprudent in going. Remember you have your baby to think of now, as well as yourself.”

But Eunice had only smiled, and said that she was not afraid of rain, and that baby would do very well indeed because she had a dear grandmother, and that she had her husband to think of, as well as her child. “I used to say,” she added, “that if ever I married and had children, I should never sink the wife in the mother, as I saw some women doing; so I must be true to my early convictions.”

It was on that evening that the mother wrote in her letter to Dr. Hollister: “I don’t half understand Eunice, I find. Had you imagined that she would ever grow very fond of society? Yet the taste seems to be gaining upon her, which is strange just now, of all times. She has gone out to-night, though the storm is severe, and even the doctor advised against it. I suppose she is afraid Burton will feel deserted; but he seems very reasonable, and was anxious that she should not expose



herself. It cannot be that our Eunice is going to develop into a society woman!"

In this way was Eunice misunderstood. It is possible that Miss Julia Merivale approached the nearest to a solution of her method.

"Your wife keeps close guard over us, doesn't she?" that young woman said to Burton Landis on the evening in question, as he stood by her side at the piano. "Do you suppose she is afraid to trust us together?"

Mr. Landis laughed at what he thought was a playful speech, as he said: "Indeed not! there is not a thread of jealousy in my wife's composition. At the same time, I must not go too far in proving that to *you*," he added, bending lower and dropping his voice. "It would be perfectly safe so far as she is concerned, but, unfortunately, I cannot feel so comfortably sure of myself."

It was one of those fine-sounding nothings which Burton Landis could not keep from saying to women who invited them, and his dangerous eyes were saying more than his words. Society garbage hunters were present, and were watching. There were glances of appreciation exchanged, and eyes telegraphed in the direction of the pair at the piano. There was another on the watch, who came toward them at the moment, self-possessed and gentle.

"Burton, I must claim your help. I have caught my chain in this lace and can do noth-



ing with it. Pardon the interruption to the music, Miss Merivale; this chain, which is always getting us both into trouble, was of his own selection."

Mr. Landis had turned toward her promptly, not in the least disturbed by the interruption; not, indeed, aware that anything had been interrupted. His wife was beginning to understand him better, and the understanding increased as the years went by. She grew into the knowledge that the fine words he murmured and the fine glances with which they were accompanied, were, as he had said of his friend Farnsworth's, "mere nothings." She came to understand that it was not Miss Merivale who created her husband's temptations, but his ability as an actor and his desire to exercise his power. He delighted to pose, to express regret, sorrow, unutterable pain, with his fine eyes and sympathetic voice. Miss Merivale was more interesting than other young women because, being of the same cast of mind with himself, she could meet him halfway. When Mrs. Landis became aware of all this, it both lessened and added to her pain, if such a paradox may be allowed. Less dangerous immediate results were to be feared perhaps, but— Was it evidence of greater moral weakness, in that there was not even an intense passion for one human being, to plead in excuse?



The years had brought in their train other minor sorrows: everything had become minor as compared with that great trouble which opened her eyes to the rottenness of the staff on which she had thought to lean. Mr. Landis's mother and sister had been adopted by his wife as a responsibility. Steadily she had resisted all his arguments about being too poor to send them money regularly; nothing less than a definite sum, however small, sent with the regularity of the recurring weeks, would satisfy her. She made estimates on paper, calculating rigidly, lopping off here and there an indulgence, and setting the results before his vexed eyes; made him see the possibilities, and gave him no rest until she had conquered. It required rigid economy on her part and a close surveillance of her husband to win him to economies that he hated, but she succeeded. The sum sent regularly was so small that it humiliated the sender, but she recognized and accepted the fact that since her husband was — what he was, it could not be more. "Jane" was humble and grateful. There came a time when she wrote that she had steady work again and regular pay, and if Burton was hard-pressed she could keep mother fairly comfortable now, without the help he gave. Burton had rejoiced over this prospective release, but the mother never had to get on without his pittance.



A few weeks after that brave letter was written, Jane fell ill again, and this time, without long delay, she died; and Burton Landis was all but prostrated by grief. To have seen and heard him, and not to have known him as well as his wife did, would have been to feel sure that more devoted brother never lived. At first he was for securing, without delay, a burial plot in the most expensive cemetery in the city, and transporting the clay of his beloved sister thither. What really deterred him was a second thought to the effect that it would sound far better to speak of her as being laid to rest beside his father in the family burial place. He made a swift journey West, lavished upon the senseless clay all the attention that she had done without through the years, and brought his mother back with him. This last was by his wife's directions. She had looked upon it as a matter of course. Thereafter, during the five and a half years that the old lady lived, she was made the centre of Burton Landis's home. Her son lavished constant and costly gifts upon her, and was always courteous and attentive, as it was his nature to be. Eunice had not known the little old lady for a week before she came to understand not only her character but that of her husband, much better than before. It was plain that she had been a weak and over-indulgent mother to the son who was her idol. She had poured out the wealth of herself upon him,



naming it love, until she had literally trained him to think of himself, plan for himself, live for himself. She had steadily carried out this policy through the years.

“Poor Jane,” she said to Eunice, “always did the best she could; I have no fault to find with her, she was good to me in her way, but she was never like Burton; of course she could not help that, poor girl, but Burton was always my idol. You can see for yourself that there is nobody in the world quite like him.”

The younger woman, listening with that tender patience which large natures always give to the old, was conscious of an inner self which said to her that if Burton Landis had proved to be the man she thought he was when she became his wife, she could have bowed down before this mother and almost worshipped her for loving him so. As it was, she was pitiful and tender. She did what she could conscientiously, to sustain the lovely fiction, and her husband did his share royally. He never left the house or entered it without hurrying to kiss his mother. He kept her room a floral paradise, regardless of expense, and brought her daily choice dainties that she must not eat. When she died, he was prevented only by stern figures pressed upon him by his wife from ordering for her the most costly casket that the willing undertaker could furnish. He accused Eunice of hard-heartedness in begrudg-



ing a man who had lost his *mother* the pitiful solace of honoring her dust. Eunice did not smile, she by no means sneered. Instead, she laid her hand gently on his arm for a moment and said softly, "Poor Burton," but she had her way. When they came back from the grave to the mother's room, the brightest and loveliest one in their home, Mr. Landis threw himself upon the deserted couch and groaned in an agony of desolation. That evening, by way of consolation, he went to a famous opera; and since Eunice could not go and it was a pity to have the other ticket wasted, he took the young typewriter at the store, because the little creature never went anywhere, and he was sure that his mother would be glad to see him trying to do for others. Mrs. Landis sat at home with her children and thought her life all over, almost from the beginning. A new leaf to be turned in it now. For more than five years she had been the daily companion of a woman who idolized her son and tolerated his wife, who had made a second idol of her grandson, Ben Kendall Landis, and almost disliked her granddaughter. This marked and utterly unreasonable adoration of one child at the expense of the other had been a constant source of anxiety to the mother. She sat that evening in a great calm. She was almost awe-stricken. Her husband's mother was not an old woman; she had married when an undisciplined child; she



might have lived until her grandchildren had grown to womanhood and manhood and been permanently injured by her marked infatuation and aversion. Their mother had been troubled over it, and God had answered. The grandmother had gone away!

"You are like Jane," the old lady had said to her but the day before she died. "You are a good manager; Jane always was, she managed me. She did the best she could, and I dare say you have done the same. I don't complain of either of you. You are not to blame because you couldn't be like my precious boy."

The "precious boy" had gone down on his knees beside her, and with his head on her pillow had murmured, "Oh, mother! how can I ever live without you?" And he had been willing that she should live, if she could, without food or warmth! The mother had forgotten it; the wife could not.

The home that Mr. Landis grew prouder of each year had been Dr. Hollister's surprise to them. A bachelor brother of his, who had died when Eunice was a baby, had left his modest thousands in trust for her with the proviso that she was not to know it until she was twenty-five. By the advice of a far-seeing business friend Dr. Hollister had invested the money in suburban lots in the very city which was, years later, his daughter's home. When Eunice's twenty-fifth birthday came, and Bur-



ton Landis in due course became aware of the legacy and the suburban lots, he smiled a superior smile, and said that he would not have accepted those lots for a gift, provided he had to pay the taxes; and he told Eunice that her father had been cheated, as all clergymen were who dabbled in business, and trusted people because they were officers in a church. Yet, in the near future, three of those same lots sold for sums that enabled them to build on the remaining ones a house after Eunice's own heart, and Burton Landis came to admire their corner as he did no other in the city. So it came to pass that they had a home which was in all outward respects, certainly, everything that could be desired.

## XVII.

### *“YOUR FATHER.”*

**B**URTON LANDIS had not fulfilled the hopes of his youth and become a member of the great firm of McAllison, Grainger & Co.; he was still a favorite clerk. His wife had long ago ceased to wish for him any higher position. Whenever, in one of his restless moods, he talked about “striking out for himself” and making a fortune as other men, with much less talent than he, were doing every day, she felt that ruin stared them in the face, and had no peace until the mood passed. No business calamity could seem much greater to her than one that would make Burton Landis his own master. Yet he was talented, and the chiefs of the great business house to which he belonged were aware of it. They did not want his vote in the firm; they preferred to pay him a salary and to direct his work; but they felt that they could afford to be liberal, and his salary had been advanced several times until he was receiving three thousand dollars a year. That sum, with no rent to pay, and his

wife with her inevitable pencil and rows of figures on guard, kept him within bounds; or at least Mrs. Landis hoped that it did.

Other changes had ensued. Ben Kendall had long ceased to be "Ben Kendall" to even his earliest acquaintances. The hard-headed farmers who had known him as a child, and spoken with sovereign contempt of his "posies" and "notions," even down to "Uncle Jared" himself, delighted to say "Dr. Kendall," and to report to one another with ill-subdued pride his remarkable success in dealing with this or that difficult case.

It became increasingly apparent that Dr. Porter, who stood easily at the head of his profession, had faith in Dr. Kendall, and his faith grew apace. As he grew older and meditated retiring, the smile of satisfaction on his face, when certain of his old friends sent for "the young Doctor," was pleasant to see. Before he was quite ready to retire, he died, leaving his good-will and blessing to the man whose growing popularity he had watched with unselfish interest. Speedily, while still a comparatively young man, Dr. Kendall shot into prominence and began to be quoted as an authority. Long before that time he had become Mr. Landis's family physician, and the confidential friend, not only of his namesake, but of Grace Landis as well. No one but their mother knew with what satisfaction she watched this growing intimacy



on the part of her children, nor understood the thrill of joy with which she heard her son more and more frequently announce that he meant to "ask Dr. Kendall about that." She came to understand that what was left to Dr. Kendall's judgment was in safe hands, and to rejoice unspeakably in the realization that her son and daughter trusted him.

Thus much of the history of the passing years seemed necessary in order to the understanding of Eunice Landis's life-story.

She sat in the library with a bit of sewing, while her husband, his day's work at the store completed, lounged in his favorite spot, a wide low window seat upholstered luxuriantly and piled high with cushions. The wide sash window out of which he gazed showed him at the moment a lovely picture. His daughter Grace, in white dress and with pale pink ribbons at her waist and neck, was moving among the flowers gathering here and there a rose that was waiting to be plucked.

A handsome man was Mr. Landis in other than his children's eyes. He had grown just portly enough to round out his fine figure well, and his curly brown hair had hardly begun to be touched with gray. His wife, looking at him thoughtfully, realized afresh that the world was justified in its judgment that he was a "splendid-looking man." But there was, this evening, a new expression on his face as he

watched his daughter. His wife did not understand what it portended, and was anxious.

"It is a fact, I declare," he said at last, and an amused smile played about his lips; "I had not realized it. Can you and I be growing old, Kitty?"

Eunice smiled. "We are certainly older than we were," she said quietly.

"It must be so," he answered, still watching his daughter. "One realizes it when he looks at the child. She is positively grown up! What an extraordinary idea, *my* daughter!" It was characteristic of Mr. Landis that he always said "my" instead of "our" in speaking of his children, or his house. "I see now what McAllison meant. He seemed to me to be talking like an idiot; but upon my word, there is truth in his remarks! I feel like congratulating him on being a man of discernment and taste."

Mrs. Landis made a distinct pause with her needle and felt a tightening of her muscles, like a warrior whose nerves were forewarning him of a battle and bidding him be ready. But she held her voice to quietness and almost indifference.

"What has he been saying?"

"Oh, he got off a quantity of stuff; high pressure compliment, you know. It seems he has seen the child somewhere, and been evidently fascinated. Applied to a mere child, as



I fancied Grace was, it sounded like the ravings of a lunatic; but now that I look at her and realize that she has become a young woman, I am enlightened. McAllison is undoubtedly struck; I never heard him go on so before; and really I don't wonder, now that my eyes are opened. She is very graceful, isn't she? Look at her now, among the roses; lilies would suit her style better."

Mrs. Landis did not look at her daughter; she was not giving heed to her husband's comments. "That old man!" she had exclaimed, dismay in her voice, and a nameless terror in her heart.

"'Old man!'" he repeated when at last it suited him to turn his thoughts from his daughter, "of course not. I'm talking about Bob McAllison, the son and heir. There isn't the least danger of the old man's marrying again; he is one of those constant old fellows who bury their hearts in the graves of their first wives. He is growing old remarkably fast, too. I shouldn't wonder if Bob would come into his inheritance before long, and there isn't a finer fortune in this city than will come to him. Upon my word, I wonder the thought never occurred to me. It all comes of forgetting the passage of time and fancying my daughter still a baby. Yet she is nearly as old as you were when I first discovered you, isn't she? Doesn't it seem ridiculous! Mrs.

Landis, you may ride in your carriage yet ; anyway in your daughter's carriage, if she has captivated young McAllison, and it certainly looks like it. He asked permission to call. I told him Mrs. Landis would be glad to see him. I was dolt enough not to realize for a moment that the child was old enough to receive calls on her own account."

"She does not receive calls from gentlemen, Burton ; your first idea was the correct one. Grace is still a child, and has no other thought about herself. I am very glad that it is so. Forced buds are always failures."

"Nonsense ! you have kept her too much a child. That was what made me appear like an idiot with Bob McAllison. She is nineteen, and some girls marry before that time. It is useless for you to talk about forced buds not doing well : look at yourself. There is no occasion for your keeping the child back on your account, Eunice, if I don't on mine. It comes tough, I admit, to think of a fellow as young-looking as I having a marriageable daughter ; but I can stand it, with Bob McAllison for a son-in-law."

"Burton, *don't !* "

The sharpness of his wife's tones arrested him at last. He raised himself on one elbow and looked at her curiously.

"What is the matter, Kitty ? You don't mean to say it hurts like that ! Why, child,



I am surprised! You have fully your share of admiration still, I assure you. Farnsworth's favorite word for you is 'queenly,' and it fits you admirably, too. Don't be silly, Eunice; of course the child must marry, some day, and leave us; just as you left your father and mother with the utmost willingness as soon as I appeared. What delights my soul is the opinion that Bob McAllison evidently has of her. My wildest flights of imagination never reached that height! as father-in-law to the fellow whose money largely makes the firm, it will be queer management if I don't have a voice in that same firm myself. I ought to have been in it years ago, if I had had my deserts."

"What kind of a man is Mr. McAllison?"

Eunice could not have told why she asked the question; her husband's estimate of men had long since ceased to influence her, yet—he was talking now about his own daughter—what did the *father* in him require?

"Bob, you mean?" he said carelessly. "Oh, a good enough fellow, I guess. I never fancied him. He has been too much inclined to stand on his dignity and oblige me to remember that he is the son of the senior partner, and I am simply a hireling. But there was nothing of that in his manner to-day; the change was bewildering and pleasant. The bewilderment is gone, since I have been lying here looking at Grace.



Mrs. Landis, I can plainly foresee that our fortune, which has eluded us so long, is at last made."

"All of which does not tell me what kind of a man this is who admires our daughter."

"Oh, bother! What kind of a man would a McAllison be? A gentleman, of course. College bred and all that sort of thing, and a man who will know how to take care of his father's millions. He has been abroad for several years, and has had charge of important interests there connected with the firm. I rather hated him because I thought they ought to have sent me out in his place, and I hoped he would make a mess of the business, but he didn't. Oh, he is a man of honor, Eunice, of course, or I should not mention his name in connection with my daughter. Give him half a chance, and he'll show you promptly enough what manner of man he is. He is given to securing what he wants, without much waste of time. Don't you undertake to examine him with a microscope, and give him the cold shoulder if you chance to find a flaw the size of a fly's foot. You stood in Dolly's way persistently, remember, and spoiled the best match I ever thought of. I'm as sure as though he had told me, that if I could have brought the two together, Farnsworth would be my brother-in-law now, instead of having had to take up with poor Julia Merivale at last. Now



that you have married your sister to a country parson, who hasn't sufficient talent ever to get away from the country, I trust you are satisfied with your efforts in that line. Since she was your sister and not mine, I had to submit to her making a failure of life with what grace I could; but I warn you I shall by no means be so docile where my daughter is concerned. As Bob McAllison's wife, there is no end to the things she could do for Ben. My boy will not have to crawl through the world on his hands and knees as his father is doing, all for the want of a little money. Why, I can foresee their future as plain as day; and to think that I never thought of it before! My dear, if you were not made of ice, you would be excited over the prospects for your children. It includes them both, I tell you."

Mrs. Landis rose up quickly, folded away her work, her face turned from her husband as she did it. Then she went to the window and called:—

"Grace, dear, isn't the dew falling? I would not stay out much longer if I were you. Besides, it is nearly eight o'clock."

"Tell her to come in here," said Mr. Landis, eagerly. "I want to talk with her."

"She cannot come now, Burton; it is her practice hour."

"Bother the practice hour! You shouldn't keep her tied down to hours and rules like a

mere child," grumbled her father. "When a young woman is of marriageable age, she ought not to be treated like a schoolgirl."

"That is just what she is, Burton, a school-girl. She has another year in school, remember, and has no desire to be considered a young lady."

"You had two more years in school, if I remember correctly, when I appeared on the scene, and I don't suppose you had any special desires in the direction of marriage until you knew me. How was it after that? Trust Grace for being as wise as her mother was, when her opportunity comes. Never mind the practice, Eunice; I want to see the child."

Mrs. Landis turned abruptly from the window. "Burton, please excuse her; she ought not to be hindered to-night of all times. Her next lesson will come to-morrow morning, and Professor Blickfeldt has no mercy on delinquents."

"It is always Professor Blickfeldt or some other idiot," grumbled the father, sulkily yielding the point and lying back among the cushions. "You have hedged her all about with lessons and regulations, and taken up her time so thoroughly that I never see her. If you had planned with a view to giving neither of them any leisure for their father, you couldn't have been more successful."

It was so exactly what she had done that the



swift color swept into Eunice's face at the charge. She knew that her husband did not mean it, that he had no suspicion of the truth ; but none the less was she aware that, ever since her children had been old enough to be influenced by words of his, she had deliberately and with consummate care planned to keep them apart. Perhaps one of the sorest problems of her sorely perplexed life had grown out of her reverence for the word "father." It had been such a sacred word in her home life. Yet what could a mother do who had come gradually but surely to the conviction that the practices and theories, yes, even the very whims of their father were calculated to help her children toward a lower plane of thought? What she did, after much thought and prayer, may be open to criticism, may even be named hypocrisy ; yet surely it was a divine hypocrisy, if one might be allowed such a term. Deliberately one woman resolved that the name "father" should be shielded ; that the ideal of what it ought to mean should be kept ever before her children, and that, so far as possible, they should be taught to believe that the reality was theirs. To that end she taught herself to use, from their very babyhood, expressions like these : —

"We will see what your father says." "I will talk with your father about it before we can decide." "Your father would not like to have you go to such a place." "Your father does



not approve of that friendship," and so on. It was by no means all hypocrisy. She did talk matters over with the father with scrupulous care; and when they were matters about which he was, because of his nature, indifferent, she succeeded in so coloring his thoughts that they expressed themselves in words which she could often quote literally.

"Your father says," and the saying would be eminently that of a wise, far-seeing, careful father. In this way, and in a hundred other ways like unto it, her children had grown, the one to young womanhood, and the boy, who was old for his years, to the verge of young manhood, believing that their father was one of the wisest of men, and had lofty ideals and aspirations for them, such as would require persistent effort along all lines to satisfy. To this end, it had been necessary to keep father and children much apart; nor had it been difficult to do so. Mr. Landis, being still a subordinate, was hard worked. His time, being well paid for, was demanded in large measure by his chiefs. When his home had been set up at some distance from his place of business, of course correspondingly earlier cars had to be taken and the return ones made later. By a careful, and yet altogether reasonable arrangement of study and recreation hours, it had come to pass that the girl and boy who had grown up in his home, and had heard him



quoted on every important and many an unimportant occasion, and believed that their lives were being constantly shaped by his plans and desires, yet had no real acquaintance with him.

So complete had been Eunice's mask that, as the years went by, there were times in which she almost succeeded in deceiving herself. When she urged some measure with the argument that she had caused to become unanswerable in her children's eyes, "Your father wishes it," she all but made herself believe that it was his original wish she was quoting, and not one that she had drawn from him by skilful and prearranged methods. At least it had become second nature with her, this continual reference to "your father," always quoting him from the standpoint of the ideal father.

## XVIII.

“*MY FRIEND DR. GORDON.*”

**W**HAT Mrs. Landis lay and gazed upon that evening, long after the husband by her side was sleeping, was a sudden realization of possibilities. The father had roused at last to the fact that he had a grown-up daughter. What if he now began to insist upon a course of action that was not only utterly repugnant to her, as a mother, but foreign to all the principles that she had carefully taught her child? What was to be done with a child who had also been taught that the words, “Your father wishes this,” were law, and honor, and duty?

It was with a sense of relief that she listened, the next day, to a telephone message from her husband to the effect that he must start at once for a neighboring city on business that might detain him for a day or two. This would give her a chance to get her breath, and decide how to meet coming perplexities. Meantime, she must be in expectation of a call from Mr. McAllison.



With thoughts of him in mind, she stood in her doorway, waiting. Across the street was Dr. Kendall's carriage; the doctor himself could not be far distant. She arrested his swift steps presently, when he would have crossed the street with merely a lifted hat for her.

"Doctor, may I claim two minutes of your time?"

"Four, if need be," he said, turning at once and springing up the steps; "I hope no one in your family is ill?"

"No; and I know that these are your business hours, and yet my errand is not professional; still, I would like your opinion. To come to the point at once, I want to ask if you are acquainted with Mr. Robert McAllison?"

"No, and yes. That is, I know something of him, but do not claim an acquaintance."

"But you know what manner of man he is? Or, at least, what his reputation is. Will you tell me something about him?"

The doctor stood silent for a moment, as if in thought; then he said:—

"One's reply to such a question would almost of necessity, I think, be colored by the motive for asking it. One's reputation is several-sided, like the characters of most people. Do you feel like explaining from what side you are interested in the young man?"

"From all sides, Doctor; he has asked permission to call upon my daughter."

The quick lift of his eyebrows, expressing, she was almost sure, disapprobation, did not escape her.

“Have you met the man, Mrs. Landis? Did he ask you personally?”

“No, her father.”

“What does Mr. Landis think of him? I beg your pardon, you are not on the witness stand, are you? Well, Mrs. Landis, I shall be very frank with you and give you my impressions on small knowledge. Mr. McAllison, viewed from a business standpoint, is a success. He has been trained by a shrewd, far-seeing father, and has taken well to the training. For the rest, he is what men call a gentleman. He can play a good hand at cards, and has too much regard for his business relations and prospects to make of them any great temptation. He understands fast horses, and his opinions with regard to them are listened to with respect by those who make their living in that way. He can sip gracefully his glass of—well, of whatever is offered, on occasion, and is hedged about from frequent excesses by the same motives that hold his other habits in check. He is a society man who is highly cultured, and has the reputation of being fascinating. Are you answered?”

