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Dear Sirs. — MINARD'S LINIMENT is my remedy for colds, etc. It is the best liniment I have ever used.

MRS. JOSIAH HART.



Edith Egerton

One of Life's Tangles

By Josiah R. Nichols

"I was thinking," the girl answered, yielding immediately to the magnetic influence of his presence, "of a similar sin I once committed against the life of a beautiful creature, and merely for a selfish gratification. I was making a collection of pretty insects when I was a little girl, and coveted the possession of every pretty butterfly that passed me, though I never dreamed of killing one. Well, I did not often find them, and one day when our old ser-

vant man caught a little beauty, with silver eyes on its black wings, (don't you know how pretty they are?) and asked me if I wanted it, I was too excited not to say yes, and he loyally accepted it for my wishes. To this day I never could forgive myself for that act of wanton cruelty," and she smiled sadly in Egerton's face, "for the poor little thing did not die for days and days, and I cried myself ill over its fluttering wings, longing vainly to bring back the gift of life for which it was struggling so pitifully, and of which my own hand had deprived it."

Egerton smiled also, but with another feeling. He was gauging the sensibility of the girl as a psychic study, as he said aloud:

"You are a truly wordsworthian child. You learned early his great precept:

"Never to blend our pleasure or our pride, With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

"Oh, Doctor," she exclaimed, impulsively, "how can I apologize for that thoughtless way in which I retained your book?"

"I, too, regret that there did not a little more thought enter into the deed," he returned, playfully; adding, "in a serious tone: 'Would you keep it? I like to feel anything of mine so near you, and I am glad, too, that you should learn to value what I admire.'"

And so it continued. Each time that the young people were alone together, Egerton drifted unobtrusively toward Edith, thoughtfully cautious all the while not to attract the attention of the others. And while he became more and more interested in tracing their numerous points upon which their tastes coincided, the conviction grew upon him that a bond of "mutual sympathy" existed between them which it would be foolish to break. To Edith the experience was similar to finding herself under a mesmeric control. She obeyed it without question, trusting herself entirely to the Doctor's guidance, and yielding up to him her deepest thoughts whenever they were alone. Let a young girl behave how she indulges the desire to speak to another of those sacred aspirations stirring in her breast. To her they are new, wonderful and precious, the first intimations of immortality which visit the soul as it matures; and she should guard herself in choosing for them a confidant, for ere she knows it, beyond recall, whether her treasure has been conveyed, there will her heart be also. To Egerton, embittered by his contact with the world, each utterance of her unsophisticated nature was lovely, and he did not hesitate to tell her so, yet always with a delicacy and tenderness her highest ideal had never realized. It was no wonder that she gave way more and more to the gusts of impulse, while the consequences of this dangerous intimacy developed slowly, but surely.

Of all this Mrs. Harold took no note. In her eyes Dr. Egerton was a very delightful guest, an improving companion for Arthur. She did not see that the half-private conversations with her niece, for Edith was naturally so timid she could not believe it possible for her to speak with a stranger, besides she was two years younger than Juliet, who was a mere child.

Whatever Mrs. White thought, she held her peace, being rather romantic herself, and lenient towards early love affairs, besides the Doctor ingratiated himself in her good graces and not arguing very deeply about his character, she smilingly ignored his special notices of Edith. Juliet, indeed, attributed the Doctor's "Edie," she while perched one night, "I really believe he comes here to see you. I've watched him, and he don't care for Arthur one bit. He just wants a chance to say something to you."

"Oh, Juliet," her cousin returned, with a peculiar warning in her voice, "don't talk that way; don't make me think of him in any other way than a friend. I ever should—it would go hard with me," and she left the broken sentence unexplained, with a prophetic insight into the intensity of her own nature and a dread of that which she, poor child, did not recognize had already taken place.

CHAPTER IX.

A DANGEROUS PROMISE.