“Yes,” she said. “Thank you. And yet—Dr. Kendall, how are we mothers to meet these problems? It is such men as he that our



children meet in society, and must mingle with, more or less. They may form friendships with them."

Then Dr. Kendall took her back suddenly to her girlhood. It was only a peculiar lift of his shoulders; the boy, Ben Kendall, had been wont to resort to it as a way to express his boyish perplexities. She remembered it well. She was back again on the vine-wreathed porch of the old manse at Brantford. Mother was sitting by the window that looked out upon it, and in the dining room was Dorothy humming a strain from her last song. Over by the south window, behind the honeysuckle, her father, in his study chair, was bending over his work, and Ben Kendall, on the porch with her, was telling her of some new anxiety that was looming up before his boyish eyes and asking her advice. She could scarcely keep her lips from quivering, and it took strong will to hold back the tears that wanted to fill her eyes. In all this there was not a trace of sentiment for the boy, Ben; she scarcely thought of him save as the link that helped to hold the mental pictures. But oh — *mother!* with her tender voice and wise counsel, and father, who was never too busy or too weary to do his thoughtful best for his young daughters. How had her life been hedged about with care and wisdom! and yet — and the loyal woman would not for the world have completed her thought.



“I am not wise,” said Dr. Kendall. “I do not see how rules of any sort can be laid down. I have believed that the judicious, watchful, constant environment of parents was the safest atmosphere the child could breathe. My father, as you know, went away from me very early in life, yet I have never got away from his influence, and I know that he and my mother hedged me in, from very babyhood, behind safe walls. Mrs. Landis, I know no positive ill of the young man about whom you are asking. Nine persons out of ten who are acquainted with him would speak of him, I presume, in terms of unqualified praise; and yet, if I had a young sister, I should not be willing to have her intimately associated with him. I am sure you understand; and I have reason, I believe, to think that a mother’s influence is the most potent human force that can be brought to bear upon a life.” This time he did not say “parents”; he refrained from looking at Mrs. Landis while he spoke that last sentence; indeed, he looked instead at his watch, and went down the steps with the last word. She did not know that he knew that her eyes were shadowed with those unshed tears. She could not get herself away from the old manse and the echo of her father’s voice.

It was that same evening that Dr. Kendall made a social call at the Landis home. He rarely had time for social calls. A young man



was with him, whom he introduced as "my friend Dr. Gordon." In the course of conversation it developed that he was a son of the famous Dr. Gordon, whose name Mrs. Landis knew was held not only in great honor but in great affection by Dr. Kendall, and that he had come to their city to establish himself in the practice of medicine, by Dr. Kendall's advice. Early in their call Mr. McAllison was announced. For a short time the conversation was general, then Dr. Kendall turned to Grace.

"Miss Grace, I have made a rash promise. That last song of yours, which, by the way, Ben hums continually, even when he is in class, has been floating through my brain all day. It happens that the poem is a special favorite of Dr. Gordon's, and he didn't know it was set to music. I promised to use my influence with you to-night to sing it for him. Have I been too reckless?"

Mr. McAllison immediately expressed the hope that Dr. Kendall's influence was powerful, and Grace arose at once, with the simple statement that the doctor knew she always obeyed him. Both young men arose when she did, but Dr. Gordon was nearest to the piano, and Mr. McAllison had to be content with a seat not far away. Here Dr. Kendall joined him, and directly the song was concluded asked for another favorite. While the music was being found, he entered into con-



versation with Mr. McAllison. Grace, as soon as she left the piano, crossed the room to her mother's side. The result was that Mr. McAllison, although he fully exhausted the limits which good form sets for a first call, had no opportunity to visit with Grace, and was compelled to retire, leaving the other young man to rejoice in the evident fact that Dr. Kendall was very much at home in that house, and need not go until he chose. Contrary to his usual habit, he was in no haste. He asked for Ben, and offered to explain more fully to him the philosophical question about which they had been talking in the morning. The other young people returned presently to the piano, and were soon chatting over the music like old acquaintances. Dr. Kendall turned from Ben long enough to say to his mother in low tones:—

“I am glad that my friend Dr. Gordon can know you, Mrs. Landis. He is a splendid fellow. I feel that I know him very well indeed. I was in his father's family during much of my medical course, and Philip was my favorite among all the sons, though he was a mere boy then. He has developed much as I thought he would. He has set up an office on Ninety-First Street, southwest corner, a very near neighbor of yours, please take notice. He wouldn't begin practice in his own city; he said he did not want to win



favor because he was a son of 'the great Dr. Gordon'; he preferred to stand on his own merits. I like it in him. The fellow has brains and pluck, and will succeed. Of course, his independence will not hinder me from giving him a lift occasionally as I have opportunity. I owe him a long debt of gratitude for his father's sake; but he doesn't need me. At the same time I am rather sorry for him just at present. Stranded, you know, among strangers. He comes from a house full of brothers and sisters, and has an exceptional mother, and until he gets well into work will miss them almost too much. If you could 'mother' him a little, Mrs. Landis, it would be a personal favor. Philip seems like my young brother. I should have him in my own family, but that I thought this part of town the place for him to locate, and I am too far away for convenience."

Mrs. Landis was gracious. She admitted that she liked the young man's face, and said it would be pleasant for Ben to know him. Nearly all of Ben's special friends were a good deal older than he; he seemed to prefer such to boys of his own age. Neither man nor matron hinted by word or look that it might be pleasant for the young doctor to know the young woman at the piano, who was treating them just then to a singularly musical laugh in response to some remark of her companion.



There was a heightened color on Grace's face when their guests had finally departed, and a look in her eyes that to her watchful mother was new.

"He is very pleasant," she said, dropping on a low seat near her mother.

"Who is, dear?" asked Mrs. Landis. "Are you speaking of Dr. Kendall?"

Grace laughed. "He is always pleasant, mother. I was thinking of the new doctor. He is very bright. I like to hear him talk. And his voice! Did you hear him in that tenor solo? It is a very pure tenor. He would like to practise some of his songs occasionally, with me to accompany them. Would that be all right?"

"I think so," said the mother, but she spoke slowly, with just a touch of hesitation. After a moment she added, "Any courtesy that we can show to a friend of Dr. Kendall will be pleasant to us, of course; but — I suppose you explained that you had not much time for extra music?"

The hesitation grew out of a mother-thought. Must this young bud of hers be rushed into life before her hour for blooming, in order to save her from another danger that, through her father, menaced her? Was that what Dr. Kendall had meant by sacrificing one of his evenings to the special introduction, and to planning the way for friendliness? Was she



ready to have her lovely young schoolgirl grow into intimate, perhaps into exclusive, friendship even with a man for whom Dr. Kendall vouched? If she could but keep her still the child that she was so willing to remain! If she dared to say to her:—

“I am willing to have you play for him occasionally, daughter, as you play for other acquaintances; but he must understand that you have not time for many social engagements; you are a schoolgirl, dear, and society must not claim you in any sense of the word. Even your friends must be content with occasional glimpses of you until school days are over.” How quickly she would say all this but for her fears. That other man with his handsome face and fascinating address, and evident admiration for the child, that showed almost too plainly for good form; and the father whose heart was set upon fostering a friendship. Was there no way to meet it save by a rival friendship? Oh, the weary problems of a house divided against itself! Could she EVER consent to her daughter’s setting up such a house as that? Yet, better that than to be united in— And there the wife sternly called a halt. After a little, she asked a question born of her haunting fears.

“How did the other caller impress you, daughter?”

“Mr. McAllison?” said the girl, indifferently. “I did not notice him especially; not



so that I distinctly thought about him, I mean. He has fine eyes, and I like the way he wears his hair. But he cannot talk very well, can he? I didn't hear him say anything that seemed to be worth his while. Has he ever called upon you before, mother? I wonder how he happened to think of it now, since he has waited for so many years?"

"I don't like him a bit," said Ben, the positive. "I think he is the sort of man I could learn to detest if it were worth while. I saw him kick his own little dog unmercifully, just because the little fellow didn't understand what he wanted him to do. I don't call a man a gentleman who will kick a little dog like that for nothing; I don't care how much money he has." Grace's eyes and expression affirmed that she agreed with her brother, although she had no special friendship for dogs, little or big. Within the week Mr. McAllison called again, asking at the door for "Miss Landis." She had gone out with her brother, and Mrs. Landis failed to send word that she was momentarily expected. Dr. Gordon was more fortunate. He asked for "the ladies." It chanced to be an evening when business had called Mr. Landis away, and his wife received the caller alone. "I hope I may stay," he said, taking a seat near her. "I may as well confess at once that I have a horrible attack of homesickness, and I cannot find a remedy for it in the entire materia



medica. I'd throw up the chances on my first regular patient for a glimpse of my mother's face or the sound of my sisters' voices. I would even like to hear the twins argue! And in our family when a fellow reaches that stage he is hard up. I asked Dr. Kendall if he thought I might venture to impose myself upon you, and he said there was nothing like venturing; so with that encouragement I came."

"Poor boy!" said Mrs. Landis, laughing, and feeling her heart warm toward the young man. "Homesickness is a dreadful disease; I have suffered from it in years gone by, and know how to sympathize. I'm sorry, too, for your mother. You don't believe it now, but it is harder for her than for you. How does your mother look? Tell me about her."

Had there been half a dozen grown-up daughters to be thoughtful for, she could not have helped meeting the genial young man halfway. By the time her son and daughter returned, which they did within ten minutes, Dr. Gordon was established for an evening's visit, and the young people greeted him with evident satisfaction.

## XIX.

### *FENCING.*

**I**T was several days thereafter when Mr. Landis came home one evening in evident ill humor.

“Something always has to happen to make a mess of things,” he complained to his wife, “just when they seem to be straightening out. Here is Bob McAllison wild to follow up his acquaintance with Grace, and, behold, he has to rush over to Paris to look after certain ends that he left loose. Serves him right for not letting me go out there in the first place. But I’m sorry for the fellow, he is so thoroughly disappointed. You ought to have heard him go on about the child. Why didn’t you tell me he had called? I believe, Eunice, you grow colder-blooded every day; nothing seems to excite you. He has called twice, he tells me, and missed her the second time. Grace ought to give more heed to the proprieties of social life and be at home, sometimes at least, during calling hours. She is getting too old to be so unconventional.”



Mrs. Landis's satisfaction in the sudden call to Paris was almost too marked to escape notice. There followed several quiet weeks, during which Dr. Gordon managed to place himself upon a plane of decided intimacy, at least with the ladies of the Landis household. His office was so conveniently situated that he could drop in during office hours and chat with Mrs. Landis while he watched his office door. Apparently he came to see her as much as he did the young people. At least he came at hours when he knew they were engaged, frankly owning his loneliness and the "hankering" he felt for a sight of his mother's face. Eunice was daily more closely drawn to the young man, and rejoiced in the growing intimacy between him and her son. She told herself that it was good for a boy to have a friend so much older than he was himself, when that friend's character had been moulded in grand lines. Also she watched, not without question and more or less anxiety, the friendly relations being established between the young man and her daughter. Not that there was the slightest appearance on the part of either of other feeling than that of cordial good-fellowship. Certainly her daughter, Mrs. Landis was sure, had no other thought. She felt that this was as it should be. Nothing was more natural than that two young people who liked the same authors and excelled in the same studies, and



were both musical in their tastes and education, should enjoy each other's society. In theory this mother believed in just such friendships. Yet she knew as well as a mother could that, but for "Bob" McAllison and her husband, she would not have permitted this continual visiting. There were times when it humiliated her to think that she was being reduced to such straits.

Such was the condition of affairs when there came to the wife another "arrest of thought." She had believed that she was familiar with every phase of her husband's character, and could not be taken by surprise whatever the development. It remained for him to show her her mistake.

"What do you think of me in the rôle of a teacher?" he asked her one evening, when he lounged among his favorite cushions. "Do you fancy I will make a good one?"

"That would depend," she said tentatively, looking up from her work with a smile.

"On the pupil, eh? I believe it would. But it is a nice little pupil whom I have promised. She has been struggling along with her German like the brave little mouse that she is, trying to get on without any help at all. I have promised to give her one evening a week for a while, though I hardly know how to spare it, driven as I am. Didn't I tell you who it was? Our new typewriter. Didn't you know

we had a new one? I supposed I had mentioned her. A nice little girl. She isn't older than Grace, and here she is earning her living. I am glad that my daughter will never have to do it, from present prospects. Nellie is ambitious to learn to read German correspondence and write letters in German, so as to get a better position as stenographer, you know. It would make quite a difference with her salary."

Mrs. Landis sat silent for several minutes. The former typewriter had been a married woman whose husband was a clerk in the store. Mrs. Landis had made her acquaintance as soon as she was employed by the firm, and had respected and trusted her. She had not heard of her departure.

"What has become of Mrs. Lane?" she asked at last.

"Oh, she got too grand for her place, and lost it. She was positively rude to me one day, over the merest trifle, and as it had occurred once or twice before, I got tired of it and suggested a change. Now we have the most accommodating little creature in the world. Everybody likes her."

Mrs. Landis felt like a sentinel who had been sleeping at her post.

"I am surprised to hear such a report of Mrs. Lane," she said. "She did not impress me as a woman of that kind. Do you mean that you had to criticise her work?"



“Well, no, not exactly. It was about some pleasantry that the thing began, — I hardly remember what; it did not make an impression upon me. I only know that she was disagreeable and I got tired of her. Never mind her. What I want to speak of is that I will not come home to dinner on Thursdays, after this, for a while. That is the evening I have promised to give to teaching. Nellie’s boarding-house is away down town, and I should not more than reach home before I should have to turn around and go back. So I shall plan to dine at the Club, or anywhere it happens, on Thursdays. That is one of the disadvantages of living so far up town. Still, I must say I like it. I feel as large as any of them when I give people my aristocratic-sounding address. That was certainly a fortunate bit of luck on your father’s part when he invested up here.”

“Why not send the young woman to Herr von Frien for lessons, Burton, and save your evenings?” It was what she had decided, after hurried thought, to say.

“Oh, I couldn’t do that. The child is as proud as she is poor, and would resent anything like charity. And then she hasn’t time for regular lessons, you see, with a professor who would hold her strictly to hours and tasks. Besides, one doesn’t want to do all one’s kindnesses by proxy, or at arm’s length. The personal touch is what is needed in this world.

You ought to be the last one to require an explanation of that sort; I thought it was one of your hobbies. Dr. Kendall is always harping upon it; I fancied he got it from you. You and he are curiously alike in some ways. Don't you remember I told you so years ago? I wonder if it comes from having breathed the same country atmosphere in your youth? Curious contribution that would make to the study of environment, wouldn't it, if one could follow it up? I believe I ought to have been a student of mental science, or whatever name such investigations would be called in these days. I am interested in everything of the sort.

"Why, yes, dear, I know it is the regular night for our mid-week meeting that I have promised" — this in answer to his wife's reminder. "But I couldn't help that. It was the only evening that I had to spare, and I felt it my duty to sacrifice it in order to help the child. I can get on without prayer meetings, let us hope, better than she can without a teacher. The fact is, we can't help others in this world to any great extent without sacrificing something." Mr. Landis was in his loftiest and most self-sacrificing mood. His wife was silent for five minutes; then she said, speaking very gently:—

"I am sorry that it is Thursday evening, Burton, on my own account. I don't like to give up the prayer meeting; but I shall not let slip this opportunity for reviewing my German.



I noticed last week when I tried to read Grace's lesson over with her that I was painfully rusty. I shall be glad of a chance to study with you. How shall we plan it? Shall I meet you at the store and take dinner with you somewhere, or dine at home and meet you afterward at any point you set?"

Mr. Landis raised himself on one elbow and looked at her. "What are you talking about, Eunice?" he said at last. "Do you suppose you can go down to our typewriter's boarding-house on Sullivan Street to take German lessons, or any other lessons? My dear, how can you be so absurd?"

"Which is the absurd part, Burton? You are going to teach German to a young woman, you tell me; and your wife wants to review her German, and takes the opportunity to do it in your company and with your help. Is that remarkable?"

"Rather. In the first place, you and Nellie couldn't study German together. Hers is elementary work, and she has little time for study, besides not being used to it. She will need to go very slowly. I shall have to explain a rule to her, for instance, and then wait while she learns it, before I can teach her how to apply it. While you — don't you suppose I remember that you took the German prize two years in succession?"

"Very well," said Mrs. Landis, ignoring the



German prize. "While she studies you can give your attention to me. I should like to read some German authors with you, Burton. I am sure it is not a new thing to have two scholars, of an evening, who are not on just the same level."

"But think of the inconvenience, Eunice, and the ridiculousness of it: an old married couple forsaking their home and their dinner and going once a week to the other end of creation to a Sullivan Street boarding-house to teach German to one of the employees of our store! The reporters would have hold of it and make a first-class sensation story out of it before Friday night."

"Very well; it will be an entirely respectable sensation at least. When an 'old married couple' go out *together* to a Sullivan Street boarding-house to look after a young girl, the most censorious can find nothing to gossip about. Can you conceive of a different kind of sensation if you were to go alone? If you like it better, why not have the girl come to us? Do you remember that on Thursday evenings Jonas goes down to his mother's to spend the night, and his car passes Sullivan Street? He could see that she reached her house in safety." Jonas was the sixteen-year-old chore boy who worked at Mr. Landis's house for his board, and went to school. Mr. Landis raised himself on his elbow again and looked at his wife and laughed.



“Upon my word, Kitty, you are unique,” he said at last. “What you will do next can never be imagined, much less planned for. Very well, since your ladyship is pleased to have it so, we will pose as philanthropists in German. Nellie shall come here to your charming study, and between your calls and other social engagements you can pretend to review German. Or else I’ll review mine with you for teacher; I have no doubt but that would be the more sensible way. It is an arrangement worthy of your skill; but at least it will be better than to have you tramping off every Thursday night in search of a Sullivan Street boarding-house and a girl; and I know you well enough to believe you would do it, once you thought of it. I should have had sense enough to keep quiet.” He stopped to laugh again, then said suddenly: “But what about the prayer meeting? I declare to you upon honor that I cannot give up any other night conveniently. I looked the matter over carefully before I hit upon Thursday. However, I know how to fix it. You can go to prayer meeting with Grace and Ben, and we can take our German together after you get back.”

“No,” said Mrs. Landis, firmly. “If you can sacrifice the prayer meeting for the sake of others, so can I. As long as the German lessons last, we will excuse ourselves from the mid-week service. We shall not be greatly



missed. You have not been able to go regularly, you remember."

The next day, which was Thursday, was a busy one to Mrs. Landis. The morning mail brought her a note from a woman whom she knew by name and by sight, but who did not belong to her world. It was much underscored and read thus:—

"DEAR MRS. LANDIS: I am *sure* you will not think me a gossip; *nothing* is further from my meaning. I am rather a true friend who *will not* stand by and see another woman wronged. I feel it my *duty* to tell you that there is a *good deal* of talk about things at your husband's store. My daughter is a saleslady there, and *cannot help* seeing and hearing. *Some* girls will gossip, you know; and for that matter so will *some* men. Daughter says they talk dreadfully, and I told her it was a *shame!* It seems there is a new typewriter girl, a minx of a thing who is bent on getting your husband into *trouble*. Daughter says she watches for him to come that way, and smiles and simpers when she sees him, and does everything she can to attract his attention. She is what some folks call pretty, and, being a man, he can't go by a pretty face, I suppose, so he stops and talks with her; he couldn't well help it the way she *acts*; but that is enough, you know, for *tongues*. Daughter says she asks him to



*call on her* at her boarding-place, the minx! And she tells that he is coming to *spend to-morrow evening with her!* I told daughter it was a *shame!* and I wasn't going to *stand* it. I should just let you know what was being talked. I thought perhaps you could speak to the creature, and tell her she was ruining her character; and if she didn't stop her goings on, you would have her punished somehow. At least, I made up my mind that you ought to know it, and I hope you will take this as it is meant.

“Your friend and sympathizer,

“MRS. JOHN SMITH.”

Within the hour a reply was sent that read thus:—

“MRS. JOHN SMITH,—

“*Dear Madam:* Your note was received. Thank you for kind intentions. In some respects you have been misinformed. Mr. Landis and I are much interested in the young girl of whom you wrote. She is an orphan and alone in this great wicked city, so far as helpful friends are concerned. She is ambitious to learn, and we are anxious to help her with her German. Mr. Landis has asked her to join us in our library this evening, that we may study together. So you see there is a foundation for the story that the two are to spend the



evening together. As much foundation, perhaps, as there is for most stories among people who hear only in snatches and imagine the rest. The habit of gossiping about other people's affairs is, as you say, much to be deplored. If all people would do as you have done, come to the persons chiefly concerned for information, less harm would doubtless result.

“Thanking you again for any thought of kindness that you had toward my husband and myself, I remain,

“Yours sincerely,  
“EUNICE HOLLISTER LANDIS.”

## XX.

### *PILOTING.*

**A**T four o'clock of that eventful Thursday, the railed-off corner of the great department store where Nellie Gardner sat at her typewriter was treated to a sensation. Mrs. Landis, who was known to some of the employees by sight, came down that way, accompanied by her husband. Mrs. Landis was unquestionably a beautiful woman. She had more than fulfilled the promise of her youth, in that there was about her an indescribable manner suggesting both grace and strength such as her youth had not foreshadowed. It was known to almost none from what storms of pain the strength had developed; everybody could see the results. Moreover, Mrs. Landis knew, and had always known, how to dress effectively. Her dressing was never what could be called "fine." It was almost severe in its plainness, yet had about it that special charm which exquisite neatness and appropriateness, together with careful attention to the small details of shape and color, always produce. It



was not unusual to see people turning on the street to gaze curiously at her as she passed, evidently trying to discover the secret of her effective toilet. She made a distinct sensation in the department store. She was, if possible, more carefully dressed than usual, having deliberately studied effect that day. The overdressed "salesladies" nudged one another and whispered as she passed. There was also another reason for the whispering. But an hour or two before Mr. Landis had sauntered that way, and paused to carry on an animated conversation with the new typewriter, who was not a favorite with her fellow-clerks, possibly in part because she distinctly prided herself upon her favor in the eyes of the man who, in the store, was second only to the heads of the firm. They watched eagerly now as he paused again near the typewriter's desk. Some of them could hear his words.

"Miss Gardner, my wife wishes to be introduced to you. Miss Gardner, Mrs. Landis." Mrs. Landis's clear enunciation made her words very distinct. "I am glad to know you, Miss Gardner. Mr. Landis tells me you have promised to study with us to-night. It was an oversight on my part not to ask you earlier to join us at dinner. We dine at half-past six, and I hope may have the pleasure of having you with us. That will surely be more convenient than for you to go home first."

The astonished girl must evidently have made some half-frightened objection having to do with her dress, for Mrs. Landis's words were distinct again.

“Oh, that need not trouble you. A dress that is suitable for the store will do nicely for the schoolroom. You and I are to be students this evening, you know.” Mrs. Landis could smile, when she chose, in a most winsome manner. The heart of the silly, golden-haired girl, who was not bad at heart, only painfully thoughtless and foolish, warmed toward the beautiful and gentle woman in spite of herself. This was very different treatment from what she had expected at the hands of Mrs. Landis, if they should ever chance to meet. Scarcely knowing what she did, she promised, under further most gracious pressure, to come to dinner; and afterward was both frightened and vain over having done so. Mr. Landis found himself liking the entire scene. His wife as a beautiful lady patroness, with eyes of unmistakable admiration levelled at her from all parts of the store, was quite as it should be. He was very far from being in love with silly Nellie Gardner; he was simply amusing himself for a few days at her expense, meaning no harm in the world, even when he kissed her in the shadowed passageway, as he had done one evening, quite without premeditation. He had laughed at her breathless—“Oh, Mr. Landis! aren't you ashamed of

yourself?" She had giggled even as she asked the question, and he argued from that that no harm had been done. This other treatment of his wife's, this graceful patronage and kindness toward one who was distinctly on a lower plane, now appealed to him as decidedly the more becoming way. He walked with the beautiful woman down the length of the store, taking the longest route to the door, and noticing the glances of admiration, while he chatted genially.

"You certainly are unique, Kitty, as I told you. I said last night that no one could prophesy what you would do next, and it is a fact. The rôle suits you, my empress, extremely well, as all rôles that you undertake do. So my little typewriter is to dine with us? She never even dreamed of such distinction," and he laughed. "The store will be green with envy, and we'll have to dismiss the little girl in a few days, because she will be so 'set up' we can do nothing with her. Never mind; it will be good fun while it lasts."

His prediction did not hold true. Nellie Gardner was not "set up" in the way he had surmised. She came to dinner in gala array, having secured an extra hour from the store, through Mr. Landis's influence, that she might rush home and make her toilet. But the result was that for the first time in her life she felt herself ill-dressed, in spite of, or perhaps because of, the fact that her gown was far more "showy"



than the one Grace Landis wore. A few words from her mother had prepared that young woman to be especially attentive and gracious to their guest. The German lesson, also, was a success. Mrs. Landis held herself carefully in the background, making suggestions only when she saw that her husband's technical explanations were befogging his pupil. It was a relief to discover that the girl really wanted to learn, and had made commendable progress by herself.

Mrs. Landis's efforts did not stop with this one interview. She had set out primarily to save her husband, but she had a heart also for the girl. Young and pretty and ill-taught and environed with dangers, unless some one who was wiser than she got control, what was there for her but moral shipwreck? Mrs. Landis worked untiringly and skilfully to gain control. Her first effort was followed up by numberless others, aided and abetted by her daughter, who saw only the girl. Before the German lessons had been in progress for six weeks a distinct change began to be visible in the typewriter. She laughed less, and talked less, while engaged in her work at the store. Her manner, especially to Mr. Landis, began to be marked by a certain respectful dignity, which, had she assumed it in the first place, would probably have shielded her from his special notice. Far from being annoyed by the change in her, Mr.



Landis distinctly liked it; he even complimented her on her improved manners. A weaker man than Mr. Landis might have been hard to find; but it would be easy to find worse men at heart than he.

Two others looked on, helpfully when they could, at the moral transformation which was taking place under their eyes. These were Grace and Ben Landis.

“Isn’t mother wonderful?” the daughter said one evening, speaking to her brother. It was a “German” evening, and the mother was in the library. “You and I know that she has no need to review German. Do you remember what Herr von Frien said that evening when he heard her read? Yet she has given up Thursday evening and the prayer meeting for the sake of that girl. There are not many women like our mother.” Ben, large-eyed, serious beyond his years, having thoughts about matters that he kept to himself, seeing certain things, of late, that no one knew or suspected that he saw, looked steadily out of the window and said not a word for several minutes. Then he spoke gravely, with thoughtful deliberation:

“Yes, that’s true; there isn’t another woman in the world like her, I believe.”

Within two months the German lessons began to pall on Mr. Landis. One evening he deliberately retired to an easy chair and left his wife to explain the difficult portions.



“I believe I have mistaken my vocation,” he said gayly to the pupil. “My wife is evidently the one who should teach, and I should be her scholar. I did not know that you were so fine a German scholar, really, Mrs. Landis. It is absurd to talk about your reviewing with me.”

Not long after this the evening for the German lesson was changed. Mr. Landis had to spend Wednesday evenings at the store, going over matters of business with department clerks. At his own suggestion, at least he thought so, it was arranged that Nellie Gardner should come on Wednesdays, and that his wife should be the teacher. Then he went, on three successive Thursdays, with his wife, to the mid-week prayer meeting. On one of these Thursdays Nellie Gardner came to dinner and accompanied them to the meeting, and heard Mr. Landis pray. It seemed to fill her with amazement. Others besides herself were moved by his prayer. A middle-aged woman in a very plain dress and with a careworn face held out her hand to him as she passed.

“Let me shake hands with you,” she said. “We belong to the same church, and that prayer of yours did my soul good. The help of it will go with me through the week.” Mr. Landis was greatly touched.

“It is wonderful,” he said, as they walked toward their car, “in what simple ways one can touch and influence the lives of others.”



There were tears in that woman's eyes to-night. I ought to remember my opportunities better, I suppose. I must try to plan so as to be more regular in attendance at this meeting."

Mrs. Landis said not a word. The years had rolled between them and that night in which she had clung to his arm and told him, as they walked home from prayer meeting, that to hear him pray was better to her than any music.

As for Nellie Gardner, she was not only willing to make the change from Thursday to Wednesday, she distinctly enjoyed it. She had a recognized place now in the family of Mr. Landis. She was the pupil and protégée of Mrs. Landis, and as such Mr. Landis patronized her; but they chatted and laughed together at the store no more. Not because the man had grown wiser; it was simply that the fascination connected with that entertainment had been, somehow, brushed off, and the entire matter turned into plain prose. Mrs. Landis, watching, praying, planning, drew, in the course of time, the long-drawn-out breath that meant relief, and knew that her husband had been piloted safely past one more rock that had threatened shipwreck. She knew also, and there was a grateful thrill in her heart over this, that in piloting him she had been allowed to save the girl Nellie.

And then, Mr. McAllison returned from his



hurried trip to Paris. One of the first things he did was to call on Mrs. Landis and her daughter, and shatter the mother's eager hope that he had met with some one while abroad who had turned aside his fancy for Grace. He was so genial in his manner, so courteously attentive to them both, and so interesting in descriptions of scenes and experiences connected with his journey, that they could not but enjoy his call. Yet the mother — watching with anxious eyes that still must not appear to watch — saw, with inward thanksgiving, that Grace, within five minutes from the time of his departure, after saying cheerfully that to hear him describe certain scenes must be almost as pleasant as to look for one's self, turned to the eager study of a difficult accompaniment that she was learning for one of Dr. Gordon's songs. It was evident that the child suspected neither Mr. McAllison's intentions nor her father's wishes. When she came to know the latter, — and the mother saw that this knowledge was imminent, — how would it affect her?

Without any special planning upon the part of any one, it had come to pass that Mr. Landis scarcely knew of, or rather scarcely remembered, Dr. Gordon's existence. This had resulted very naturally. It chanced that Dr. Gordon's evenings were almost wholly occupied with work that he was doing in the laboratory at the College of Physicians, and his leisure time was



during the hours when physicians with extensive practice were giving attention to "Office hours."

"The sole attention that my office hours need at present is to sit where I can keep an ever hopeful eye on my office door," Dr. Gordon remarked cheerfully to Mrs. Landis when he was visiting her, "and it is surprising how much more cheerful it is to watch it from your window than mine."

As this chanced to be also Grace Landis's least occupied hour, it is not surprising that her presence frequently contributed to the sociability. Almost imperceptibly to all concerned, it became a habit to expect Dr. Gordon to drop in soon after luncheon for a little visit. With increasing frequency he came to take luncheon with them, being brought often by Ben, and occasionally sent for by Mrs. Landis, when there was some dainty dish that she knew would remind the young man of home. As the days passed, and the friendship grew, he began to feel at liberty to drop in occasionally, unasked of any one, and to feel sure of a welcome. Yet the master of the house had met him but formally and all but forgotten him. His own home life was very limited, and more and more frequently "business," or calls connected with business, seemed to claim even his evenings. He renewed his knowledge of Dr. Gordon at last in a way that created embarrassment and discomfort. It was just after dinner,



and the family were together in the library, when Grace received a summons to the parlor. She returned in a few minutes, and replied to her father's question as to who had called:—

“It is Dr. Gordon. He is waiting, mother. He came to say that he has found that he will not have to be at the college to-night, and that he can call for me at eight o'clock. He can have Dr. Kendall's carriage. I told him I would see if you had made any other plans for me.”

“Call for you for what?” It was the father's voice with a note of displeasure in it. “It seems to me that this is an unusual proceeding. Who is Dr. Gordon, and how does he happen to be on such familiar terms with my daughter?”

Grace looked her intense surprise, not to say distress, and the mother wished that she had herself responded to the call to the parlor. She made haste with her explanation.

“Don't you remember him, Burton? You met him at Judge Templeton's, and afterward here, the evening that the Waylands called. He is a valued friend of Dr. Kendall. There is a musicale this evening at Professor Webber's. Grace is to sing; and Dr. Gordon, who did not expect to be able to go, finds that he can, and has offered to call for Grace. That is all.”

“It seems to me quite enough. There is not the slightest occasion for anything of the sort. 'Phone for a cab, of course, if you don't want Grace to go in the trolley. The Havi-



land cars pass Professor Webber's door, and Ben can go with her, I suppose. I should think, Eunice, you had laid aside your usual nice sense of propriety, if you are 'willing that our daughter should depend upon a stranger to take her to an appointment, even though he has the privilege of borrowing Dr. Kendall's horses."

"A stranger!" began Grace, in amazement. "Why, father—" and then the look in her mother's eyes arrested her words. The mother spoke quickly:—

"Ben can take you out there, dear, if your father prefers it."

"I prefer it most decidedly. Who is Dr. Gordon, pray, that he should presume to the honor of an evening drive with my daughter? I confess I am surprised, Eunice. I supposed—" She interrupted him with dignity.

"I will explain at another time, Burton. Daughter, you ought not to keep Dr. Gordon waiting longer. His time may be limited. Say that your father has arranged that Ben shall take you. Or—would you rather have me speak to him?"

Mr. Landis interposed. "Let her do her own explaining, Eunice; she is not a child. If you don't know what to say, tell him your father does not approve of a stranger taking such liberties as he has done, and considers himself a model of endurance because he doesn't go and kick him out for his impudence."

## XXI.

### *“HOW WAS IT TO END?”*

**P**OOOR Grace moved slowly toward the parlor, a look of perplexity and pain on her face. Here was a new phase of life for her. She had never before heard her father speak in that manner. Could it be possible that he knew something wrong, or at least unpleasant, about Dr. Gordon? She dismissed the thought at once as having to do with the impossible. But—what a singular idea to speak of him as a stranger!

Within three days came a complication that simply added to the girl's bewilderment. They were at the breakfast table, and the morning mail had been brought in and examined while they lingered.

“What have you there, daughter?” Mr. Landis asked, as, having given attention to his own letters, he noticed a heightened color on Grace's face while she examined one of hers.

“It is a note, father.”

“So I observe. My question had rather to



do with its contents. They are not secret from your father, I hope."

"It is just an invitation to take a drive to Coldbrook."

"With whom?" There was an ominous frown on Mr. Landis's face, and his voice had a peremptory note in it new to his daughter.

"There is quite a large company of young people going, I believe, in single carriages. My invitation is from Mr. McAllison."

The frown lifted at once.

"Is it, indeed?" her father said graciously. "That is quite a distinction. It is not every lady as young as yourself whom Mr. McAllison honors with attentions. Coldbrook is a charming spot, and the drive there is simply delightful. I was always planning to take your mother on that trip; but I have had to live such a grind of a life as to leave no time for pleasure. I am thankful that there are pleasanter prospects for my children. When are you to go, daughter?"

"The plan is to go to-morrow afternoon. But — I will decline my invitation, shall I not?"

"In the name of sense, why? You are the only girl in the city, I am sure, who would harbor such a thought for a moment."

"But you know, father, what you said about my driving out with a stranger."

"Oh, that was entirely another matter." Mr. Landis spoke in utmost kindness; the



deference which this beautiful daughter evidently paid to his wishes was delightful to him. "Dr. Gordon is a stranger, it is true, a mere nobody, so far as our knowledge goes; while Robert McAllison is the son and heir of the senior partner of your father's business house. I have known him since he was a boy, and am ready to vouch for him in every respect. Of course, you may accept his invitation. Your father isn't an ogre, child, who desires to keep you from legitimate enjoyment. He merely wants to guard your pleasures with the utmost care, as a careful father should. Write your note of acceptance at once, and I will take it down town with me."

His daughter's face did not brighten.

"But, father," she said, in evident distress, "I don't want to accept the invitation. Mr. McAllison seems almost a stranger to me. I never exchanged a dozen sentences with him, and I do not know the people who are going. I shouldn't enjoy it at all."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Landis, sharply. "One whom your father knows so well need not be considered as a stranger. I tell you I have known him all his life. And he will introduce you to a choice set of young people with whom you properly belong. It is quite time you met others than those who chance to be your companions in school. You cannot remain a schoolgirl always, and I am only



too glad to have you introduced among another class by Mr. McAllison. You cannot get into any higher set in this city, remember, than the McAllisons'. I desire you to accept the invitation. If you do not care anything about your own advancement in life, think of your father. It would not be very good policy on our part to offend a McAllison, I can assure you."

Mrs. Landis arose suddenly from the table.

"Burton," she said, "do you realize what time it is? You have lost already the car that you usually take, and it is time for the next one."

Thus recalled to his business trammels, Mr. Landis looked at his watch and made a sudden exit, grumbling as he went that he hoped and trusted his children would never have to be tied down to hours as he had been all his life. His last word to Grace was a direction to reply to her invitation without delay.

"Mother," said Grace, as the door closed after her father, "what can I do? I don't want to go to Coldbrook. Why is father willing to have me go, when I don't know Mr. McAllison one-quarter as well as I do Dr. Gordon? And what could be done about the rehearsal? It is the last one before our concert. Besides" — and Ben, as well as his mother, noted the flush that overspread her face as she added this last item — "I promised Dr. Gordon an hour's



practice to-morrow afternoon, and he is depending on me."

"“Do the duty that lies first, dear,” quoted her mother, trying to speak in her usual tone. “It is class time just now. You must at least defer your reply until after the French recitation. After that I shall be ready to talk with you. Your father feels the importance of being courteous to the McAllisons; there may be more pending than we, who do not understand business, realize. He knows the young man so well that he does not take into account how slight an acquaintance we have with him. Don’t worry, dear. It will all come right.”

Grace went away, but Ben still lingered. He had brought his book to the table with him, and given more attention to that than to his breakfast. But the book seemed to have lost its interest. He glanced from it to his mother’s face, as much of it as was visible. She had walked to the window, and was looking out upon the side garden, gay with flowers that he was sure she did not see. Ben’s eyes saw much in these days that he felt instinctively his mother did not want him to see, so that he had often to keep them veiled lest she should understand. He would not for the world have her understand.

It was a troubled hour to Eunice. She went presently to her room, and locked her door. She had problems to consider. It was not simply nor chiefly this one day that pressed upon



her: it was all the days. This one marked a crisis, that was all; the battle was on. She was bearing her life all over again, intensified a thousand fold, because now it touched her daughter. How was she to protect her from the "Bob Mc-Allisons" of the world? Could she alone, single-handed, rescue her from the world, its pomp, its pride, its glories, and its failures? Yet was she to look on and see her darling sacrificed? It was much, it was a great deal, that the child did not want this alluring world which was eager to hold out its hands to her; but wouldn't she *have* to take it? Must she, the mother, after all these years of planning and of suffering, come to a direct issue, and stand between the child and her father? And, if the father chose to assert his authority, had she any right to withstand it? Was she not his daughter? Nay, would it be of any use to try? Had not she herself taught the lesson that Grace had learned so well—the lesson of implicit trust in her father's judgment of men and of things? Was she now to tell her that he was not to be relied upon? That she could not safely follow his directions? If she did, would not the girl think that her mother must suddenly have lost her reason? How was it all to end? Was there any end? Was there to be another long-drawn-out travesty of living?

There has been little said concerning the matter, yet the portrayal of this life is a failure



if it has not been understood by those who have studied it thus far that Eunice Landis lived daily a life of prayer. Trouble had not withdrawn her from her girlish faith. Instead, the passing years had led her to lean more and more heavily upon an unseen arm. Not only in what she recognized as startling crises in her life; but daily, hourly, it had been her habit to inquire the way and wait for answer. But she was human, and there were times when she faltered and questioned and found herself gathering up her burdens and shouldering them again, even after she thought she had left them at the place appointed. She did so on the morning in question. She went over, and over, and *over* again, the whole perplexing, weary way, and questioned every step of it, as though she could alter her own past by studying it. Then she put it all away again, as she had a hundred times before, and asked the only important question: What shall I do now?

Before the French recitation was over, Dr. Kendall's carriage drew up at the door.

"Where is Grace?" he asked, as Mrs. Landis came out to meet him. "I have a message for her to the effect that McAllison will not be able to keep his engagement with her to-morrow, and is not able to write his regrets. He was thrown from his horse late last night and injured. No, not seriously. A broken arm and a bruised head. They will



keep him in bed for a few weeks perhaps, days anyway. Grace hasn't come yet? Then you will deliver the message, please. I gave my word that it should reach her promptly with all due regrets."

He did not hear Mrs. Landis's low-toned "Thank God!" She had not meant that he should. She was profoundly thankful; to her the accident meant deliverance. And yet the Bob McAllisons strown along her children's perilous pathway would not all or always be breaking their arms or bruising their heads. How was it to end?

There were days, even weeks, of comparative peace; the bruises did not mend rapidly. But at last Mr. McAllison was out again with as marked an interest as ever in Grace Landis, and her father's hopes were correspondingly high. Mrs. Landis, who had not been able to settle upon any plan of defence, was compelled to content herself with keeping Grace so busy with lessons and duties that she was frequently "not at home" to callers, and often, when invitations came, had other engagements. Nevertheless, there were evenings in which Mr. McAllison succeeded, and he made good use of his opportunities. Meantime, Dr. Gordon was getting into practice and beginning to have fewer leisure hours. What time he had, however, for social life, he continued to bestow with great constancy upon the Landis household,



never seeming to be drawn elsewhere by the new friends he was rapidly making. Mrs. Landis, watching with care the growing intimacy between him and her daughter, felt that the friendship was ideal in its frankness and freedom from self-consciousness, and that she could heartily enjoy their good times with the young people but for her haunting fears. As the mid-year vacation drew near, her anxieties increased. What excuse was she to make, during the holidays, that would hold her daughter back from the festivities that not her young friends alone, but her father, would be sure to press upon her? She had seriously considered and abandoned the plan of sending the girl to make a visit to her aunt or grandparents, feeling that her reason for so planning would be too patent for the good of those concerned. More than that, the father would be sure to object, and with reason. Grace's visits to the country were never made in the winter.

Other anxieties also were pressing. Not only had Mr. Landis awakened to his daughter's existence as being an important factor in his own life, but he had begun to realize that he had a son who was growing toward young manhood. He took more notice of him than he had since the boy had been too old to be frolicked with as a baby. He planned little trips covering a day or two of time, and took his son with him, putting aside loftily all objections on the score of study.



German prize. "While she studies you can give your attention to me. I should like to read some German authors with you, Burton. I am sure it is not a new thing to have two scholars, of an evening, who are not on just the same level."

"But think of the inconvenience, Eunice, and the ridiculousness of it: an old married couple forsaking their home and their dinner and going once a week to the other end of creation to a Sullivan Street boarding-house to teach German to one of the employees of our store! The reporters would have hold of it and make a first-class sensation story out of it before Friday night."

"Very well; it will be an entirely respectable sensation at least. When an 'old married couple' go out *together* to a Sullivan Street boarding-house to look after a young girl, the most censorious can find nothing to gossip about. Can you conceive of a different kind of sensation if you were to go alone? If you like it better, why not have the girl come to us? Do you remember that on Thursday evenings Jonas goes down to his mother's to spend the night, and his car passes Sullivan Street? He could see that she reached her house in safety." Jonas was the sixteen-year-old chore boy who worked at Mr. Landis's house for his board, and went to school. Mr. Landis raised himself on his elbow again and looked at his wife and laughed.



“Upon my word, Kitty, you are unique,” he said at last. “What you will do next can never be imagined, much less planned for. Very well, since your ladyship is pleased to have it so, we will pose as philanthropists in German. Nellie shall come here to your charming study, and between your calls and other social engagements you can pretend to review German. Or else I’ll review mine with you for teacher; I have no doubt but that would be the more sensible way. It is an arrangement worthy of your skill; but at least it will be better than to have you tramping off every Thursday night in search of a Sullivan Street boarding-house and a girl; and I know you well enough to believe you would do it, once you thought of it. I should have had sense enough to keep quiet.” He stopped to laugh again, then said suddenly: “But what about the prayer meeting? I declare to you upon honor that I cannot give up any other night conveniently. I looked the matter over carefully before I hit upon Thursday. However, I know how to fix it. You can go to prayer meeting with Grace and Ben, and we can take our German together after you get back.”

“No,” said Mrs. Landis, firmly. “If you can sacrifice the prayer meeting for the sake of others, so can I. As long as the German lessons last, we will excuse ourselves from the mid-week service. We shall not be greatly

missed. You have not been able to go regularly, you remember.”

The next day, which was Thursday, was a busy one to Mrs. Landis. The morning mail brought her a note from a woman whom she knew by name and by sight, but who did not belong to her world. It was much underscored and read thus :—

“DEAR MRS. LANDIS: I am *sure* you will not think me a gossip; *nothing* is further from my meaning. I am rather a true friend who *will not* stand by and see another woman wronged. I feel it my *duty* to tell you that there is a *good deal* of talk about things at your husband’s store. My daughter is a saleslady there, and *cannot help* seeing and hearing. *Some* girls will gossip, you know; and for that matter so will *some* men. Daughter says they talk dreadfully, and I told her it was a *shame!* It seems there is a new typewriter girl, a minx of a thing who is bent on getting your husband into *trouble*. Daughter says she watches for him to come that way, and smiles and simpers when she sees him, and does everything she can to attract his attention. She is what some folks call pretty, and, being a man, he can’t go by a pretty face, I suppose, so he stops and talks with her; he couldn’t well help it the way she *acts*; but that is enough, you know, for *tongues*. Daughter says she asks him to

*call on her* at her boarding-place, the minx! And she tells that he is coming to *spend to-morrow evening with her!* I told daughter it was a *shame!* and I wasn't going to *stand* it. I should just let you know what was being talked. I thought perhaps you could speak to the creature, and tell her she was ruining her character; and if she didn't stop her goings on, you would have her punished somehow. At least, I made up my mind that you ought to know it, and I hope you will take this as it is meant.

“Your friend and sympathizer,  
“MRS. JOHN SMITH.”

Within the hour a reply was sent that read thus:—

“MRS. JOHN SMITH,—

“*Dear Madam:* Your note was received. Thank you for kind intentions. In some respects you have been misinformed. Mr. Landis and I are much interested in the young girl of whom you wrote. She is an orphan and alone in this great wicked city, so far as helpful friends are concerned. She is ambitious to learn, and we are anxious to help her with her German. Mr. Landis has asked her to join us in our library this evening, that we may study together. So you see there is a foundation for the story that the two are to spend the



evening together. As much foundation, perhaps, as there is for most stories among people who hear only in snatches and imagine the rest. The habit of gossiping about other people's affairs is, as you say, much to be deplored. If all people would do as you have done, come to the persons chiefly concerned for information, less harm would doubtless result.

“Thanking you again for any thought of kindness that you had toward my husband and myself, I remain,

“Yours sincerely,  
“EUNICE HOLLISTER LANDIS.”