In the midst of this stolen happiness, Egerton was ill at ease. When with Edith he was too much charmed to reflect upon the wrong he was committing, but alone the real situation forced itself sternly before his eyes, and a voice from the grave of his disappointed hopes and misplaced affections shook his soul with the prohibition of

this self-gratification. Their lovely, yet forbidden intercourse, must cease. He felt it. For to what could it lead, in the end? The least disastrous consequence would be the destruction of her peace of mind, perhaps a broken heart. He had grieved over the wound he had made, when the edifice of his hand had slain, when the innocent life—was he to pierce her gentle breast with more cruel darts, the agony of mental suffering? He would suffer in house, looking over the fence into an orchard, struggling vainly to tear himself away, a business letter arrived which demanded the departure he had hesitated to postpone. Thrusting the letter into his pocket as a reminder of disagreeable realities, he turned his steps the same evening in the direction of Edith's home. He must see her one more, but he would have a strict guard over himself in saying good-bye.

Following a short cut across the plantation, which an old colored man had pointed out, Egerton found himself at the back of the old house, looking over the fence into an orchard. Attracted by the clattering sound of little Mary's voice, Egerton looked toward the tree in which the small lamp was hidden, and gathered peaches for her lady, and perceived Edith seated on a camp stool in the shade, with a book in her lap. It was but an instant's work to clear the low barrier which separated them, and he was walking across the uneven ground with a beating heart.

She looked up at the sound of footsteps, and a bright smile like a rainbow beamed across her face, which was usually beclouded.

"Oh, Doctor, we have not seen you for so long!"

"Then you have missed me, Edith?" he said, impulsively, holding her hand and gazing wistfully into her eyes.

"And you are you all alone to-day?"

"Arthur has gone back to Washington, you know," she said, evasively. She could not tell him that an engagement had arisen between herself and Juliet, or that in an unreasonable jealousy of Arthur's admiration, Edith was hurt by the sudden coolness of her cousin's manner, and thought after Arthur was gone, Juliet seemed ashamed to have him see her advances toward reconciliation, the girl still continued at an isolated distance. With the feeling of a sister to a younger brother, she had ventured to lend to the young man some personal extravagances which he revealed to her, hoping she would mitigate the uncomfortable state of his own mind concerning his half-private conversation with Edith. The suspicion was not only unjust, but preposterous to Edith's mind. Even if Arthur, a married man, "she could not have regarded him as a lover. His disposition was too frivolous, his will too obstinate, besides she had witnessed an exhibition of violent temper for a slight cause, which shocked and prejudiced her against him.

Seeing the shadow that swept across her gentle features at his question, Egerton inquired, in the low voice to whose magnetism she always responded: "Something is troubling you. May I not share it?"

"It was nothing," she said, the serenity which his face ever brought smoothing away the frown from her brow. "I was reading over those lines upon 'Copper's Grave,' which you showed me. They have been haunting me like a strain of pathetic music, so I brought the book out here to study under the influence of nature, the lights and shadows and all the freshness and beauty which the poet loved."

She opened the book, and, pointing to the last verses, she continued musically:

"To-day they move me with a sense of prophecy. Will it indeed be so, that all doubt, all misgiving, will be cleared away at last? The assurance of a power, distinct from our crude conceptions of it, moving towards the appointed end, of a love that does not fail amid all the vacillations of our feeble minds, a something fixed and steadfast to cling to, despite all the phases of feeling, whether of hope or despair—is this faith? A belief that I shall believe in yonder clear depth of sky, and my soul was at peace."

She raised her eyes eagerly to him with an enthusiast's expectation of his sympathy and assistance, but Egerton was mute. He could not answer, and he felt the weight of something sensibly when she submitted her lately-acquired ideas upon religion to his judgment.

To answer her searching soul with a harsh skepticism he felt would be a crime, besides his proud, self-sufficient doubt had vanished before her devout bearing, and he could only bow his head in silent reverence.

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"I suppose I want to know," the girl continued, "this restlessness is the desire for knowledge, not faith, and that may not be. We must take it on trust a little while, as Mr. Steele tells me, and in the time of deepest darkness cling to the promise that

Earth's worst frenzy, marring hope, Shall not hope's fruition."