## XX.

### *PILOTING.*

**A**T four o'clock of that eventful Thursday, the railed-off corner of the great department store where Nellie Gardner sat at her typewriter was treated to a sensation. Mrs. Landis, who was known to some of the employees by sight, came down that way, accompanied by her husband. Mrs. Landis was unquestionably a beautiful woman. She had more than fulfilled the promise of her youth, in that there was about her an indescribable manner suggesting both grace and strength such as her youth had not foreshadowed. It was known to almost none from what storms of pain the strength had developed; everybody could see the results. Moreover, Mrs. Landis knew, and had always known, how to dress effectively. Her dressing was never what could be called "fine." It was almost severe in its plainness, yet had about it that special charm which exquisite neatness and appropriateness, together with careful attention to the small details of shape and color, always produce. It



was not unusual to see people turning on the street to gaze curiously at her as she passed, evidently trying to discover the secret of her effective toilet. She made a distinct sensation in the department store. She was, if possible, more carefully dressed than usual, having deliberately studied effect that day. The overdressed "salesladies" nudged one another and whispered as she passed. There was also another reason for the whispering. But an hour or two before Mr. Landis had sauntered that way, and paused to carry on an animated conversation with the new typewriter, who was not a favorite with her fellow-clerks, possibly in part because she distinctly prided herself upon her favor in the eyes of the man who, in the store, was second only to the heads of the firm. They watched eagerly now as he paused again near the typewriter's desk. Some of them could hear his words.

"Miss Gardner, my wife wishes to be introduced to you. Miss Gardner, Mrs. Landis." Mrs. Landis's clear enunciation made her words very distinct. "I am glad to know you, Miss Gardner. Mr. Landis tells me you have promised to study with us to-night. It was an oversight on my part not to ask you earlier to join us at dinner. We dine at half-past six, and I hope may have the pleasure of having you with us. That will surely be more convenient than for you to go home first."



The astonished girl must evidently have made some half-frightened objection having to do with her dress, for Mrs. Landis's words were distinct again.

“Oh, that need not trouble you. A dress that is suitable for the store will do nicely for the schoolroom. You and I are to be students this evening, you know.” Mrs. Landis could smile, when she chose, in a most winsome manner. The heart of the silly, golden-haired girl, who was not bad at heart, only painfully thoughtless and foolish, warmed toward the beautiful and gentle woman in spite of herself. This was very different treatment from what she had expected at the hands of Mrs. Landis, if they should ever chance to meet. Scarcely knowing what she did, she promised, under further most gracious pressure, to come to dinner; and afterward was both frightened and vain over having done so. Mr. Landis found himself liking the entire scene. His wife as a beautiful lady patroness, with eyes of unmistakable admiration levelled at her from all parts of the store, was quite as it should be. He was very far from being in love with silly Nellie Gardner; he was simply amusing himself for a few days at her expense, meaning no harm in the world, even when he kissed her in the shadowed passageway, as he had done one evening, quite without premeditation. He had laughed at her breathless—“Oh, Mr. Landis! aren't you ashamed of



yourself?" She had giggled even as she asked the question, and he argued from that that no harm had been done. This other treatment of his wife's, this graceful patronage and kindness toward one who was distinctly on a lower plane, now appealed to him as decidedly the more becoming way. He walked with the beautiful woman down the length of the store, taking the longest route to the door, and noticing the glances of admiration, while he chatted genially.

"You certainly are unique, Kitty, as I told you. I said last night that no one could prophesy what you would do next, and it is a fact. The rôle suits you, my empress, extremely well, as all rôles that you undertake do. So my little typewriter is to dine with us? She never even dreamed of such distinction," and he laughed. "The store will be green with envy, and we'll have to dismiss the little girl in a few days, because she will be so 'set up' we can do nothing with her. Never mind; it will be good fun while it lasts."

His prediction did not hold true. Nellie Gardner was not "set up" in the way he had surmised. She came to dinner in gala array, having secured an extra hour from the store, through Mr. Landis's influence, that she might rush home and make her toilet. But the result was that for the first time in her life she felt herself ill-dressed, in spite of, or perhaps because of, the fact that her gown was far more "showy"



than the one Grace Landis wore. A few words from her mother had prepared that young woman to be especially attentive and gracious to their guest. The German lesson, also, was a success. Mrs. Landis held herself carefully in the background, making suggestions only when she saw that her husband's technical explanations were befogging his pupil. It was a relief to discover that the girl really wanted to learn, and had made commendable progress by herself.

Mrs. Landis's efforts did not stop with this one interview. She had set out primarily to save her husband, but she had a heart also for the girl. Young and pretty and ill-taught and environed with dangers, unless some one who was wiser than she got control, what was there for her but moral shipwreck? Mrs. Landis worked untiringly and skilfully to gain control. Her first effort was followed up by numberless others, aided and abetted by her daughter, who saw only the girl. Before the German lessons had been in progress for six weeks a distinct change began to be visible in the typewriter. She laughed less, and talked less, while engaged in her work at the store. Her manner, especially to Mr. Landis, began to be marked by a certain respectful dignity, which, had she assumed it in the first place, would probably have shielded her from his special notice. Far from being annoyed by the change in her, Mr.



Landis distinctly liked it; he even complimented her on her improved manners. A weaker man than Mr. Landis might have been hard to find; but it would be easy to find worse men at heart than he.

Two others looked on, helpfully when they could, at the moral transformation which was taking place under their eyes. These were Grace and Ben Landis.

“Isn’t mother wonderful?” the daughter said one evening, speaking to her brother. It was a “German” evening, and the mother was in the library. “You and I know that she has no need to review German. Do you remember what Herr von Frien said that evening when he heard her read? Yet she has given up Thursday evening and the prayer meeting for the sake of that girl. There are not many women like our mother.” Ben, large-eyed, serious beyond his years, having thoughts about matters that he kept to himself, seeing certain things, of late, that no one knew or suspected that he saw, looked steadily out of the window and said not a word for several minutes. Then he spoke gravely, with thoughtful deliberation:

“Yes, that’s true; there isn’t another woman in the world like her, I believe.”

Within two months the German lessons began to pall on Mr. Landis. One evening he deliberately retired to an easy chair and left his wife to explain the difficult portions.



“I believe I have mistaken my vocation,” he said gayly to the pupil. “My wife is evidently the one who should teach, and I should be her scholar. I did not know that you were so fine a German scholar, really, Mrs. Landis. It is absurd to talk about your reviewing with me.”

Not long after this the evening for the German lesson was changed. Mr. Landis had to spend Wednesday evenings at the store, going over matters of business with department clerks. At his own suggestion, at least he thought so, it was arranged that Nellie Gardner should come on Wednesdays, and that his wife should be the teacher. Then he went, on three successive Thursdays, with his wife, to the mid-week prayer meeting. On one of these Thursdays Nellie Gardner came to dinner and accompanied them to the meeting, and heard Mr. Landis pray. It seemed to fill her with amazement. Others besides herself were moved by his prayer. A middle-aged woman in a very plain dress and with a careworn face held out her hand to him as she passed.

“Let me shake hands with you,” she said. “We belong to the same church, and that prayer of yours did my soul good. The help of it will go with me through the week.” Mr. Landis was greatly touched.

“It is wonderful,” he said, as they walked toward their car, “in what simple ways one can touch and influence the lives of others.”

There were tears in that woman's eyes to-night. I ought to remember my opportunities better, I suppose. I must try to plan so as to be more regular in attendance at this meeting."

Mrs. Landis said not a word. The years had rolled between them and that night in which she had clung to his arm and told him, as they walked home from prayer meeting, that to hear him pray was better to her than any music.

As for Nellie Gardner, she was not only willing to make the change from Thursday to Wednesday, she distinctly enjoyed it. She had a recognized place now in the family of Mr. Landis. She was the pupil and protégée of Mrs. Landis, and as such Mr. Landis patronized her; but they chatted and laughed together at the store no more. Not because the man had grown wiser; it was simply that the fascination connected with that entertainment had been, somehow, brushed off, and the entire matter turned into plain prose. Mrs. Landis, watching, praying, planning, drew, in the course of time, the long-drawn-out breath that meant relief, and knew that her husband had been piloted safely past one more rock that had threatened shipwreck. She knew also, and there was a grateful thrill in her heart over this, that in piloting him she had been allowed to save the girl Nellie.

And then, Mr. McAllison returned from his



hurried trip to Paris. One of the first things he did was to call on Mrs. Landis and her daughter, and shatter the mother's eager hope that he had met with some one while abroad who had turned aside his fancy for Grace. He was so genial in his manner, so courteously attentive to them both, and so interesting in descriptions of scenes and experiences connected with his journey, that they could not but enjoy his call. Yet the mother — watching with anxious eyes that still must not appear to watch — saw, with inward thanksgiving, that Grace, within five minutes from the time of his departure, after saying cheerfully that to hear him describe certain scenes must be almost as pleasant as to look for one's self, turned to the eager study of a difficult accompaniment that she was learning for one of Dr. Gordon's songs. It was evident that the child suspected neither Mr. McAllison's intentions nor her father's wishes. When she came to know the latter, — and the mother saw that this knowledge was imminent, — how would it affect her?

Without any special planning upon the part of any one, it had come to pass that Mr. Landis scarcely knew of, or rather scarcely remembered, Dr. Gordon's existence. This had resulted very naturally. It chanced that Dr. Gordon's evenings were almost wholly occupied with work that he was doing in the laboratory at the College of Physicians, and his leisure time was



during the hours when physicians with extensive practice were giving attention to "Office hours."

"The sole attention that my office hours need at present is to sit where I can keep an ever hopeful eye on my office door," Dr. Gordon remarked cheerfully to Mrs. Landis when he was visiting her, "and it is surprising how much more cheerful it is to watch it from your window than mine."

As this chanced to be also Grace Landis's least occupied hour, it is not surprising that her presence frequently contributed to the sociability. Almost imperceptibly to all concerned, it became a habit to expect Dr. Gordon to drop in soon after luncheon for a little visit. With increasing frequency he came to take luncheon with them, being brought often by Ben, and occasionally sent for by Mrs. Landis, when there was some dainty dish that she knew would remind the young man of home. As the days passed, and the friendship grew, he began to feel at liberty to drop in occasionally, unasked of any one, and to feel sure of a welcome. Yet the master of the house had met him but formally and all but forgotten him. His own home life was very limited, and more and more frequently "business," or calls connected with business, seemed to claim even his evenings. He renewed his knowledge of Dr. Gordon at last in a way that created embarrassment and discomfort. It was just after dinner,



and the family were together in the library, when Grace received a summons to the parlor. She returned in a few minutes, and replied to her father's question as to who had called:—

“It is Dr. Gordon. He is waiting, mother. He came to say that he has found that he will not have to be at the college to-night, and that he can call for me at eight o'clock. He can have Dr. Kendall's carriage. I told him I would see if you had made any other plans for me.”

“Call for you for what?” It was the father's voice with a note of displeasure in it. “It seems to me that this is an unusual proceeding. Who is Dr. Gordon, and how does he happen to be on such familiar terms with my daughter?”

Grace looked her intense surprise, not to say distress, and the mother wished that she had herself responded to the call to the parlor. She made haste with her explanation.

“Don't you remember him, Burton? You met him at Judge Templeton's, and afterward here, the evening that the Waylands called. He is a valued friend of Dr. Kendall. There is a musicale this evening at Professor Webber's. Grace is to sing; and Dr. Gordon, who did not expect to be able to go, finds that he can, and has offered to call for Grace. That is all.”

“It seems to me quite enough. There is not the slightest occasion for anything of the sort. 'Phone for a cab, of course, if you don't want Grace to go in the trolley. The Havi-



land cars pass Professor Webber's door, and Ben can go with her, I suppose. I should think, Eunice, you had laid aside your usual nice sense of propriety, if you are willing that our daughter should depend upon a stranger to take her to an appointment, even though he has the privilege of borrowing Dr. Kendall's horses."

"A stranger!" began Grace, in amazement. "Why, father—" and then the look in her mother's eyes arrested her words. The mother spoke quickly:—

"Ben can take you out there, dear, if your father prefers it."

"I prefer it most decidedly. Who is Dr. Gordon, pray, that he should presume to the honor of an evening drive with my daughter? I confess I am surprised, Eunice. I supposed—" She interrupted him with dignity.

"I will explain at another time, Burton. Daughter, you ought not to keep Dr. Gordon waiting longer. His time may be limited. Say that your father has arranged that Ben shall take you. Or—would you rather have me speak to him?"

Mr. Landis interposed. "Let her do her own explaining, Eunice; she is not a child. If you don't know what to say, tell him your father does not approve of a stranger taking such liberties as he has done, and considers himself a model of endurance because he doesn't go and kick him out for his impudence."

## XXI.

### *“HOW WAS IT TO END?”*

**P**OOOR Grace moved slowly toward the parlor, a look of perplexity and pain on her face. Here was a new phase of life for her. She had never before heard her father speak in that manner. Could it be possible that he knew something wrong, or at least unpleasant, about Dr. Gordon? She dismissed the thought at once as having to do with the impossible. But—what a singular idea to speak of him as a stranger!

Within three days came a complication that simply added to the girl's bewilderment. They were at the breakfast table, and the morning mail had been brought in and examined while they lingered.

“What have you there, daughter?” Mr. Landis asked, as, having given attention to his own letters, he noticed a heightened color on Grace's face while she examined one of hers.

“It is a note, father.”

“So I observe. My question had rather to



do with its contents. They are not secret from your father, I hope."

"It is just an invitation to take a drive to Coldbrook."

"With whom?" There was an ominous frown on Mr. Landis's face, and his voice had a peremptory note in it new to his daughter.

"There is quite a large company of young people going, I believe, in single carriages. My invitation is from Mr. McAllison."

The frown lifted at once.

"Is it, indeed?" her father said graciously. "That is quite a distinction. It is not every lady as young as yourself whom Mr. McAllison honors with attentions. Coldbrook is a charming spot, and the drive there is simply delightful. I was always planning to take your mother on that trip; but I have had to live such a grind of a life as to leave no time for pleasure. I am thankful that there are pleasanter prospects for my children. When are you to go, daughter?"

"The plan is to go to-morrow afternoon. But — I will decline my invitation, shall I not?"

"In the name of sense, why? You are the only girl in the city, I am sure, who would harbor such a thought for a moment."

"But you know, father, what you said about my driving out with a stranger."

"Oh, that was entirely another matter." Mr. Landis spoke in utmost kindness; the



deference which this beautiful daughter evidently paid to his wishes was delightful to him. "Dr. Gordon is a stranger, it is true, a mere nobody, so far as our knowledge goes; while Robert McAllison is the son and heir of the senior partner of your father's business house. I have known him since he was a boy, and am ready to vouch for him in every respect. Of course, you may accept his invitation. Your father isn't an ogre, child, who desires to keep you from legitimate enjoyment. He merely wants to guard your pleasures with the utmost care, as a careful father should. Write your note of acceptance at once, and I will take it down town with me."

His daughter's face did not brighten.

"But, father," she said, in evident distress, "I don't want to accept the invitation. Mr. McAllison seems almost a stranger to me. I never exchanged a dozen sentences with him, and I do not know the people who are going. I shouldn't enjoy it at all."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Landis, sharply. "One whom your father knows so well need not be considered as a stranger. I tell you I have known him all his life. And he will introduce you to a choice set of young people with whom you properly belong. It is quite time you met others than those who chance to be your companions in school. You cannot remain a schoolgirl always, and I am only



too glad to have you introduced among another class by Mr. McAllison. You cannot get into any higher set in this city, remember, than the McAllisons'. I desire you to accept the invitation. If you do not care anything about your own advancement in life, think of your father. It would not be very good policy on our part to offend a McAllison, I can assure you."

Mrs. Landis arose suddenly from the table.

"Burton," she said, "do you realize what time it is? You have lost already the car that you usually take, and it is time for the next one."

Thus recalled to his business trammels, Mr. Landis looked at his watch and made a sudden exit, grumbling as he went that he hoped and trusted his children would never have to be tied down to hours as he had been all his life. His last word to Grace was a direction to reply to her invitation without delay.

"Mother," said Grace, as the door closed after her father, "what can I do? I don't want to go to Coldbrook. Why is father willing to have me go, when I don't know Mr. McAllison one-quarter as well as I do Dr. Gordon? And what could be done about the rehearsal? It is the last one before our concert. Besides" — and Ben, as well as his mother, noted the flush that overspread her face as she added this last item — "I promised Dr. Gordon an hour's



practice to-morrow afternoon, and he is depending on me."

" "Do the duty that lies first, dear," quoted her mother, trying to speak in her usual tone. "It is class time just now. You must at least defer your reply until after the French recitation. After that I shall be ready to talk with you. Your father feels the importance of being courteous to the McAllisons; there may be more pending than we, who do not understand business, realize. He knows the young man so well that he does not take into account how slight an acquaintance we have with him. Don't worry, dear. It will all come right."

Grace went away, but Ben still lingered. He had brought his book to the table with him, and given more attention to that than to his breakfast. But the book seemed to have lost its interest. He glanced from it to his mother's face, as much of it as was visible. She had walked to the window, and was looking out upon the side garden, gay with flowers that he was sure she did not see. Ben's eyes saw much in these days that he felt instinctively his mother did not want him to see, so that he had often to keep them veiled lest she should understand. He would not for the world have her understand.

It was a troubled hour to Eunice. She went presently to her room, and locked her door. She had problems to consider. It was not simply nor chiefly this one day that pressed upon



her: it was all the days. This one marked a crisis, that was all; the battle was on. She was bearing her life all over again, intensified a thousand fold, because now it touched her daughter. How was she to protect her from the "Bob Mc-Allisons" of the world? Could she alone, single-handed, rescue her from the world, its pomp, its pride, its glories, and its failures? Yet was she to look on and see her darling sacrificed? It was much, it was a great deal, that the child did not want this alluring world which was eager to hold out its hands to her; but wouldn't she *have* to take it? Must she, the mother, after all these years of planning and of suffering, come to a direct issue, and stand between the child and her father? And, if the father chose to assert his authority, had she any right to withstand it? Was she not his daughter? Nay, would it be of any use to try? Had not she herself taught the lesson that Grace had learned so well—the lesson of implicit trust in her father's judgment of men and of things? Was she now to tell her that he was not to be relied upon? That she could not safely follow his directions? If she did, would not the girl think that her mother must suddenly have lost her reason? How was it all to end? Was there any end? Was there to be another long-drawn-out travesty of living?

There has been little said concerning the matter, yet the portrayal of this life is a failure



if it has not been understood by those who have studied it thus far that Eunice Landis lived daily a life of prayer. Trouble had not withdrawn her from her girlish faith. Instead, the passing years had led her to lean more and more heavily upon an unseen arm. Not only in what she recognized as startling crises in her life ; but daily, hourly, it had been her habit to inquire the way and wait for answer. But she was human, and there were times when she faltered and questioned and found herself gathering up her burdens and shouldering them again, even after she thought she had left them at the place appointed. She did so on the morning in question. She went over, and over, and *over* again, the whole perplexing, weary way, and questioned every step of it, as though she could alter her own past by studying it. Then she put it all away again, as she had a hundred times before, and asked the only important question : What shall I do now ?

Before the French recitation was over, Dr. Kendall's carriage drew up at the door.

"Where is Grace?" he asked, as Mrs. Landis came out to meet him. "I have a message for her to the effect that McAllison will not be able to keep his engagement with her to-morrow, and is not able to write his regrets. He was thrown from his horse late last night and injured. No, not seriously. A broken arm and a bruised head. They will



keep him in bed for a few weeks perhaps, days anyway. Grace hasn't come yet? Then you will deliver the message, please. I gave my word that it should reach her promptly with all due regrets."

He did not hear Mrs. Landis's low-toned "Thank God!" She had not meant that he should. She was profoundly thankful; to her the accident meant deliverance. And yet the Bob McAllisons strown along her children's perilous pathway would not all or always be breaking their arms or bruising their heads. How was it to end?

There were days, even weeks, of comparative peace; the bruises did not mend rapidly. But at last Mr. McAllison was out again with as marked an interest as ever in Grace Landis, and her father's hopes were correspondingly high. Mrs. Landis, who had not been able to settle upon any plan of defence, was compelled to content herself with keeping Grace so busy with lessons and duties that she was frequently "not at home" to callers, and often, when invitations came, had other engagements. Nevertheless, there were evenings in which Mr. McAllison succeeded, and he made good use of his opportunities. Meantime, Dr. Gordon was getting into practice and beginning to have fewer leisure hours. What time he had, however, for social life, he continued to bestow with great constancy upon the Landis household,



never seeming to be drawn elsewhere by the new friends he was rapidly making. Mrs. Landis, watching with care the growing intimacy between him and her daughter, felt that the friendship was ideal in its frankness and freedom from self-consciousness, and that she could heartily enjoy their good times with the young people but for her haunting fears. As the mid-year vacation drew near, her anxieties increased. What excuse was she to make, during the holidays, that would hold her daughter back from the festivities that not her young friends alone, but her father, would be sure to press upon her? She had seriously considered and abandoned the plan of sending the girl to make a visit to her aunt or grandparents, feeling that her reason for so planning would be too patent for the good of those concerned. More than that, the father would be sure to object, and with reason. Grace's visits to the country were never made in the winter.

Other anxieties also were pressing. Not only had Mr. Landis awakened to his daughter's existence as being an important factor in his own life, but he had begun to realize that he had a son who was growing toward young manhood. He took more notice of him than he had since the boy had been too old to be frolicked with as a baby. He planned little trips covering a day or two of time, and took his son with him, putting aside loftily all objections on the score of study.



It would do the boy good, he declared, to get away for a few days occasionally from the eternal grind of lessons. There was something besides books to be learned. The youngster would know nothing about the world if he were kept all the time in a coop at home bent over his books.

“Your policy may do very well for girls,” he said to Eunice, in one of the many times when they discussed the question, “though I think you are carrying it altogether too far in Grace’s case; but I tell you boys won’t stand that sort of thing. They have got to have their liberty, or be ruined. Why, at Ben’s age I had been looking out for myself for years, and here he is still being coddled!”

Sometimes it was impossible for his wife not to wonder what manner of man he would have been if in his youth he had been judiciously “coddled.”

Ben, meantime, was changing. The mother felt it, and could not be sure what secret springs were being moved. He was not so frank with her as he used to be, and at the same time he was even more tender of her, and more constantly on the alert for her comfort. With regard to the little trips taken with his father, about which she would like to have heard in minutest detail, he was especially uncommunicative. Yet incidents connected with them sometimes leaked out, or were hinted at, that



filled her with grave fear. Mr. Landis on one occasion contributed definitely to these fears.

“I don’t suppose I can make you realize it,” he said to Eunice in his half-vexed tone one evening, “but you are making a perfect ‘Molly Coddle’ of Ben. Last night, when I kept him down town to dine with us, McAllison tried to be friendly with him; showed him attention enough to turn the head of the average boy, and I wish you could have seen how he received it! He positively declined to play a game of whist with us. McAllison, when he found that the fellow didn’t know one card from another, offered in the most good-natured way to teach him, and assured him that his blunders wouldn’t make the least difference with any of us. The youngster simply stood on his dignity. He didn’t care to be taught — there was no occasion for his wasting time in learning, as he did not choose to put such knowledge in practice, and several other rudenesses. I don’t know when I have been more mortified. If it had been some men, talked to in that way, they would have felt insulted. But McAllison is a perfect gentleman. He was as good-natured as possible; he even commended the boy on general principles, though he told him he would understand when he was older that gentlemen made distinctions between card-playing as a business and as an occasional pastime. He wasted his kindness. Ben was as stubborn as a mule. That is your



influence, Eunice. I told McAllison that my son had been too long exclusively in a feminine and middle-aged atmosphere, and that it would take time and patience to rub off the extremes. I shall undertake the training of the boy myself, and try to teach him that his father is a gentleman, and associates only with gentlemen; and that if he is ever to be recognized as such, he must cultivate a different manner from the one he exhibited last night."