She uttered the words with a passionate protest, then gave a little sigh, and looked down at Mary, who was trying to attract her attention to the fact that the basket was full of fruit.

"Will not you have some, Doctor?" They took them to the house, Mary. We will come presently, I believe."

she resumed, turning once more to Egerton, with a tinge of bashfulness in her manner. "I believe I have found the cure for sorrow, if I can only lay hold on it. I have been very happy, very happy, since I made up my mind to join the church."

A sneer curled the lip of Egerton at mention of a directly religious sentiment, but the girl did not perceive it, as she continued: "All that holds me back now is the fear that I do not believe enough. If I could but be as sure that it really was all true, that Christ was a historic fact, I believe all trouble would vanish out of my life. I would not mind a dark, though I've studied and studied."

"Don't you think you are studying upon the subject too hard?" he interposed, gently.

"I must, must; there is nothing else in life for me," she said, and her voice rang with suffering, but she controlled herself, and forcing into stillness the

horrors that lay at the root of all her transient woes, she continued, with more self-possession:

"I am not happy here. They misunderstand me. I wish I were home."

There was a sentimental about Egerton that had enjoyed her trusting him with her sorrows, but to-day he realized the sympathy than he had supposed, as the girl added: "But that is not all. I have not heard from my father in ever so long, and when I left him he was looking so badly and worried, he was looking something like a man no answer. Oh! if I should lose him, what should I do?" and the pent-up bitterness found vent in a burst of violent feeling such as Egerton had never witnessed in her contained nature before.

"He never did care for me," she sobbed, "but it is better to live with sorrow than to live with a heart that is broken. I have some claim upon him, than to be dependent upon strangers."

Egerton listened with a strange certainty that he must remain a helpless witness of her grief was intolerable. The tenderness of his past life, so unobtainable, he seemed so lonely, so unhappy, and while he tried to soothe her with reassuring words, memories of his own young days, strangely and agonizing to hers in suffering, rose to his mind, and he found himself drifting into speaking of personal commune they had had before, but now heart was brought back to her, and he found her in contact with heart, and he found the care of an uncle, cold, harsh and selfish; how he had been taunted by his cousins for being a dependent; how his affections had been repelled, his every childish wish repressed, his very existence treated as an imposition, till in desperation he had burst from the torturing thrall and run away, preferring to grapple with want and poverty in the proud spirit of independence.

How in his desolate condition he had met with one true friend, a man whose name he did not reveal, who had extended aid, material, mental, and excited his earliest ambition, finding no natural outlet, his soul had centred in the love of a profession till the cold abstractions had become the absorbing passion of his life.

She listened, her grief hushed in the interest of the recital, as she watched his eye kindle with enthusiasm when he reached this point in his narrative, as he related his delight in the discovery of science, with what reverence he had traced her unerring laws back to their Source, and watched in breathless expectation for a personal intimation of all the supreme Originator of all.

"When you spoke just now, Edith, as if you all but grasped the ideal. If you were seeking, I could have aided you. I could have been the laboratory (chemistry was ever my favorite study), when experimenting with the elements of life, I learned over the crucibles like a worshipful angel waiting expectantly for the propitious omen."

To be Continued.

Curiosity is little more than another name for Hope.

Unless a tree has born blossoms in spring, you will vainly look for fruit on it in autumn.

Since the generality of persons act from impulse, not more than from principle, men are neither so good or so bad as we are apt to think them.

Many of the supposed increase of knowledge have only given a new name, and often a worse, to what was well known before.

The heaviest words in our language are the two briefest ones. Yes and no. One stands for the surrender of the will, the other stands for denial; one for gratification, the other for character.

If the mind, which rules the body, ever forgets itself so far as to trample upon its slave, the slave is never generous enough to forgive the injury, but will rise and smite the oppressor.

The whistle of life lies in the love we have not given, the powers we have not used, the selfish prudence which will risk nothing, and which, shirking pain, misses happiness as well.

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