## XXII.

### *“DON'T YOU WORRY.”*

**T**HE habit of criticising his son, and of objecting to many of the theories on which he had been reared, grew upon Mr. Landis. He indulged in many homilies when he and his wife were alone, with Ben for a text. Boys, he affirmed, could not be wrapped in pink cotton and kept in glass cases, whatever might be said of girls. In these days it was absurd for a young man to act as though he were afraid of a pack of cards or a glass of wine. The fact was, extremes of any sort were dangerous. It was the boys who were brought up to be scared at the thought of a social game of cards even in their own homes, and who dared not sip a glass of claret, no matter by whom offered, who eventually supported gambling houses and liquor saloons.

“Reaction is precisely what I should look for in a fellow like Ben, and as a man who knows life, I should advise you to let up your hold on him in these directions before you drive him to extremes.”



It was in this way that one of the homilies closed. The mother could not keep herself from anxious thought. Was there truth in the warning? Mr. Landis certainly had opportunities that she had not for knowing the world. Something was troubling Ben; she had seen that for several weeks. Had his father discovered that the boy was even now brooding over the narrow environments of his life and feeling that he was trammelled? With the sense that was ever upon her of being singularly alone in the training of her son, had she been too strenuous, and was he realizing the evil effects? She was led to give voice to certain of her fears one evening to Dr. Kendall, on one of those rare occasions when he lingered for a few minutes' talk that was not professional. Once again she saw that characteristic lift of his shoulders which sent her back to her girlhood.

"Don't worry over anything of that kind, Mrs. Landis," he said quickly. "Ben has reason to be thankful that his home associations are not in any way connected with cards, for instance. Of one thing you may be certain. The young man who has never learned to play for amusement is not the one who is suddenly tempted some evening to add to the interest by playing for — something else." There was significance in his tone, and the suddenness with which he had checked himself, and finished his sentence in another form, had not escaped the



listener. It roused afresh her anxieties as a wife. Was her husband sometimes tempted to "add to the interest" of a social game, and was the doctor aware of it? The instant alarming query was, Where did the money come from?

Not long after this conversation Dr. Butler called, and found the family alone. The pastor of so large a flock as Dr. Butler's could not, of course, be a frequent visitor in many homes, and Mrs. Landis felt that, although she had been a member of his church for years, she had but slight acquaintance with him. When, therefore, Mr. Landis brought forward the subject that had of late been discussed by his wife and himself, she listened with eagerness, hoping for an ally.

"Dr. Butler, I wonder if you would not find my wife a fit subject for instruction? There are points, not exactly of theology, it is true, but of social observance, for instance, on which she and I differ. To illustrate as nearly as I can formulate her views, she believes that boys should be brought up in cages. Gilded ones, you understand, and plentifully supplied with lumps of choice sugar, but still cages. They must not go here, and they must not go there, for fear of some sort of moral infection. They must never taste anything stronger than water, for fear of becoming drunkards; and they mustn't touch a pack of cards, not even at home with their fathers and mothers, for fear of



becoming gamblers ; and so on, through the entire list. Now what do you think of all that ? ”

Mr. Landis’s tone had been sufficiently whimsical to admit of his pastor’s listening with an amused smile, and shaking his head playfully at Mrs. Landis. There was another who listened eagerly. He detected the undertone of intention in his father’s question. His mother saw that Ben, who was in the back parlor, screened from their guest’s view by the drooping curtains, partly closed his book and gave earnest heed to the conversation.

“ It is dangerous business, Mr. Landis, to come between husband and wife ! Gallantry ought to hold me to the lady’s side. Isn’t that so, Mrs. Landis ? And yet, in the interests of the rising generation, I am afraid I must vote, in part at least, with your husband. In our laudable desire to guard our young people from possible dangers, some of us are tempted to go to the perilous verge of safety. The boy who is taught to believe that there is a serpent lurking somewhere in every pack of cards, and who finds on investigation that in themselves they are innocent pieces of pasteboard which very respectable people handle skilfully without harm, is the very one who is tempted to rush to the other extreme, and so find the serpent in very deed. ”

“ Precisely what I have told her ! ” said Mr. Landis, triumph in his voice. “ I am glad that



she is hearing it from such a distinguished source. The boys who are held too closely, in their homes, are the very ones who, later, crowd our drinking saloons and gambling houses. The true way, I tell Mrs. Landis, is to use all these things with moderation, learning self-control in precisely the same way that we learn other lessons, and being manly enough not to go to extremes in any direction."

Dr. Butler bowed his approval. "I do not see that you need an ally, after all, my dear sir. You have put the whole question into an admirably brief statement. The habit of controlling one's tastes and inclinations within the limit of safety cannot be too early acquired."

"And what," asked Mrs. Landis, "is to be done with those who do not acquire the habit, and fail to stay within the limit of safety?"

Dr. Butler shook his handsome head, which was old enough to be well touched with gray. "My dear madam, that is a sad question which every pastor studies with more or less pain. What shall be done with the army of immoderates who are bent on ruining themselves? I can but shake my head and say, 'If only they had in some way been taught self-control in their youth, how good it would have been!'"

"But is there not in our text-book a hint of a higher law than control for the sake of self? A law that holds its subject to the sort of example which would be safe for those to follow



who are able to refrain altogether, but who have not strong enough wills to go part way? I supposed that was what Paul meant when he spoke of the 'meat' that made his brother offend."

Both men laughed. "Paul did not live in this city," said Mr. Landis.

"Nor in this age," said Dr. Butler, significantly, as he arose to take leave. His host went away with him. When Mrs. Landis, who had accompanied them to the hall, returned to the parlor, Ben was at the piano. He touched the keys gently, improvising after a fashion of his own, filling the room with soft, sweet strains. The twilight was falling swiftly. In a few minutes all the room was in shadow. Mrs. Landis crossed to the chair she had left but a moment before, and dropping into it shaded her face with her hand. She felt strangely depressed. Under cover of the darkness she even allowed a tear or two to plash unheeded on the hand that lay listlessly in her lap. If one's pastor felt and talked these things, how could one expect to stem the tide? She had never felt more utterly alone. Suddenly the music ceased, and Ben came up behind her chair and softly kissed her hair, then her nose.

"Don't worry, mamma," he said, using the name that he kept for very special occasions, "I'm not going to rush off straightway and ruin myself, simply because you have tried



your level best to keep me from danger. It would be a pretty poor stick of a boy, I should say, who would persist in going to the dogs because he had a father and mother who did what they could to help him. If Dr. Butler had been talking with me, I should have told him so. I could tell him of fellows who are ruining their fathers with cards, that they learned how to handle in their own parlors; and I, for one, am glad that those 'innocent bits of paste-board' haven't a single association with my home or my mother. Don't you be afraid for me, mamma," — more kisses, this time on her moistened eyes, — "I shall not go back on you if all the preachers in the land do."

And the mother smiled through her tears, and felt a warm glow at her heart, and was comforted.

Before the spring fairly opened, Mr. Landis's suspicions and vexations took fire.

"What in thunder does it all mean?" he asked, when Eunice and he were in their dressing room. "Are you bent on ruining your daughter's prospects in life, as you did your sister's? McAllison has had rebuffs enough to permanently offend a man less infatuated. Why do you keep Grace down to studies and set hours in this way? He tells me that he hasn't been able even to get speech with her for more than a week! I don't care if she never gradu-

ates, so that she marries Bob McAllison. You didn't graduate, and I should like to know wherein you suffered by it! Suppose your mother had hedged you in as you are doing to Grace, and never given me half a chance? What would have happened then?"

What, indeed! there had been terrible hours of which he knew nothing, when his wife had asked herself that question.

She was goaded now to plain speech.

"Burton, Grace does not care for Mr. McAllison's society. I planned to have her excused from his calls this week because she asked me to do so. She is unusually busy and very much interested in her work. She felt that she had not time to give to society, and could not seem to make him understand this."

"I should think not! What girl in her senses could expect to make a man like Bob McAllison understand that she did not want his attentions! Do you suppose he has to beg for ladies' society? Grace is acting like an idiot. She ought to have time for him. Her eternal lessons ought not to be allowed to interfere in a way to ruin her prospects for life. Not only hers, either; the entire family is involved. I blame you, Eunice, more than I do her. If you had made the situation plain to her, she would have discovered long before this that it would be an excellent idea for her to learn to want the attentions of that man. You don't



understand the situation yourself; it seems impossible to make it clear to you. I tell you, Eunice, it means for me independence on the one hand, or beggary on the other. Bob McAllison can give me any position in the store that he chooses. You can see for yourself, I should hope, what sort of a position it will be likely to be if Grace turns the cold shoulder on him; and I tell you frankly, that if I don't get help from that source, or some other, we — oh, well, there is no need to talk nonsense. The only point is that Grace must be made to understand that for the sake of others as well as herself, it will not do for her to act like a fool. Will you undertake it, or shall I?"

"Mr. Landis, am I to understand that you wish to sell your daughter to the highest bidder?"

Eunice spoke in the tone to which her husband always gave heed.

"Nonsense!" he said, but it was spoken quietly and with a changed manner. "Don't go into heroics, Eunice; they don't become you so well as they used. You and I have grown too old for that sort of thing. Of course, I want nothing in life but Grace's good. Naturally, it would be pleasant enough to have for a son-in-law a man who could, by a turn of his finger, put us all above the range of money anxieties; but you ought not to need to be told that Grace is the first consideration. What



under heaven does the child expect? Youth, culture, high position, and wealth all ready to be laid at her feet. I believe the man would propose to-morrow, if he only had half a chance. There isn't a girl in the city, of marriageable age, that he couldn't have for the asking. There must be something in the way that I don't understand." Mr. Landis was growing excited again. "That reminds me to ask why that long-limbed doctor is hanging around our house so much. He seems to be altogether too much at home with the members of my family to suit my taste. Ben quotes him *ad nauseam*. It seems to me, Mrs. Landis, that your usual good judgment has rather deserted you. Cannot you be made to appreciate the fact that Grace is a young lady, and that men who hover about her in that fashion in all probability have matrimonial intentions?"

Mrs. Landis hesitated, and felt her face flushing. At last she said, in a somewhat constrained tone: "You forget that Dr. Gordon is a friend of our family physician, and is a stranger in town and a neighbor. Of course, under those circumstances, he is made welcome to our home."

"That is all very well, my dear. You know that hospitality is one of my virtues. If I remember correctly, we have had several skirmishes before now, rising out of my desire to exercise it; but I wish always to remember my



duty to my children. If Dr. Gordon were a white-haired old man, he might live in our home without demur from me; but as it is, I have my eyes open.

“Oh, yes, I know he is very fond of Ben; but, you may take my word for it, that it is because the chap happens to be Grace’s brother. I saw the fellow look at her the other night in a way that means business. I’ve had my wings scorched, myself, and know the signs. Aside from Grace altogether, merely on the score of philanthropy, if you don’t want to make life miserable for him, you ought to be careful. What is this entertainment that Grace and the rest of them are talking about?”

“It is a class party. They are to have charades based on historic events; but there is nothing elaborate, or that requires much time. They are to depend chiefly on such costume and scenery as are available at the moment. The chief object, I think, is fun.”

“And how does Dr. Gordon happen to be associated with it? He isn’t a classmate.”

“He is simply an invited guest. He is helping them with the charades because he seems to understand how to do so.”

“And he and Grace are to be in charades together, aren’t they?”

“I believe so. The charades, as I told you, are chiefly to create fun. The characters are mostly grotesque, and there isn’t a sentimental



touch about them. I think, Burton, you can trust both your daughter and her mother."

"That depends — evidently they don't know the world any too well! I tell you frankly, that I don't like it in the least; and that if you have set yourself deliberately to the thwarting of my plans, I won't have it."

## XXIII.

### *AN INJUNCTION.*

**N**OR was this by any means the last that Mrs. Landis was destined to hear on the subject that had roused her husband to an unusual degree. They were interrupted in the usual way by the discovery that the man who was a "slave to hours" was late and must hasten, but he renewed the charge that very evening, beginning where the morning had left him. Who was Dr. Gordon, he asked his wife fiercely, that he should be thought of in the same season with a man like Bob McAllison?

She was goaded into the cold statement that if he could rise above the belief that every girl, even before she was through with schooldays, looked upon every man who chanced to call on her as desiring to marry her, he might understand his own daughter better.

"That is all very fine," he said, pushing another pillow under his head and arranging the afghan for greater comfort. "I am well acquainted, you know, with your lofty theories.



The only trouble is that facts do not bear them out. I told you distinctly that I knew Bob McAllison meant love and marriage; he as good as told me so. And the other one means the same thing; and unless Grace has been brought up as an idiot, she knows it. Trust a girl for understanding these matters, even though her mother has forgotten her girlhood! What I say you are doing is to allow Grace to be thrown daily into companionship with a fellow who is in no sense of the word her equal, and whom I should never tolerate for a moment in connection with her. And in this way you are wronging the child."

Two bright spots glowed on Eunice's cheeks, but she controlled both voice and manner as she said: —

"I have certainly not been planning marriage for our daughter, Burton, nor has there been any such exclusive companionship as you seem to think. But I will confess that I do not understand your words about Dr. Gordon, nor do I know why you should not look at least with calmness upon a closer acquaintance with him if it should ever become necessary. He is from an unexceptionable family, and is himself in character and reputation all that the most careful father could desire."

"Oh, his family!" quoted Mr. Landis in uncontrolled scorn. "How much money has a practising physician, do you suppose, to



divide among ten or a dozen children? I don't know how many children there are, I am sure; but he is forever boasting of the houseful of brothers and sisters. Suppose the father is a famous physician! A man cannot support a family on fame! There are very few doctors, let me tell you, who make the financial success that your old admirer Ben Kendall is making. There are very few who get pushed as he was. You will never find him doing for Dr. Gordon or any other fledgling what Porter did for him; he is too fond of money himself, and he knows how to look out for Number One exceedingly well. Gordon isn't of that type. He will never be a rich man. It makes me indignant to think of your speaking of him as having any possible connection with Grace, when the only son of the heaviest business man in this city stands waiting for her. The stupidity of the average woman, where her own interests are concerned, is beyond belief. But I told you this morning what I may as well repeat. I expect to see my daughter the wife of a merchant prince, and for her own sake I don't propose to allow any folly that might have a tendency to overturn my plans. I distinctly forbid that charade foolery. Have Grace withdraw entirely from the entertainment if she cannot enjoy it without having her name associated with that pill-vender's. As for this eternal chatting and song-singing with him, I



shall tell her myself it must come to an end at once. There has been far too much of it for her good. I regret exceedingly that I haven't taken matters in hand before."

It might not have been politic, but one plain word Mrs. Landis allowed herself, with that quality in her voice which represented strength.

"I think you have forgotten, Mr. Landis, that she is my daughter as well as yours."

It was a sentence over which her husband pondered. His wife, then, even after being assured that Bob McAllison was not simply amusing himself with a passing fancy, but meant the highest honors for their daughter, was not in sympathy with the idea. Incredible as it seemed, she would apparently rather see Grace married to that long-limbed doctor than to a McAllison. Such being the case, it behooved him to be very careful. He had strong faith in his wife's capabilities, but he had also faith in himself. "If it is really a case of 'Greek meeting Greek,'" he said to himself, "why — we shall see!" and he laughed a little over the prospect.

That charade party became a source of endless embarrassment to Grace Landis. She was disturbed beyond measure when she heard of her father's edict.

"But, mother, why should he object to charades just now when he has never done so



before? Don't you know how he planned that charade party at Grandma's, and arranged almost everything himself, and had me appear in nearly every charade? Ours are much simpler than some of his were. Why, it is simply fun anyway; and there is nothing that could possibly offend any person's taste. You know that, mother. Did you tell father that every one of them had been talked over with you, and the one you didn't quite like had been dropped?"

"It isn't simply the charades, daughter," said the perplexed mother, who, for various reasons, was afraid of saying too much. "The truth is, your father doesn't like to have your name so closely associated with Dr. Gordon's. He thinks it not in good taste. You remember, dear, I did not quite like the idea of your appearing together in four different scenes."

The color deepened on Grace's cheeks and spread over her sensitive face. "But I explained that, mother," she said. "It was simply to save trouble, and time. The same costume does for three of them, with slight changes, and it fits me. The girls all understand it; they planned it so as to avoid confusion and delays between the acts. Besides, there are half a dozen others in the same scenes. I had nothing whatever to do with the arrangement." Her embarrassment seemed to increase as she talked, and was much greater



than the occasion warranted. Her mother tried to reassure her.

“Grace, dear, I understand that, of course; I had no thought of blaming you, or of blaming any one, for that matter. It is just one of those happenings which seem so natural that those concerned do not give it any thought. One hearing about it for the first time, and not understanding the details, sees, perhaps, what we do not think of. We have been a bit careless, that is all.”

She did not think it necessary to tell her daughter that the father had not asked, and had not been informed, how many times she appeared with Dr. Gordon in the charades; but continued to explain, as gently as she could, that what must now be considered was the fact that the father objected with emphasis to Grace's taking any part whatever in the entertainment. She explained that she had done what she could to secure a compromise with regard to this one party, but he had been inexorable. He had no objection to the class party, but he had to the charades; and here again the mother did not enter into detail as to their one objectionable feature—her child might think what she would. She was emphatic, however, in her opinion that as matters now stood the least embarrassing way would be to withdraw from the entertainment altogether.

“But, mother, how *can* I?” and Mrs. Landis



had never seen her daughter more emphatic. "Cannot you see that it will break up the entire programme? It is too late now to supply my place. And what explanation could I make at this late day? What will — what will the girls think?"

"Daughter," said Mrs. Landis, pushing away the work with which she had tried to cover some of her feeling, and giving Grace the full benefit of her troubled eyes, "I believe I appreciate to the full your embarrassment, and you may be sure that I did what I could to save you. What I must ask you now is, Do you wish to go on with the entertainment as it is planned, knowing that it is distinctly contrary to your father's expressed desires?"

The girl was standing by the piano, one arm leaning upon it, and her head resting in her hand. With her other hand she had turned the leaf of a sheet of music that lay near; her mother knew that it was a song of Dr. Gordon's. A line of the words had been corrected in pencil, and as Grace's eyes rested upon it, the shadow of a smile played around her mouth for a moment, evidently over some memory. Then she made a movement of impatience and pushed the song from her.

"Why need he —" she began, and stopped. There was silence in the room for several minutes. When Grace spoke again, it was in a changed tone. "Mother, you know, of course,



that I will not play charades contrary to my father's wishes; they are not worth that. But — it seems to me that something more than an evening's entertainment is involved. There are friends to be considered whose feelings will be hurt. I do not know how I am to explain it; I don't understand it myself. Am I to say I have suddenly discovered that my father does not approve of charades, when it is less than a month since he took part in one and helped to plan others? Or if it is my part in them that he does not like, I am afraid people will think there was no hint of this at our mid-year frolics."

Mrs. Landis hoped and believed that her daughter would never know how much she, the mother, stood in need of pity at that moment. She had spent her life, as a mother, laboring to teach her children that their father's opinions were to be respected, and that his slightest word was law. Now she foresaw with strange pain that she had probably succeeded. Grace might hold back, might question, might writh, but in the end she would do "of course" as her father said. And this decision would involve — what? However, this line of thought must not be indulged. For the present it was certainly better not to rouse Mr. Landis too thoroughly by opposition. She tried to speak soothingly.

"You must remember, dear, that your father has to be absorbed in business a great deal of



the time, and does not give much attention to what is going on outside. He is just awaking to the fact that he has a grown-up daughter, instead of a child, to think about. Cannot you see that doings which were of no consequence in childhood begin to take on importance when one becomes a young woman?" She was not succeeding very well. Her daughter's face did not soften.

"I have not involved myself in any doings of which my mother disapproved," she said, and they were the coldest words she had ever spoken to her mother. Oh, to be able to say to her: "Child, I know it! you have done no wrong. It is I who have permitted, even fostered, indeed, an intimate friendship with one man in order to save you from the toils of another." But in that case she would have to add, "And that other is the man whom your father is resolved you shall marry." Ought some such words to be said? Not yet; she did not know how to say them. She held herself to tones that did not hint at anything out of the ordinary. "Shall I explain to Dr. Gordon that your father has grown suddenly jealous of you, and wants to withdraw you from the wicked world of charades and other 'poms and vanities,' and keep you still a child? I think I can do it without hurting his feelings."

She never forgot the look in her daughter's eyes, nor the sound of her voice, low, grave,



and self-sustained: "You cannot do it, mother, without hurting the truth. It is not 'the world' of which my father is afraid. Has he told you of the party which is to be at Mr. McAllison's in a few weeks, where the people are all to dress in character, and wear masks? Some of the characters are what I am sure you would call 'questionable,' and as for masks, I did not know that refined society approved of them, but my father wants me to wear one." Then Mrs. Landis knew that she had no word ready to say; and there was silence for several minutes. It was Grace who spoke again.

"I will give up the class party, of course; I will not go contrary to father's directions in ways that I can help, but I would rather tell Dr. Gordon myself." Then she went away, leaving her mother to ask herself if her years of self-abnegation and sacrifice had been spent in vain.

To have seen the girl, later that morning, as she walked down the oak-lined avenue leading from the college, one would not have supposed that she had given serious thought to anything that day. Dr. Gordon had overtaken her and possessed himself of her books, criticising her at the same time for carrying so many, and assuring her that if this sort of thing continued the next generation would have to be accompanied to and from school by drays. She had interrupted him gayly.



“Save your breath, doctor, please. You need it for something of more importance than my poor books. Do you know you must train some other ‘Alice’ and ‘Huldah’ for those remarkable literary charades? I cannot perform.”

He gave her a quick, anxious look, and his solicitude showed in his voice. “Is it too much for you, Grace? Do you feel that you are overtaxing yourself? I have been afraid of it all the spring.”

She gave a gay little laugh. “Not in the least, doctor. You are nothing if not professional! It is father who is being overtaxed; he objects, and, like the dutiful child that I am, I obey.”

“Oh, I do not wonder at his anxiety; you know very well what I think of your work; but some one ought to tell him that the frolic for which you are preparing is the very let-up you need from mental strain. Didn’t you explain to him that the charade party was historic nonsense instead of research and dignity?”

“I explained nothing. Mother talked with him, and she is sure that he is inexorable, and that the charades must go, or rather that I must stay. Don’t fathers generally pitch upon some triviality that happens to be in line at the time? I haven’t told the girls yet, and I rather dread it. They consider all the details arranged, you see. Couldn’t you help me out



by suggesting some one to take my place, and promising to train her, so that they need have no trouble about it?"

"That is an altogether comfortable and unselfish sloughing off of responsibility," he said. "Relief for you and wholesale martyrdom for the rest of us. Why should I not, rather, follow example and desert, since you are the one who smuggled me in, and since my interest in the affair falls flat as soon as you leave it? Come, if one person can, on the eve of a great historic function, composedly decline to serve, why may not two?"

She looked up at him with a sudden flash in her eyes that was almost appeal. He did not know how hard she was trying to treat the matter as a triviality, not worthy of serious words.

## XXIV.

“*WE MUST WAIT, I SUPPOSE.*”

“**Y**OU will not do that,” she said quickly.  
“Why will I not?”  
“Because you are thoughtful of others, and will not desert them at a time when it would cause embarrassment and distress.”

“And you, who have a nine times more important rôle than I, will desert them at just such a time because you *are* thoughtless of others! Is that the logic?”

“Because I cannot help it.” There was the faintest suspicion of feeling in her voice. Dr. Gordon gave her another of his quick, searching glances and laid aside his humorous tone.

“Grace, is there more to this than appears on the surface?”

There was no help for her but to call an excess of dignity to her aid.

“I don’t quite understand the question, Dr. Gordon. I find, at a late hour it is true, but I am not to blame for that, that my father objects to my taking part in these charades; and



I therefore consider it my duty to withdraw, and beg the committee to overlook the trouble I am unintentionally making them. Surely, there is nothing wonderful in such a state of things."

"Certainly not." He was as dignified as herself. "Pardon my obtuseness in not understanding it at once. Since those who will be disappointed and inconvenienced are all your friends, and not mine, whom I am trying to serve simply for your sake, you mean, I suppose, that I ought not to be the one to complain."

He was undoubtedly hurt, as she had feared he would be; he had been too thoroughly a friend to be put aside with surface dignity. Poor Grace could not bear it.

"Don't be cross," she said softly, in her natural tone. "I am ever so sorry to lose the fun."

He was eager to meet her halfway.

"Was I cross? I beg your pardon. I am bewildered. This is all so unexpected and so — excuse me — preposterous! If we were planning for a masked entertainment, I could understand your father, or at least appreciate his objections. By the way, what does he say to that? The formal invitations are not yet out, but I heard that I was to have one, and of course you will be invited. Has your father heard about it? A very large party at the McAllisons', all guests



to masquerade in costume. No man in his senses would object to impromptu charades among intimate friends, and smile on a masked party, would he?"

And then Grace was glad to recognize her friend Laura Watson crossing the street to them, and to stop and wait for her, and to call out to her that they were doing so. It gave her no opportunity to answer that question. Dr. Gordon walked beside the young ladies almost in silence, while Grace chattered eagerly, with a nervous desire to have no breaks in the conversation. Laura left them at the corner on which the Landis home stood, and Grace was rushing up her own steps with hurried thanks to the doctor for carrying her books, when he stopped her.

"Just a moment, Grace. What does your mother say to all this? I beg your pardon, I ought not to ask such a question, perhaps. I don't quite know what ought to be said under such peculiar circumstances,—” this, with a slight laugh,—“I only know that I must have a little talk with you as soon as possible and make sure of some things. Will you drive with me this afternoon? I have to meet Dr. Kendall out at the Belmont place at three o'clock, but I shall be detained there only a very few minutes, just long enough indeed to give the doctor a message; and it will afford me the opportunity I have been seeking, if you



will go. The drive there is delightful, you remember."

"Doctor, I can't!" Her voice was constrained.

"Why can't you?"

"Oh! there are reasons. I cannot explain now. Dr. Gordon, won't you please excuse me? I have an appointment just at this time that I ought to keep."

"I will not detain you a moment; only tell me when I may see you alone. I have something very special to say. May I call this evening?"

"No; not this evening. I am — I must not make engagements for this evening. Some other time, I cannot tell you when. Dr. Gordon, I think I *must* be excused at once. Professor Blickfeldt is waiting for me, and it makes him very angry to be kept waiting." And she turned from him and ran up the steps, conscious the while that her excuse must sound both childish and heartless. The frowning face of the professor of music could be seen distinctly peering out from the library window, but Professor Blickfeldt might have waited if Grace had known what to say to Dr. Gordon.

An evil fate seemed to pursue her that day. Had a tableau been planned by one who hated her, she felt that it could not have been done more effectively than it was that afternoon. She had been more than willing to go to the down



town library on an errand for her mother. The desire to get away alone and think out certain problems for herself pressed upon her, and this would afford opportunity. But it chanced that her father lunched that day at home, a rare event, and waited to ride down town with her.

“I shall have the pleasure of escorting a beautiful young woman across Broadway once more,” he said, smiling down upon her as they waited on the porch for their car. “I used to have that privilege quite often. You are a pretty girl, Grace, a very pretty girl; but I am not sure that you are quite up to what your mother was at your age.” And then there came into view, not the car, but the McAllison family carriage, with the son and heir and his fifteen-year-old sister as sole occupants.

“What good fortune!” exclaimed the young man. “Adele and I were just planning to stop and try to persuade Miss Landis to fill one of our vacant seats, and, behold, we find you both ready for a drive, I hope.”

“Never more ready,” was Mr. Landis’s quick and gay reply. “I have just been congratulating myself on having the rare pleasure of a trip with a young woman. I’m bound for the store, of course; perhaps you can set me down there? As for my daughter, her objective point is the library, I believe.”

Mr. McAllison was on the ground, waiting to seat his guests. There was no rational way



of avoiding the courtesy. He sat down opposite Mr. Landis and talked with him genially, leaving Grace to the merry tongue of his young sister. They drove at once to the store, and their host descended with due ceremony, and further distinguished Mr. Landis by standing on the sidewalk with him for a few seconds. Then he took the seat beside Grace and gave the order to his coachman to drive to the park.

“Your father said I might give you an outing before setting you down at the library,” was his smiling explanation. “It is such a perfect day for driving, and the park boulevard is in such perfect condition, that I am sure you will enjoy it.”

The park boulevard was, for a mile or two, the most direct route to the Belmont place, and as they bowled along, Grace had the pleasure of seeing Dr. Kendall's phaeton pass them, and of having Dr. Gordon, its sole occupant, look back and lift his hat to her with grave ceremony. He could not see the look that the encounter brought to her eyes, nor the question in her troubled heart, “What can he think of me *now*?”

Whatever he thought he kept to himself. At least he did not enlighten Grace, and his presence in the Landis household no longer annoyed its head. The class party, with its semi-impromptu charades, took place at the



given time, without Grace Landis's assistance or presence. Through the indignant girls, who could not help thinking that she had deserted them unnecessarily, she learned that Dr. Gordon had been "perfectly splendid!" He had filled all the gaps, and helped the new ones to manage their parts, and made the whole affair a perfect success, "in spite of traitors!" The *College World* had announced that, "Miss Landis having been detained from the entertainment by a slight indisposition, her important parts in the charades had been ably sustained by," etc. Which statement was as near the truth as newspapers often come.

In due course of time the party at the McAllison mansion took place, and here also Miss Landis was conspicuously absent. On that occasion the girl appeared at home in a new rôle; she was very quiet, but certainly very firm, or, to quote her father's word, "obstinate," in her refusal to accept the invitation. Nor did she choose to give other reason than a determined "Father, I don't care to go." Mr. Landis was at first excessively annoyed. He accused Eunice sharply of undue influence and unfair authority. He did not understand the ring of satisfaction in his wife's tone as she replied: "Burton, I have not exchanged one word with Grace on the subject of that party. She has not given me so much as a hint of what she intended to do about it."



Such a state of things puzzled Mr. Landis fully as much as it rejoiced his wife. Heretofore he had looked upon Grace as a pliant subject, who would always be swayed by her mother, unless her father could manage in some way to gain the ascendancy. He knew his wife too well to doubt her statement for a moment, or even to consider that it must be taken with allowance. Therefore he must think of his daughter as having a decided will of her own; and if it must be "managed" instead of simply guided, it behooved him to move with caution. He found he was making no headway whatever with indignation, and therefore changed his tactics and became loftily indifferent.

"Oh, very well, daughter, please yourself, of course. If you do not care to appear in good society, nor appreciate a courtesy when it is shown you, it is not a matter that one would like to force. It is true, I should have been pleased to show that my family was sufficiently cultured to appreciate invitations sent out of courtesy to me; but then, I do not wish to oblige you to take a position for which you are evidently not fitted. I must wait, I suppose, and hope that you will, sometime, be old enough to appreciate unusual opportunities.

"Never mind, Kitty," he said to his wife, by way of atoning for certain words that he felt had been sharp. "I confess I thought at one



time that you were a bit unfair in the amount of influence you were exercising over Grace, and was somewhat sore over it, you understand. But I find that my young lady is disposed to have her own way, in spite of either of us. She must be cajoled, it seems, into that which is for her own interest. So be it. You have always this consolation in dealing with me: I never mean more than half I say; unless I am telling you that, with all your whims and eccentricities, — and you will allow that you have tons of them, — you are the sweetest and the most charming woman in the world, and I have always known it. Farnsworth says he should like to know how it is that I contrive to stay a lover after nearly a quarter of a century of married life. I told him the explanation was simple, that I was a lover in the first place. Which was rather hard on him, poor fellow!”

“Why did he marry Miss Merivale if he did not care for her?” Eunice asked the question quietly, more for the sake of showing that she acknowledged her husband’s apology than for any other reason. She had long ago lost all interest in the “Farnsworths” and “Merivales” of her husband’s world, and was indifferent to their motives.

“Oh, he got discouraged, I suppose; tired of everybody else, and of poor Julia, too, for that matter. A case of marrying to get rid of her, I fancy. The laws of propinquity helped;



Julia was eternally around, you know, and was the sort of girl who seemed always to be expecting to be made love to. Queer girl, Julia was. She hasn't worn well. Have you seen her lately? She looks terribly faded out. As a matter of fact she is not more than five or six years older than you, and she looks twenty years older, at least. It annoys Farnsworth a little, I guess. He is always harping about your looking so young. The fact is, Kitty, that fellow never forgave me for stealing a march on him by marrying you before he got around. As for me, whenever I think of poor Dolly, and her hard life, and of Farnsworth's thousands, I wonder how you can forgive yourself."

Mrs. Landis replied only with a smile. She never argued on these matters with her husband any more. Of what use to remind him that her sister Dorothy's life was, in her own estimation, blessed above that of all other women; and that if she herself had her own life to live over again, she would make even more strenuous efforts than before to keep those two forever apart? He had not understood in his young manhood, he had not grown in the direction that could help him to understand now.

The spring term of the college in which Grace Landis was a pupil spent itself; the commencement season came, and passed. Grace was graduated with all the honors that her col-



lege could bestow, and was no longer, in the common acceptation of that term, a schoolgirl. Her father, who had been for several weeks, even months, biding his time, waiting for this hour, was doomed to further disappointment. He had explained the declined invitation to the party in a manner that he considered eminently skilful.

“ It clashes with some of her notions, Robert, about masks, and matters of that kind. I understand it perfectly. The child has no end of whims; they come naturally, her mother had them. She was a clergyman’s daughter, you understand. Grace is like her mother in some ways, but she will rise above all these ideas; give her time. I have been so tied down to business, always, that I haven’t been able to give her the attention I should, and a girl kept at home with her mother grows naturally in narrow grooves for a while. But Grace has a mind of her own, I assure you. She cannot be driven, any more than her mother could. We shall just have to exercise a little patience. It is true enough that she has no time just now for social life, nor even for her intimate friends. The grind of the closing months of school is upon her. As the commencement season approaches, the child is simply submerged! What with themes, and exams., and what not, it is a wonder that she isn’t wild. It is all wrong, this making everything in life subservient to



the whirl of a few weeks, during which the finishing process is supposed to be taking place. I have higher ideas of education than that, myself; but when a girl is fairly in the swim, nothing can be done but to stand aside and wait until high tide tosses her on shore. I assure you, I shall be very glad when it is all over, and my daughter has a chance to become rational again."

## XXV.

### *CHECKMATED.*

**B**UT she remained irrational. In the face of most fascinating plans that her father mapped out for the summer vacation, including that much delayed trip to the White Mountains, this time with "Bob McAlison" in his mind instead of Farnsworth as a central feature, the girl whom, when he was vexed with her, he called her mother's own child in every particular, held persistently to her desire and determination to spend the summer at her Grandfather Hollister's. Not for anything that the White Mountains had to offer would she disappoint grandfather and grandmother and Aunt Dorothy, and all the dear old friends of that neighborhood. She liked Brantford better, she believed, than any other spot on earth. No, indeed! two weeks there would not satisfy her, nor four. She wanted the whole quiet summer in the country. She needed the rest of it. She had had noise and rush enough during the past nine months to last for a lifetime. This summer was simply a



vacation. He had promised that she should go on with her music and German and Latin when they were at home again; so she wanted the summer for real rest. He would like her to get the utmost enjoyment possible out of her vacation, would he not? Well, then, that was the way and the only way for her to get it.

Mr. Landis was forced to yield; at least, he decided that yielding was discretion. If the child was ever to be made to carry out the dear wish of his life, it must be done through yielding to her whims and coaxing her to his side. The days when a father could command his daughter to marry the man he had chosen for her were, he reflected regretfully, among the past.

So daughter and son fitted early to Brantford, to be followed by Mr. and Mrs. Landis as soon as the former's vacation, which was this year to be extended to six weeks, fell due. Mr. Landis told his wife and daughter, with reproach in his tone, that he was indebted to Bob McAllison for his additional two weeks of breathing space. Some men, he said, could be true to their friends, it seemed, even though they were despicably treated. He had, however, new plans concerning the summer, about which he kept his own counsel.

Mrs. Landis never forgot the rest and peace of those weeks in the home of her childhood. Dr. Hollister, white-haired and venerable, yet



clear of voice and firm of intellect as ever, was still the beloved pastor of the First Church, with a younger man to bear the brunt of the labor. Or, as the doctor genially put it, "My assistant does the work, and I give orders, and preach occasionally, and enjoy myself." Much of his enjoyment that summer was found in long talks with his son-in-law. Mr. Landis's relish for theological themes seemed to have returned in full force. At least, he sat by the hour in the good doctor's study, listening flatteringly and asking an interested question now and then, and was so entirely satisfactory that the doctor told Eunice it was really surprising what a grasp her husband had on religious thought. For one who had never made a study of theology, it was truly wonderful. Whereat Eunice smiled. She believed that she was, at last, thoroughly acquainted with her husband. She by no means considered him a hypocrite, in the crude use of that word. She did not consider even his appetite for theology a feigned one; but rather that, because he saw it pleased the old doctor to have a listener who was at leisure, it became his pleasure for the time being to gratify the theologian. She knew that Mr. Landis had always been his best self at Brantford, and old associations had not lost their spell. Certainly he gave himself up to the simple, restful cheer that was all about him. More than that, he helped



to create it. He was gay when gayety was the order of the hour, and perfect in his sympathy when an event occurred in the parish to call it forth. He was attentive alike to old and young. The parish generally enjoyed him.

"He is a good talker," said the men. "Posted on all sorts of subjects, and interested in everything worth talking about." "And so thoughtful and attentive!" said the elderly women. "Isn't it charming to see how careful he is of Mrs. Hollister's comfort, and as devoted to his wife as though they were just married!"

"He is so gay and genial," said the young women, "better company now than the average young man." Certainly, Burton Landis was at his best that summer, and won golden opinions. Afterward Mrs. Landis said, a tender memory in her tones, "I am glad we had that summer together at Brantford."

The days passed, and Mr. Landis matured his plans and bided his time. His friend and ally "Bob" McAllison had been compelled to make a trip to the West with a younger brother who was an invalid, and to remain long enough to see him comfortably settled for the season. So some time must elapse before the projected scheme could be carried out.

It was Mr. Landis's belief that the young man would be able to fit into the simple, unconventional life at Brantford, or at least be



able to fit into his daughter Grace's thoughts, much better than at home. "She has so many people and things to distract her there," reasoned the wise father. "But in the country, where there is no one who is in any sense of the word her equal, and where she will miss the atmosphere to which she has been accustomed, it will be strange if, thrown in the same house with him for a few days, she does not lay aside some of her frigidity and get at least on friendly ground with Bob. I'm a strong believer in propinquity, anyhow; I've seen it accomplish wonders." So he worked at his little surprise. The air of careless ease with which he asked the necessary question at the latest possible moment was inimitable.

"By the way, mother, is the old manse filled to overflowing, or is it like the traditional omnibus, 'always room for one more'?"

"We've always room for another," said the hospitable hostess, with a smile for her favorite son-in-law, "provided it is some one that we want to see. Have you a friend coming?"

"Yes, a business acquaintance who writes me that he will run down for a day or two and talk over some matters with me, if I will listen. It is rather a bore to talk business in vacation, but it has to be done sometimes. Of course I can entertain him at the hotel, but that would tear me away from the family circle a good deal." He laughed, as he spoke, with the air



of a man who knew he was an acknowledged acquisition to the family circle.

"We can make him comfortable," said Mrs. Hollister; "let him come right here by all means. When do you expect him?"

"Why, that is the annoying part. His letter played truant, and reached me only this morning. He will be here to-night, unless I wire him to the contrary."

Were his ease and indifference a trifle overdone? His daughter gave him one quick, searching glance, then dropped her eyes on her plate and ate her muffin in silence. By whatever process she reached her conclusion, before the muffin was finished, she was quite sure that the stranger, on business plans intent, was none other than Mr. McAllison, and she herself was the business that her father, at least, had in hand. Not only this, but certain other conclusions were reached before they left the breakfast table.

Mr. Landis and his son Ben had taken to making excursions together, sometimes to a famous country resort, occasionally to the nearest town. The troubled feeling with which Eunice had at first regarded these trips had settled into something like comfort. She did not allow herself to argue out the reason why there had come to her an instant sense of relief at the discovery that it was the son who with quiet skill pressed his company upon his father, sometimes under quite marked protest, instead



of its being the father who urged the son. It would have been the depth of humiliation boldly to have confronted the thought that she trusted the boy, and was vaguely anxious for his father; therefore she would not permit herself to think about it.

One of these excursions had been planned for the day. Father and son therefore departed very soon after breakfast, Mr. Landis assuring them all that he would return in ample time to meet his guest. Grace waited until the two had been gone for half an hour before she went to her grandmother with some of the results of her rapid thinking. She waylaid her in the hall with her arms full of fresh linen.

“Grandmother, you needn’t move the sewing out of the pink room; father’s friend can occupy my room; I’m going to run away to Aunt Dorothy’s.”

Mrs. Hollister let a mound of towels fall to the floor in her surprise.

“Why, child! not to-day?”

“This very morning, grandmother. I’ve been packing my bag. I’m all ready now, and I can fix up my room for the guest.”

“But Grace, dear, I thought you didn’t mean to go to Dorothy’s until next week? Is your mother going? What has started you so suddenly?”

“Changed my mind, grandmother. I’ve thought of something about which I want



Aunt Dorothy's help. Oh, no, mother will wait until father is ready. I'm going to surprise auntie. If I had mentioned it before father and Ben went, Ben would have thought he must see me to the train, and that would have delayed them. I don't need any help to get to the train; just as though a girl of my age couldn't take care of herself, in the country, at least. Oh, yes, mother knows all about it, of course."

"Well, well!" said Mrs. Hollister, "you young things do beat all for flying around. You are like your Aunt Dorothy, child, almost more than your mother, in some things. Dorothy was always in a rush. That's just like her, to start up all in a minute and do something unexpected. Your mother was quieter."

Grace laughed. "Mother is quiet now," she said, "but she always accomplishes. Haven't you noticed that, grandmother?" She carried her point, of course, and parried successfully Mrs. Hollister's perplexed questions and objections to losing her favorite grandchild. Neither did the young girl say one word about the scrap of conversation that had passed between her mother and herself.

"Dear child, I don't quite like your starting off in this way, all alone. What leads you to think it is Mr. McAllison who is coming?"

For answer she had been kissed two or three times, with a whimsical air, and between the



kisses these words: "Be a good little mother this time, and don't ask a lot of hard questions. I don't 'think,' mommie, I *know*. And I don't believe you are going to disgrace your daughter by hinting that she cannot be trusted to step on a train of cars and ride twenty-five miles in broad daylight."

Hours before the father and son returned from their trip, Grace was safe under the protecting wing of her Aunt Dorothy.

There was, however, an irate father. Mr. Landis's annoyance was excessive. He even showed, for the first time in his life, an irritable front toward his mother-in-law. In their room together, Eunice, of course, had to bear the brunt of his vexation, and she had rarely seen him so disturbed. This lasted for an hour or two, then his face gradually cleared, and his inevitable tendency to make the best of things came to his aid. "I guess I'm a fool, after all," he said, by way of apology. "It isn't so bad when one comes to think of it on all sides. In fact, I'm not sure but it will be a decided improvement. In that scrap of a town Grace will find it difficult to get up an engagement or an interest that will absorb her. She will really have to give poor Bob a little chance, in self-defence, if for no other reason. Upon my word, I am not sure it could have been better planned; it is the very opportunity Bob needs; and what she needs, too, for that matter. If



she could once overcome her ridiculous shyness, which grows out of having kept her a schoolgirl for so long, and get really acquainted with Bob, she couldn't help but enjoy him. Well, if he gets here to-night, we'll follow my lady by the morning train; and I'll renew my long-interrupted attentions to Dolly, and make an effort to get acquainted with my respected brother-in-law, while Grace entertains Bob. There are some fine drives in that part of the country, they say, and Grace can take the nag and that ridiculous 'carryall' of theirs, and do the honors. It's a capital idea."

In vain Mrs. Landis racked her brains for some excuse to at least delay her husband's plans. She could think of no argument that would not be more likely to precipitate them; and was compelled to see the two men make a triumphant start the next morning for the only train that stopped at the country town where Dorothy lived. The return train was late in the evening. Poor Grace would be almost driven to at least one day of Mr. McAllison's society, without her mother to relieve her. It looked as though the child had outwitted herself.

During the short car ride, Mr. Landis discoursed genially to his companion.

"My little girl will be taken by surprise. She had not the remotest idea that the 'business friend' I was expecting was an acquaintance of



hers. I was planning, you understand, to give her a pleasant surprise. It is rather hard on a girl of her caliber to be spending her entire vacation in a dull old town like Brantford. She is so loyal to the family traditions and to the feelings of her grandparents that she could not be persuaded to go elsewhere. I admire it in her, but nevertheless it is pretty tedious business. I planned to brighten the way, now and then, with one surprise and another, and you were the first one, you see. I had no idea the child might start up suddenly and run off to her auntie, although it was natural enough on the principle that any change is better than eternal sameness. A queer old place that, where my respected brother-in-law seems content to spend his days. I don't know how they do it, these clergymen. Magnificent wife he has, too. Fitted to shine in any society, and just buried alive back there. There is one consolation, Grace will have no opportunity to flit or to hide. My little girl is as shy as a fawn. I understand her perfectly; she has seen such frantic efforts on the part of some, to force themselves into a society where they do not belong, that she is not going to give envious persons a chance to say that she meets her opportunities even one-third of the way. Moreover, the child is as innocent as a dove. It isn't often in these days, McAllison, that one finds a rosebud with none of the bloom brushed off."



Mr. McAllison frankly admitted that one of Miss Landis's attractions was her rare unconsciousness of her charms; and was so evidently interested in anything that could be said about her, that Mr. Landis's satisfaction and hopes increased every minute.

At last they were in the trim little village where the Reverend Joseph Thorndyke, Dorothy's husband, was the leading pastor. They were walking up the rose-lined path that led to the hospitable-looking piazza of the manse, where old-fashioned porch rockers stood about in a way to suggest delightful tête-à-tête visits.

The Reverend Joseph Thorndyke, hospitality in his voice and a twinkle in his eye, greeted them cordially.

"Warm day, isn't it? Come in, out of the heat; always cool in our parlor. Just from home, Burton? All well there, I hope? You and your friend are just in time to help me keep bachelor's hall. I was ordering my dinner by 'phone, when you rang. I'll just multiply the order, and we'll be all right. No trouble in the world, I'm only too glad to have company. 'Grace'? Why, the fact is, she and her auntie have run away!"

## XXVI.

### *THE UNEXPECTED.*

**T**HE Reverend Joseph stopped to laugh at the amazed, not to say disgusted, face of his brother-in-law.

“Sounds badly, doesn’t it?” he said, “but those are the facts as briefly as I can put them. They left me this morning, early. I drove down to the junction with them, for the coast train, you know. To tell the truth, Dorothy is rather tired out; ministers’ wives have so many irons in the fire to look after; she runs the parish, practically. She needed a few days of complete rest. And Grace wasn’t looking quite so well, we thought, as she was last summer. Been studying too hard, hasn’t she? So they ran away together, you see; it will do them both good.”

“‘Where have they gone?’ Well, now,” with a genial laugh, “you couldn’t ask a harder question to answer. I’m the one who naturally ought to know, if anybody did, and I honestly don’t. Oh, you needn’t look so crushed, Burton, it isn’t a complete separation;



she is coming back. But you know, or rather you don't know anything about the continual demands made on a pastor's wife in a country parish. The only hope of complete rest is to go where letters and telephone messages and all that sort of thing won't know how to reach her. They have only gone down the coast a little way, to one of the resorts. There are about a hundred of them along this coast, Mr. McAllison, within easy reach. Nice little resorts, too, many of them quiet enough for complete rest. So I packed them off this blessed morning, and am left in such dense ignorance that I can tell no deacon nor directress nor secretary among them where she is to be found. To be very accurate, they actually did not know themselves which of several places they would decide to stop at. Good joke, isn't it? Of course they can telegraph me if they want anything, and they took young Jo and Ned along for ballast; but they are off on a genuine lark, and mean to have the fun of it. I hope you didn't want to see Grace for anything special?"

"I certainly do want to see her very much indeed," said Mr. Landis, in his most dignified tone, and he looked as though he should enjoy kicking his smiling brother-in-law. "My friend here has taken a long journey for the pleasure of having a little visit with my family, and has only limited time. It is a very extraordinary state of affairs, indeed; that is, if



you really do not know where to communicate with them. I must confess that I do not fancy having my daughter where I cannot reach her even by telegram. I wonder you could consent to such a scheme, Joseph!"

"It does sound rather absurd, doesn't it? But I was willing to take the risk, what risk there is, for the sake of giving Dorothy a complete rest. It isn't as though she hadn't the boys with her. I'll trust them to take good care of their mother, and their cousin, too. And then, you know, they have the advantage of us, because they know just where to reach us all. They could 'phone to me from any one of the points along the coast. Oh, I shall hear in a day or two, of course. In the meantime, take it comfortably. We'll have a good bachelor dinner by and by, and a drive when it gets cool enough. The warmest day of the season; I'm glad the girls are where it is cool. Oh, bless you, no! no sort of use to try to hunt through that row of seaside resorts. Why, there's one about every mile! Besides, we've only one coast train a day from this point. That's the one they took. The others all go straight through to the city, you know. Have to wait until to-morrow, anyhow."

There was no help for it. Grace and her Aunt Dorothy and that innocent-looking Uncle Joseph, with his twinkling gray eyes, had outwitted Mr. Landis. That gentleman could see



himself hunting drearily through that thickly populated coast in search of a daughter, and knew that he must do nothing so absurd. Neither could they get back to Brantford until evening. They must accept the inevitable with what grace they could.

The Reverend Joseph Thorndyke did the honors of his house with skill and hearty kindness. He gave them an excellent dinner, drove them to all the points of interest he could think of, and finally to the station for the late afternoon train to Brantford, promising with the greatest cordiality to report promptly as soon as he heard which of the many available resorts the truants had chosen for their outing.

It ceased to be a matter of importance, however, in twenty-four hours more. Mr. McAllison had not been able to arrange his affairs for a long stay at Brantford. In fact, his duty was imperative to join his friends the next day but one, in order to carry out engagements made when he had fondly supposed that the Landis family would choose the same locality for their summer. To Mr. Landis's hint that he should change his plans sufficiently to give them a little more time, he replied gloomily that there was to be a "confounded wedding" among the family connections, and he was expected to serve in some stupid capacity or other, he had forgotten what. Mr. McAllison was evidently disappointed. But not more so, ap-



parently, than was Mr. Landis. His annoyance and chagrin were bitter. He took savage revenge on Grace. Her outing with her Aunt Dorothy was cut short, and she was summoned home like a naughty child. She came back to Brantford meekly enough, and was very quiet under her father's stern rebuke to the effect that had she been less childish she might have saved him the disappointment of his life. As it was, he thought she had demonstrated her inability to take care of herself, rushing off like a sixteen-year-old schoolgirl, and even hiding her whereabouts from her friends, as though she were ashamed of it! Hereafter she would do well to stay where her father and mother could watch her. Over this sarcasm his daughter looked grave, rather than indignant. Now that the excitement of the affair had passed, it almost seemed to her that she deserved sarcasm. Would it not have been more womanly, and better in every way, to face the situation, and speak to Mr. McAllison the dignified truth? Such, sooner or later, must be the outcome, if the man was sincere, and she had no reason to believe that he was not. Ought she not to have done it without all this skirmishing? Deep in her heart was a reason that she did not like to confess to herself. It was impossible to avoid seeing how entirely her father's hopes were centred on this plan of his, nor could she fail to realize how bitter



would be his awakening to a disappointment. In the stress of the first bitterness he might be tempted to be severe, unjust, to — she put it vaguely — to others; and the results might be lifelong in their pain. Still, she knew that the issue was only postponed.

The summer holiday closed, and they went home. In a short time thereafter life appeared to be moving in the regular grooves to which they were all accustomed. Grace Landis was almost as much of a schoolgirl as before her graduation. What with her music, and her Latin and German, and her “eternal professing,” as her father phrased it, “one had no chance to visit with her.” But he said it pleasantly, and was very patient with her. Mr. McAllison had not yet returned, and under such circumstances whatever held his daughter back from general society was to be encouraged rather than frowned upon. Never, in her busiest school days, had Grace Landis worked harder, or seemed to be more absorbed in her studies. She declined society invitations in a manner that gratified her father for the present, and at the same time made him feel uneasy about the future. He assured himself that something must be done to get the child out of this mood before Bob McAllison returned and the real season opened, but did not allow himself to have real anxieties. He could not well see how there could be need for anything more than a



*Grace Landis was almost as much of a schoolgirl as before her graduation.*





little wholesome parental authority. There was no "Aunt Dorothy" under whose wing the girl could hide, with a mischievous Uncle Joseph to aid and abet her; and he had seen to it himself that other possible entanglements were nipped in the bud. He laughed softly whenever he met Dr. Gordon, and returned with the utmost friendliness that gentleman's grave bow. For Dr. Gordon came no more to practise his songs, and "rub up" his knowledge of German, and eat friendly luncheons with the Landis household. He had not even called since they returned from the country, save in the most formal manner on one of Mrs. Landis's "at home" evenings. Then he had come in with a number of others, had made his call as brief as propriety would admit, and had exchanged not a single sentence with Grace. Mrs. Landis, looking on, condemned by prudence to silence, felt that something had gone wrong, and watched with an anxiety, such as none but mothers can understand, the almost feverish absorption of her daughter in the studies and pursuits that, in the natural order of things, would, by this time, have lost a little of their power.

Grace, who steadily kept her own counsel, had her hours of pained and painful questioning. Why should Dr. Gordon continue to treat her as he did? What had she said or done, during that last vividly remembered interview, to justify him in meeting her with only



the courtliest of bows, after their weeks and months of friendship? Could he not have seen that day that there were reasons beyond her control why she must at that late hour overturn their plans and cause trouble and embarrassment? Even if he could not, had the class entertainment been so much more to him than to her that he must toss aside her friendship as a worthless thing, because she had failed her class? And he had said, that day, when he had asked her to drive, that he had something very special to say to her; she remembered the exact phrase, and her face flushed painfully now over the remembrance of the significant tone in which it had been spoken. She had been compelled to refuse the invitation, but couldn't he see that there were again reasons beyond her control? Wasn't she sure that if she accepted, her father would forbid her going, and there would be scenes that would multiply the trouble a hundred-fold? But, because a girl who for ever so many weeks had been his friend, had reasons that she did not care to mention for declining a single invitation, was she not, therefore, to be recognized as a friend any more? Was the "very special" thing he had to say to her of so little importance, after all, that he could afford to abandon its saying because she could not drive with him? What if he had met her, afterward, in another man's carriage? Could he be sure that she could not explain



even that to his satisfaction, if he would but give her a chance?

Still, if he could not trust her by so much, — and at this point in her thoughts Grace Landis drew herself up proudly and looked like her mother, — perhaps it was well that he had turned away from her friendship before any “very special” words were spoken. Yet, because they had not been spoken, and because, being a girl who had suddenly become a woman, she knew what those words were to have been, she must keep her pain to herself. Not even her mother must know the bitterness of the valley through which her child was passing. She believed, poor foolish child, that her mother did not know, did not imagine. That was because, while she might be bearing something of the pain of womanhood, she knew nothing about motherhood.

There were times when the mother told herself that she must know at once just what had passed between Dr. Gordon and her child. Had the man played with her daughter’s friendship, and deserted her for a later fancy? She could not believe it. Then, was he too suffering? And if so, why was he? What had happened? Still, if she could learn the whole, what could she do? Grace would never marry without her father’s consent, and that consent to other than the man on whom he had insanely set his hopes could never be obtained. And



then the mother felt that life was a miserable, inextricable tangle, and that she must look on in silence and see another young heart slowly, dignifiedly wither. This mood did not last. She assured herself that she would do no such thing. No such wreck of life as had come to her should ever be allowed for her child. Yet, what was there that she could do?

The festive season opened, and Mr. McAllison returned. And then, for some of them, the unexpected happened. It might almost be said that it was unexpected to the girl who created the situation.

Suddenly, the interested public noted with eagerness that Grace Landis and young Mr. McAllison were seen everywhere together. At receptions and festive occasions of all sorts he was sure to be not far from her side. More than that, she drove with him, and attended concerts in his company, and in short made it as apparent as polite society knows how to do that here was an exclusive friendship. The delighted world expressed its approval, or at least its personal interest. It was undoubtedly a "great match," and a brilliant wedding was in the near future.

It was not that Mr. McAllison's were the only invitations accepted, or that by any means all of his were accepted. The life he lived during those weeks was anything but smooth to the man who was used to being society's



idol; still it was apparent to others besides the anxious mother that Grace no longer took pains to avoid the attentions lavishly bestowed upon her. Mr. Landis was in the seventh heaven of satisfaction and anticipation. He commented upon it by the hour to Eunice.

“You see, I hope, the good effects of a little judicious managing. If we had let Grace go on playing charades and accompaniments for that long-limbed doctor’s benefit, before this time there would have been some nonsense between them that it would have been hard to control. As it is, Grace has at last awakened to the fact that there are other men in the world who are only too glad to pay her attention, and that the most brilliant one among them is at her feet. McAllison is in dead earnest and means the honorable thing all through. In fact, he is really princely in his plans. You may be sure I found all this out before I allowed matters to reach the pass that they have; trust me for looking after the interests of my own daughter! I confess that the girl has kept me ‘on nettles,’ as they say in the country, for a good while; but I rejoice in the fact that she has come to her senses in time. Bob has utterly lost his head as well as his heart, or he wouldn’t have stood some of her treatment. But it is all over now.”

## XXVII.

### *“WELL—IT IS OVER.”*

**Y**ET it was very far from being “over.” What was the girl about? There came a day when from the depths of humiliation she asked herself that question, and was ashamed of the answer. There had come upon her suddenly an intense desire to show Dr. Gordon that life was not a desert for her, even though he had determined never to speak those “special” words. She had friends still, who could trust her. What if she should try to please her father? This was the question that was allowed to hover about her thoughts. Mr. McAllison had been very kind to her, had singled her out for kindnesses; and he was a man whom nearly all of her acquaintances admired. It is true that she had not cared for his society, and had told her mother that they seemed not to have two ideas in common; but might not that be because she had not tried to know him better? How could she be sure that she was not doing him injustice? Perhaps she might grow into a feeling of



friendship for him sufficient to please even her father. At least she could accept his courtesies, and show him that she was not an awkward schoolgirl who did not know when she was well treated. So, for the time, she left her mother out of consideration and proceeded to please her father. And all the while she knew — and on that day of humiliation she compelled herself to own it to her conscience — that she was but playing off her pain and her bitter sense of being wronged upon another, whom she knew that she could never love, and who, she came to realize with deepest shame, loved her with a strength that called at least for honesty. She never forgot that day in which she had a revelation of herself. They were together in the library. Mr. McAllison had risen and was standing near the mantel with one arm resting on it while he looked at her, a steady, searching gaze, and asked the question, the answer to which she felt must forever humiliate her in her own eyes.

“May I ask you, then, the cause for so sudden and so marked a change as there was in your manner toward me? Why, since you are certain that you not only have never had one thought of love for me, but can never have, did you, after declining my invitations and avoiding my society until, but for the construction that your father put upon it, self-respect would have held me from further attempts, suddenly seem



to act as though my attentions were at least not unpleasant to you? To speak plainly, I thought you had given me reason to hope that the feeling I had for you was returned. Since I have offered to you the utmost that any man can offer, it seems to me that I am entitled to an explanation."

It was then that Grace Landis had that self-revelation, as with a flash-light, and its accompanying feeling of self-abasement. She was in the presence of a man who, however his tastes and views of life might differ from hers, had sought her in good faith, been patient with her whims and vagaries, and persistent in his courtesies. Finally he had, as he said, offered her all that he could. In the interests of decency she must confess to him that, not for his sake even, but for her father's sake, she had tried to deceive herself, yet had never for one moment been deceived. She had always known, or at least felt, that there was no power on earth strong enough to induce her to become his wife. In what words could she make such a revelation as that? Her face crimsoned with shame.

"I have no defence to make," she said at last, "save the weak one that I did not realize what I was doing. There were reasons why I wanted to—to be your friend; but I have never thought, until this moment, of the pain that I might be inflicting. I deserve your indignation."



He still looked at her with those grave, searching eyes. He was a man of the world, a man whose life had always been environed by the ultra-fashionable. He had been accused of playing with the hearts of others. If the charge was true, he was being punished. Like Grace, he had never until that hour understood the measure of the pain he could thus inflict. For the first time in his life he had given in very truth all that he had to give. After a silence that was more humiliating than speech, he spoke in tones hoarse with suppressed feeling.

“Well, Miss Landis, it is over then. I can only say that I hope you will never be made to endure the suffering that you have inflicted.” Then he turned and without another word or glance left the room and the house.

Upstairs among his favorite pillows, Mr. Landis lounged and exulted, his wife as usual being his victim.

“The hour has arrived, Kitty. I could see it in Bob’s face as I let him into the library. ‘She said she would see me here,’ he told me, and his voice actually trembled with eagerness. Bob is awfully in earnest. See what power you beautiful women have over us poor men! Grace, the minx, kept him waiting for fully ten minutes before she went downstairs. She wanted to play with the victim a little while longer before she put him out of his torture. There is an

element of cruelty in all womankind, I believe. Though why the fellow couldn't see that she is settled at last, is more than I can understand. I have felt comfortable over it for several weeks."

Eunice had no word to offer. She was torn by conflicting doubts and fears. She could not believe it possible that her daughter had settled one of the most momentous questions of her life without a word for her mother; she could not believe it possible that she meant ever to marry Mr. McAllison. Yet she was as far from understanding the inexplicable change in the girl as was Mr. McAllison himself. She did not realize the power of the father's influence that she had herself carefully trained her child to feel. Neither did she understand that other influence which was pressing, and that her daughter would not own, even to herself.

But the mother had not long to wait. At least, the barrier between those two was broken. In the agony of her shame and pain Grace threw herself into her mother's arms that evening, and moaned out her story. She did not spare herself in the least.

"Oh, mother! how could I do it? How could I be your child and do so mean and false a thing! I despise myself. I can never feel self-respect again, and you can never love me as you did before, no one ever can." The mother had to turn comforter. She had to compel her daughter to remember that there had been no



such abandonment of principle as in her excitement and self-abasement she was accusing herself of. She had simply done what hundreds of others had done and were doing: permitted herself to think of *self* only, and accept attentions that were not of interest to her, simply because such a course was for the time less embarrassing than some other course. It was a low plane from which to argue; the mother was ashamed of it. She had trained her daughter to rise above self, and the doings of others, and base her actions on principles. Grace felt the lowness of the atmosphere and sought feebly for better excuse.

“I wanted to please father; I don’t believe even you understand how strong that motive has been. All my life, you know, I have been trained to think of father; and he had his heart so set upon this, mother, I thought for a while that perhaps I could learn to feel differently.” Indeed, that mother understood. Had she not done the training? And there would have been no fault to find with the training, provided only there had been a father whom to please would have led his child above the commonplace doings of fashionable society life into the high atmosphere of truth and purity. Could a mother who realized this fail to take some of the humiliation and blame to herself?

They had the storm to face that evening. Mr. Landis, growing impatient over the long



interview Grace was giving to her mother, knocked imperatively, and insisted on trying to congratulate his daughter and being told details. At first he found it impossible to believe that, after all his efforts and the high hopes of the past few weeks, Grace had actually thwarted him. When he did at last take in the meaning of his wife's words, his indignation knew no bounds. The self-control that had kept him, before his children, somewhere within the limits of reason, deserted him utterly; he raved like a madman; he called his daughter by every cruel name that came to him. She had ruined not only herself, but her mother and him, he told her. Yes, and her brother; she had absolutely blasted her brother's prospects in life!

"You don't know what you are doing!" he cried in a fury. "You are a fool! I tell you, I am involved — involved in such a way that Bob McAllison is the only man living who can extricate me. Even my good name is at stake. We shall be reduced to beggary and dishonor; and what will become of your boasted dignity then? and your mother's 'queenliness,' that is forever prated about?"

In vain Eunice tried to remind him that he was exhibiting himself to his daughter in a new light. He turned upon her almost fiercely, and bade her not try to tutor him. She had kept his children under her thumb, and ruined



them, that was enough. Suddenly he changed his line of reasoning; and assured Grace that she need not suppose she was to be allowed to act the complete idiot to the end. He would save her from herself. She was his daughter, and it was her business to obey him. She had obeyed her mother all her life, instead of him, and this was the consequence! he would see to it now that he had his turn. He wanted her distinctly to understand that she was to marry Bob McAllison. That was the only way, now, to save them all from beggary and disgrace.

He should tell McAllison that his daughter had been stark mad when she refused him; or rather, that she had been a fool playing with her opportunity, eager, like other fools, to test her power. He would risk but he could arrange it, and she might be sure he would do so. If she dared to disobey him after that, she was distinctly to understand that she was no daughter of his.

Having finally exhausted language upon them, he flung himself out of the room, went into his sleeping room and locked the door. Mother and daughter, left to themselves, had at first no word to say. They did not want even to look into each other's faces. Both felt that the depths of humiliation had not yet been reached. It was very late that night when quiet, if not peace, settled down upon the Landis household.



Yet even the quiet did not last. The hall clock was tolling two when a nervous hand unlocked Mr. Landis's door, and his voice was heard calling to his wife, who lay on the couch in the outer room. He felt ill, he told her, or at least "queer." He didn't know what was the matter. She would better ring up Kendall and tell him to come out. Tell him to come as soon as he could. Then he got himself back to the bed, and fell into such a paroxysm of pain that in a very short time the entire household was alarmed. The remainder of the night was a long-drawn-out anxiety. Dr. Kendall, four miles away, had to be waited for; and sometime before they could hope for his coming, Ben Landis had run across the street and brought back with him Dr. Gordon. Both doctors stayed until morning, and were long in getting the results they desired. By daylight, however, the patient was sleeping quietly. Mrs. Landis asked if the trouble was over, and Dr. Kendall replied that it was for the present, but that Dr. Gordon, who was so near them, would keep close watch during the day, and he should call again in the evening.

There followed several trying days. Mr. Landis, unused to illness and impatient to be at his work, tossed among the pillows, regardless of the doctors' admonitions about the importance of keeping as quiet as possible, and fretted and grumbled. Dr. Kendall, he said,



was "an old muff"; his medicine was "namby-pamby stuff," and was doing no good. He believed he would dismiss him and send for Henderson. His wife and daughter were constantly with him, and tried by every device in their power to make the hours less irksome. Apparently he had forgotten that he was offended with Grace, and treated her much as usual. Nor did he make any mention of the scene that had occurred on the evening of his illness. Evidently he was holding matters in abeyance until he should be able to give them personal attention. Meantime, Dr. Kendall brought them word one day that the McAllisons were not getting encouraging news from the young son who had been sent West. He was evidently not so well; his brother Robert had gone out to him, and was planning to take him to the south of France for the remainder of the season.

The doctor said nothing about this in his patient's room, but merely mentioned it to Mrs. Landis as an item of news, while he stood waiting for something that was being prepared for him. She received it without comment, and believed that he did not know what a weight of immediate anxiety he had lifted from her shoulders. Her husband could hardly carry out any of his embarrassing schemes with the principal actor in the south of France.

The next morning Dr. Kendall brought a



professional friend with him, and after asking that the patient be left in their care for a while, made an extraordinarily long call. Then he sent for Grace to stay with her father while he "explained matters" to Mrs. Landis. The explanation was bewildering as well as startling. She had supposed that her husband was suffering from an acute attack of indigestion. Dr. Kendall told her that the immediate attack had revealed a condition of things that had not been suspected, and that called for prompt attention. He had believed, since the evening before, that a surgical operation would be necessary, and the specialist he had brought with him that morning had concurred with this, and felt that no time was to be lost. It was also right that he should add that there were unusually grave fears as to the result, the character of the operation and the nervous condition of the patient being such as to augment the usual dangers. Being put instantly through a searching cross-examination, he further owned that the danger was imminent, and that as a matter of fact the operation was a forlorn hope.

Never, in all her many heart cries that had for their undertone "How will it all end?" had Mrs. Landis for a moment imagined such an ending as this. She had believed her husband to be a man of unusually fine constitution, destined in all human probability to long life. That he was the victim of an insidious disease

that had made such progress, all unawares, as to have reached the danger point, seemed for the moment impossible. Yet here was the doctor waiting gravely to see how much help he could depend upon from her. There was no time for the indulgence of any personal feeling. Almost immediately she rallied her powers of self-control, and asked : —

“ Doctor, what do you want of me ? ”

“ I want you to be a tower of strength to him,” he said quickly, “ and I see that we can depend upon you ; that makes me more hopeful. He will need to be told his condition, to be argued with, I fear, for he is sceptical as to anything serious being the matter. He will need to be helped to use all the will power he possesses. After the first shock, you will know better than we how to manage. There is imperative need that I should explain to him the state of things at once ; but I wanted, first, to speak to you.” Then he went back to his patient.

## XXVIII.

### *POSING.*

**I**T came to pass that none of them understood Mr. Landis. The scepticism as to anything being the matter except a desire on the part of the doctor to keep him for a patient, the fretting against fate, in short the perpetual restless irritability that had characterized their patient from the first, all disappeared before the truth. Mr. Landis was astonished, he was in a measure awed, but he was also interested. All his life he had been exceedingly interested in whatever for the time being made him a person of importance. Could he have posed all the time satisfactorily to himself as a great man, he would almost have been a great man. As it was, he was fond of posing. When he could not be of marked importance in any way, the next best thing was to seem to be. Here, at last, was a grave situation of which he was the centre. It was not a petty case of indigestion, prolonged because the doctor did not know enough to give him a tonic that would set him on his feet; it was a condition of things

so grave that the greatest surgeon in the great city had stood beside him and considered the prospect. To say that Mr. Landis liked it, might be saying almost too much. It did, however, have an instantly calming effect upon him. He tossed and fretted no more. He took the rôle of adviser and comforter.

“Have you told Mrs. Landis, doctor? Poor Eunice! how is she going to bear any situation without me to lean upon? Oh, of course she bore up bravely, before you, and she will before me, too. There never was such a woman! Well, we must all do our utmost, for her sake.” To his wife he said: “Poor Kitty, it is hard for you to be deserted by the one you depended on. But never mind, it will all come out right. These doctors are pessimists; they make the most and the worst of anything. Isn’t that so, doctor? I shall astonish you all, I think.”

He remained in this mood throughout the day, and gained so steadily in strength that by the next morning it was agreed that there was less danger in proceeding with what must be done than in longer waiting. The patient’s interest in the situation never flagged. When it was over, and he knew that the doctors believed his life hung in the balance, he was deeply interested in the continual stream of callers, who could not ring the muffled bells, but who came to inquire and to offer any and every thing in the way of help. Especially was he interested



that there came at three different times inquiries and messages from the heads of his firm.

"The world is kind, Kitty," he said to his wife, "a great deal kinder than it has the credit of being. It is worth coming to a place like this to realize how many friends one has."

The day dragged its slow length along, but it ended in hopefulness. Mr. Landis was cheerful, and full of courage.

"It is all right, Kitty," he said cheerily; "don't you go to being down-hearted. You and I will have some good times together, yet. We have always had pretty good times, haven't we? I've been a careless fellow in some respects, but you always knew that my heart was in the right place, didn't you? It's held on to you like a vice in spite of all the pretty women in the world."

With his pastor, who was admitted for a few minutes, he was genial and superior.

"No need to waste your time on me, Dr. Butler. I attended to important matters, you know, long ago.

"Oh, yes, my dear sir, I know—but faith has always been one of my strong points. Besides, I'm not going to die, you understand. I shall astonish you all by being out in a few days. Don't let Mrs. Landis be worried about me—that is the main point."

Dr. Gordon, who had been in and out from the first, rendering the sort of assistance that a

physician could, acting always under Dr. Kendall's directions, and never coming in direct contact with the family, arrived at ten o'clock that night with the announcement that Dr. Kendall wished him to spend the night with the patient. Dr. Kendall came in soon after, and begged both Mrs. Landis and Grace to get a few hours of rest. Dr. Gordon and the trained nurse would remain on the watch, with Dr. Kendall's assistant downstairs within call; the family could be summoned at a moment's notice if need be, and they would need their strength for to-morrow. He prevailed at last, and Mrs. Landis and Grace went away together to the latter's room. Ben Landis, however, went no farther than the library, where he sat down in his father's chair, and laid his arms on his father's table, and hid his face.

Utmost quiet reigned in the sickroom. The trained nurse was getting a much needed rest on the couch at the farther end, while Dr. Gordon was on guard. Suddenly the patient opened his eyes, and fixed them on Dr. Gordon.

"I was rather hard on you, doctor, I am afraid," he said quietly. "And I may as well own that I romanced a little; but I did it for the best. Oh, I'm not getting flighty; you needn't hunt for my pulse, I'm all right; only, at such a time as this, one likes to straighten things out. It wasn't exactly an engagement, but I thought it would be very soon; I had



settled it in my own mind that it was a sure thing; and there were reasons why I *had* to want it. It wasn't that I had anything at all against you. I guess it's all up, though, now. If I had had any idea that she would be such a determined creature, I wouldn't have pushed it so; maybe I wouldn't, I don't know. The child is like her mother, she has a mind of her own. But it isn't many girls who have such a chance as she had to get to the top; it seemed to me a providence, and I thought I ought to help Providence along a little."

He even laughed as he said this last.

Dr. Gordon bent over him, glass in hand. "It is time for your powder, Mr. Landis, and you must not talk."

"All right, I won't. I'm going to sleep. I feel much better. I shall be out of danger in the morning, see if I'm not. But, doctor, just a word: if anything should happen, you know, you might tell Grace, if you want to, that I meant everything for the best, and had no grudge of any sort against you. Good night."

Dr. Gordon went back to his chair. He knew that everything depended on keeping his patient as quiet as possible; he had almost immediately dropped back into sleep. The peculiar hush of a sickroom rested upon everything. Dr. Gordon went backward in memory. It was June, and he was driving down the boulevard, wondering why Grace Landis had felt that



she must not drive with him. There had been some reason that troubled her. What was it? Then, at the turn in the road, he had passed a carriage in which sat Grace Landis, and by her side Mr. McAllison. This, then, was the reason why she had declined his invitation. Why had she not told him? Did she think him of such jealous disposition that a previous engagement to drive with her father's friend would have offended him? That could not be the reason. There was a sense in which he would have no right to be offended, not yet — and in any case it would have been folly. He was still revolving the problem that evening, while riding up town in a trolley. Presently he became aware that the seat beside him had been taken by Mr. Landis, and turned from his absent-minded gaze out of the window to greet him. And then the McAllison carriage had passed, and both men had looked at it.

“That’s a fine turnout,” Mr. Landis had said, his eye following the carriage; “when I have acknowledged interests in that establishment, I think I shall patronize this sort of conveyance less regularly.” He had laughed at Dr. Gordon’s bewildered look, and had made haste to add: “I beg your pardon for referring to family affairs in such familiar fashion; I had in mind your friendly relations with my young people, and was fancying that you were posted. It isn’t announced, of course; people are grow-



ing more and more foolish about these matters, I believe. . . What is the use in being so punctilious, with family friends at least?" Dr. Gordon, after a silence that he feared was marked, forced himself to ask one question. It was a preposterous question, he thought; still he must know what this father meant.

"Do you mean me to understand that there is an engagement, Mr. Landis?"

"Well, as I told you, it hasn't been announced as yet; and I suppose the young people would thank me to keep my knowledge to myself, but I don't see the slightest harm in telling you that I am looking forward to a father-in-law's privileges in connection with those horses. I think them the finest in town." And then Mr. Landis had risen, still smiling, bade the doctor a cordial good evening, and signalled his exchange at the corner. As for Dr. Gordon, he rode to the end of the car line that evening before he discovered his mistake.

What he believed then, and had believed ever since until this hour, was that Grace Landis had permitted herself to become engaged to Robert McAllison, and had asked her father to make the fact known to himself. That it had been done bunglingly was not the daughter's fault.

At four of the morning, Dr. Gordon, after bending over his patient for some seconds, fingers on his pulse, exchanged glances with the



trained nurse who was also near the patient, then went hurriedly to the telephone in the hall and spoke to Dr. Kendall.

After that, he knocked at the door of the room where he knew Mrs. Landis and her daughter were, and spoke a few low, quick words to the mother. They were all in the sickroom, Mrs. Landis and her children, when Dr. Kendall arrived. He glanced toward the bed, then spoke low to Dr. Gordon.

"Did he rouse again?" and Dr. Gordon shook his head.

For the next few days speculation was rife among those who knew, or knew of, the Landis family.

"How sudden it has all been, and how awfully sad!"

"Wasn't Mrs. Landis almost prostrated with grief? They had been such a devoted couple."

"Yes, indeed. Mr. Landis had always treated her more like a lover than a husband."

"Would Robert McAllison be likely to return at once?" Perhaps though, poor man, he could not leave his invalid brother; they had heard that he was not improving; and he couldn't get here for the funeral, anyway.

Probably the wedding would have to be postponed now, for some time; Grace Landis would not like to be married in mourning. How hard it would be for the poor things if the brother were to die, too, before very long!



It seemed a real pity that Robert McAllison could not be at home, and be given the right to take hold of business matters for them at once. Poor Ben Landis was so young. Still, of course, Robert could advise them just what should be done.

In these and a dozen other channels ran the busy tongues, for the most part friendly, sympathetic tongues. It was a kind world, and they were sorry for the stricken family, even though the daughter had secured the most distinguished idol of society for herself.

Within the stricken home the mother sat much apart,—alone in her grief as she had had to be in her deepest life for many years. Twenty years before, in the solemn midnight, she knew that the real parting from her husband had taken place. No other dreamed it. To her it had been then as though the grave had closed over the lover of her youth, and left but his effigy to mock her. Yet to that which remained she had pledged to be true to the end, and the end had come—not as she had planned and hoped and prayed. Eager had been her longing that before the outward separation came, there might be weeks, months,—might there not even be years of true living on her husband's part,—years in which he should become at least a reminder of what she had believed he was when in her youth and innocence of the world she gave herself in good faith to



him. No such golden memory was left to her. As she looked back over her life, she realized that she who loved almost with a passion everything that was true had spent most of it in posing. And this, not only before the world, but to her own family, even to her children. Most of all, perhaps, to them, and for them. And she must pose still. "Broken-hearted," that was what she was expected to be. Poor widow! the most desolate of all widows, for with her dead still unburied she knew that her heart had broken twenty years before. And she believed that she was the only one who had aught to cover. She had not heard her son Ben when, swollen-eyed and haggard, like one who was bearing a weight far beyond his strength, he waylaid Dr. Kendall who was passing hurriedly from the house, and said, speaking low and glancing behind him in fear that he might be overheard:—

"Doctor, need she ever know—some things?"

He seemed to be sure that his pronoun and his noun would be understood; and they were. Dr. Kendall laid a tender hand on the boy's shoulder, and spoke quickly.

"No, my boy; it shall be your and my duty and privilege to see that she never does. Trust me, Ben."

And the young fellow gave him a look that a father might have coveted, and trusted.



Through the days of bewilderment immediately following their bereavement, Dr. Gordon seemed to be by common consent the one on whom the family leaned. Servants and attendants came to him for directions; callers stopped to question him before they ventured on sending up cards and flowers. Outsiders waylaid him on the streets, having discovered somehow that he was the one from whom reliable information could be secured. There were some who said that they didn't see but Dr. Gordon was doing for the family about all that Robert McAllison himself could do if he were there; and that if it were not an assured thing that he and Grace were engaged, there would be a chance for a romance. In fact, there were some who revived memories of the spring before, and asked one another if there hadn't been a time when she and Dr. Gordon seemed very intimate. But there were those who could explain that that was when Grace was a school-girl, and had seemed very much younger than she now did. Dr. Gordon had been received as a friend of the family because Dr. Kendall was interested in him; and because he was a stranger in town they had made him much at home, and Grace had played his accompaniments for him. But that was before she was in society, and they were quite sure that the other was a settled matter.

## XXIX.

### “*THE MANTLE OF SILENCE.*”

**F**OLLOWING hard upon the funeral came plans and discussions and disagreements. There had need to be plans, and there was need for promptness. Not a penny was left besides the home, which had been so deeded that it must be Eunice's own, and the two city lots still unoccupied. Even Mr. Landis's life insurance had been signed away, years before, to cover a debt that his wife had not known of, and took care not to ask about too closely. She wished only to know that there was enough to pay it. Not a cent had been saved from his salary. “He was so generous, poor fellow,” said Dr. Hollister to his wife. “He liked to lavish everything on Eunice and the children, and he had no idea that he was to be cut off in his prime.” The good doctor knew, and his wife knew, that on much less salary they had saved, not only for their children, but for their old age; but they spoke no word of censure about the younger man who was built on different lines from them.



Eunice, too, knew all this—knew more. She knew where much of the surplus money had been lavished, and she covered the knowledge with silence. There were other things that she did not know—that she was never to know. Dr. Kendall was true to his word; he took prompt and decisive steps to cover the knowledge from her; and he and Ben knew that they could keep the secret. Thus they worked, each in his place, to hide from one another's view as much as possible the glaring defects in the life that had passed; and the poor wife believed that she was the only one who knew how stupendous a failure that life had been. It was curious how many people were at work covering the traces of the wreck. None of those most interested knew about a sad-faced man, in mourning for his young brother whose life had gone out suddenly in a foreign land; how in his private office one day he bent over some papers, selected one, tore it into bits, and dropped the bits into the glowing grate. It was his sacrifice for the woman whom he loved and would have made his wife. Robert McAllison was a man of the world; he had tastes, now fast growing into habits, that were utterly out of accord with Grace Landis's ideas; her life linked with his would have been more miserable than her mother's had been. Yet for love of her the man who had been rejected kept her father's name from public disgrace, and neither then



nor afterward mentioned the thousands that had been lost through him.

But all these are matters that had nothing to do with the family discussions and disagreements. Dr. Hollister and his wife wanted Eunice and her children to come straight to the old manse at Brantford and make it into a home again—wanted this so much that it seemed to them they could not give it up. They had enough, they assured Eunice, with the rent of her house, to support them all. She must remember that they themselves would not need it long. Dorothy and her large-souled husband contended that their manse was larger, and that at least Eunice ought to divide the time with them. Ben was sure that if his mother would but consent to his leaving school at once, and going to work, he would have no difficulty in supporting her and Grace. This was his right, and it would be his privilege; he longed to be about it. Grace was equally sure that she had only to seek a position as teacher to keep Ben at school and her mother in comfort, and this was the only sensible plan.

Mrs. Landis listened to them all: thanked each one heartily, assured each schemer that she knew he and she could be trusted, and that it was blessed to know that one had so many staffs to lean upon. But her plans were already made, and were not quite in line with any of the others. Ben, who was her good son, the



comfort of her life, and the hope of her old age, would, she was very sure, do nothing that would trouble his mother, and she desired nothing more earnestly than that he should have a thorough education, and be able to do the best work. Therefore he would, of course, remain at school. They would all stay in the dear home together, and would use it to make home for others not so well situated as they were. Grace, she was sure, would enter into her plan with heartiness, and do more than her share in helpfulness to others. This sounded interesting, and drew out many questions and exclamations.

“The plain prose of it is,” said Dorothy, “that Eunice means to turn her beautiful home, located on one of the choicest corners in the city, into a boarding-house. And the worst of it is that she will do it. We may as well yield to her gracefully as to have a family fuss and then yield. Eunice has had her own way, and managed us all ever since she was born, and she will do it to the end.”

Dorothy was right. Her sister smiled quietly on her in recognition of the fact that she meant to carry her point. She sailed calmly through seas of opposition from the family and family friends, and replied at patient length to the critical questions of outsiders who thought themselves sufficiently intimate to criticise. She was sure that she could make her plan a success. She kept to herself the fact that it was



no new plan, but had been studied over ever since that time, in the long ago past, when she realized that she had no human prop on which to lean, and lived on the edge of a support that might at any moment give way and leave them worse than penniless. Not for nothing had she studied carefully the management of successful boarding-house keepers with whom she had come in close contact, and in her own home kept close and intelligent watch of all supplies, and the average cost of the same. Much earlier than the troubled relatives had believed would be possible, she was ready to experiment on her plan, with seven boarders promised. It surprised no one that Dr. Gordon was one of them.

“It will be so convenient for him,” commented the interested and half-offended neighbors, “and so unexpected to be able to find a place to *board*, on this square!”

“And then, he is so intimate with the family—quite like a brother to Grace and Ben. It seems like a very nice arrangement, so far as he is concerned, for of course the boarding-house scheme will not last long after Grace is married. It seems almost strange that Mr. McAllison allows it at all; but Mrs. Landis has a mind of her own; I always knew that.”

In most of their surmises the outside world was correct; but they made one or two important blunders. Within six weeks of the day on



which the father had gone away, Grace Landis sought her mother in her own room, and there was about her that indefinable something which gives warning that a very special interview is about to take place.

She brought a hassock and laid it in front of the low chair on which her mother sat, and curling down on it laid her head in her mother's lap.

"Well, darling?" said Eunice, touching with tender, caressing fingers the brown head. One night, long ago, the night that Burton Landis had asked her to be his wife, she had sought her mother, and put herself into almost the same attitude.

"Mother," said Grace, "can you bear to have me talk a little bit about—about what is past? I have something to tell you that I think will comfort you; it has me."

For answer, the mother bent and kissed her. She could not have spoken just then.

"Mother, that last night, father talked with Dr. Gordon about me; he said he was willing that—the doctor should be my friend."

"And you are willing, darling, to take Dr. Gordon for your best earthly friend? Is that what my little girl means?"

"Oh, mother!" A burst of tears followed, and then the girl became voluble in her confidences. It meant so much to her that her father had spoken.



“Mother,” she said, “I could never have promised but for that. You know I could not, don’t you? I *had* to disappoint father, I could not help it; but I could have kept myself from marrying against his will, and I meant to. Oh, mother! it is so sweet to know that he thought of me, too, that last night — thought of my happiness, and said that he had meant to be good to me.”

The mother’s self-control suddenly gave way, and tears, such as she had not shed before, came to her relief.

“Oh, my child!” she said, “my darling, your father meant to be good. I think he always meant to be good.”

“Yes,” said the awe-stricken girl, who was not used to her mother’s tears, “he was good; we are sure of that. He wanted me to marry wealth and importance; but it was because he loved me so, and thought it would be for my happiness, and for yours; he was always thinking of you, mother. I know that however much Ben and I can do for you, we can never fill his place. But, dear mother, doesn’t it make you glad for me that he thought of me, too, and left his blessing for me?”

Mrs. Landis restrained her tears, and spoke the words that her daughter expected, and that she had a right to have in this her hour of special confidence. For herself there was no human ear in which she could confide her



grief. It had found outward expression only in that bitter cry, "I think he always meant to be good." It was her pitiful consolation for the wasted life, the worse than wasted life: the ten thousand lapses from the straight paths of integrity, of honor, of purity. He had frittered life away, following whims and impulses, never anchored to any principle or faith that held firm against the shock of temptation. How could a widow with such a grief be comforted with any words? There was only one thought that helped her: she had propped that distorted life through the years; it was her duty now to leave it to God.

Some things Grace did not tell her mother. They belonged to herself, and to Dr. Gordon. It was after matters had been set right between them that she, still wondering over what was hard to understand, had said:—

"But, Philip, do you know, I cannot help thinking that it was unlike you to be so offended with me for refusing your invitation that day, and for driving out with some one else, that you would not even call upon me any more, nor give me the least chance to explain. After all that had passed between us, couldn't you have thought that I had reasons for what I did?"

"It wasn't that," he said quickly. "I was not such an idiot as that, Grace. It was because, on that very day, I heard that you were



engaged to the man with whom you went driving."

She drew away from him a little at that, and looked up into his face with eyes that had reproach in them.

"Engaged!" she said. "A street rumor, and you, knowing me as well as you did, having spent the evening before that with me, believed it. Oh, Philip! What well-informed person gave you such an authentic piece of news?"

He caught his breath quickly. He had been careless. He meant that she should never know whose falseness it was.

"Yes," he said, "just a street rumor; it was in everybody's mouth."

"Not then," she said, her face paling with memories of what had had to be confessed to Dr. Gordon, before she could answer his question. "Not so early as that, Philip?"

"Never mind, darling," he said. "Don't let us waste our time in talking about it. I was a fool; nothing is plainer to me now than that. You may forgive me just as much and as often as you please."

All his drifting, wasted life, from his mother and his sister Jane on through the years, Burton Landis had had friends who for varying reasons had covered his faults and his sins with the mantle of silence; he had them still. For the sake of the living, Dr. Gordon carefully shielded the dead.



So Grace Landis stayed with her mother, not only until her marriage, as the managing world had planned that she should, but after her marriage. She and Dr. Gordon continued to help to make of the Landis home a veritable home for homeless ones, and succeeded even beyond Mrs. Landis's hopes, that had been firm from the beginning. Not the least among the reasons for her financial and other successes was the fact that the girl Nellie Gardner gave up her position as typewriter in the great department store, and came to the boarding-house, at first as dining-room girl, then general helper, then secretary and business manager, then friend and all but partner; and in all of these capacities lover of her idol, Mrs. Burton Landis.

Grace was married in the winter following her father's death. Hers was a quiet wedding, to which only a very few friends outside the immediate family circle were summoned. Among them was, of course, Dr. Kendall, and his mother.

Mrs. Kendall, watching Grace as she moved among her guests, went back in memory to the girlhood and the marriage evening of the bride's mother, and said suddenly to Eunice, "She is older than you were, isn't she?"

"Yes," said Eunice, quietly, needing no explanation. "You are the only one outside the family who was present at that wedding, are you not?"



“I guess I am,” said the old lady, simply. “Ben was hindered from going, I remember. There’s been a lot of changes since then.” And her eyes wandered to the face on which they loved to linger. Her boy, Dr. Ben Kendall, was just across the room, and close to him, listening eagerly to what he was saying, was the young man, Ben Kendall Landis. A confidential word had evidently just passed between them, something that had made the younger man’s eyes flash with pleasure and pride. Among the changes that time had brought was the fact that it was an honor to any man to be able to refer to Dr. Kendall as a personal friend.

But it was fully three years from the evening on which Grace Landis was married that Dr. Kendall, having lingered late, recalling with Mrs. Landis tender memories of his mother who had but a few months before gone away, thanked his hostess gravely for her sympathy, and said with a long-drawn sigh as he arose to go:—

“Yes, I miss my mother more than most men can; she has been all in all to me these many years, and she was all I had.”

He took a few steps toward the door, stopped, stood in utter silence for several minutes, then, with a sudden set of his head that meant resolution, turned and came back to Mrs. Landis, standing before her.



“Eunice, forgive me. I am awfully tempted. You told me never to speak of it again, not if you should live for a hundred years. You told me to forget it, to *forget you!* That was impossible; I never have, I never can. I have not changed. I have secured what men call success; and I have risked your displeasure, and dared again. In doing this, have I lost my friend?”

They were in the library; the other part of the house was in silence. Grace Gordon was in the nursery hovering about the crib of her sleeping Eunice, with last loving touches for the night. Ben Landis had come in, a short time before, and pausing at the library door had recognized the voices within, and had turned and entered the deserted sitting room, where he stood in the bay window looking out upon the moon-lighted earth. Grace came, presently, and stood beside him. “Ben, dear,” she said, “do you know what Aunt Dorothy thinks?” Ben slipped an arm about his sister as he said, with the sound of a smile in his voice:—

“Aunt Dorothy thinks many things.”

“I don’t agree with her,” said Grace, seeming to know that her words needed no explanation. “I wish it were so. I mean I wish that mother could—but I don’t understand how she *could!*”

Ben still looked out upon the roses in the moonlight. He was not thinking of roses.



Visions, such as his sister knew not of, floated before him. How *much* he knew that others did not! How much he had understood! When had he *not* understood! Away back, in his very babyhood, it seemed to him, he had known that his mother — Later, during those days when he had vowed, and carried out the vow, to become his father's guardian in places where his mother could not be, what had he not come to understand! He felt that he would be very glad if his mother "could," but he had no explanation to make to his sister. The "mantle of silence" was sacred; it should not be disturbed. So, as he turned from the window to the brightly lighted room, all that he said was:—

"Look at those yellow roses, how white they are in this light."

THE END.

## Pansy's Latest Books

### PAULINE

Illustrated by Elizabeth Shippen Green. 12mo, cloth, rough edges, gilt top, \$1.50

A romance of to-day; full of strong situations, complications, and deep thought. It is absorbing, often dramatic, and yet imbued with those religious and moral elements that underlie all of Mrs. Alden's work, and shows how, by a strange misadventure and many sorrowful experiences, the chief personages are brought into the large light that illumines and clarifies all souls. This is not a book for children, but is a story of strength and purpose,—the best kind of a love story.

---

### MAG AND MARGARET

Illustrated by C. Chase Emerson. 12mo, cloth, \$1.50

A book for girls, written in Pansy's inimitable manner when telling a strong and helpful story for children. Mag is a lovable character; and Margaret becomes so in time, but only through stern experience. It is a capital story of contrasting girl natures which come into the same path at last.

Lothrop Publishing Company - - Boston

# Dorothy South

A Love Story of Virginia Before the War

By GEORGE CARY EGGLESTON  
Author of "A Carolina Cavalier"

Illustrated by C. D. Williams. 12mo, dark red cloth, portrait cover, rough edges, gilt top, \$1.50

**T**HIS distinguished author gives us a most fascinating picture of Virginia's golden age, her fair sons and daughters, beautiful, picturesque homes, and the luxurious, bountiful life of the old-school gentleman. Dorothy South has been described in these characteristic words by Frank R. Stockton: "Learned, lovely; musical, lovely; loving, lovely; so goes Dorothy through the book, and sad would be the fate of poor Arthur Brent, and all of us, if she could be stolen out of it." This is a typically pretty story, clear and sweet and pure as the Southern sky.

Lothrop Publishing Company - - Boston

THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED  
THE COST OF OVERDUE NOTIFICATION  
IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO  
THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST  
DATE STAMPED BELOW.

BOOK DUE - WLD  
S 822 228  
D 3 1977  
**CANCELLED**  
JAN 4 1977



