

She clasped her hands, and her pretty eyes filled with something that for the life of him he could not help thinking was admiration—was it admiration of him?

'Oh, how lovely! but then you are very clever. I would give anything to go just for once in my life to an intellectual place like that.'

'I'll take you some day—if you like.' He said the last words almost in a whisper. 'There is a ladies' night once a year, and they are kind enough to send me an invitation.'

'Oh,' and she blushed. She could not help it, for she knew that her stepmother was dying to get her married, and every day for the last week the merits of the man before her had been set forth. She liked him too, he was so silent and kind, so learned and gentle; she was inclined to think that to marry him would be a beautiful and dignified fate, and that she could be very content indeed. Perhaps she was in love with him. She had no experience and could not be sure; but she was sophisticated enough to feel that there might be a certain significance in his remark.

He saw the blush and wondered. He liked her, he had thought of her constantly since the night of the Halkin Street dance. He had also thought of matrimony, but there was a certain hesitation in his nature. Moreover, it was ridiculous, but he was horribly afraid of her. Nineteen and a half, a sweet flushed face, blue eyes and brown hair, a little gray dress and gold bangles, a slim waist and a bunch of honeysuckle tucked into her belt, and he was more disconcerted than he would have been by a whole court full of the British public and a judge and jury; or by an election mob, and the fact that he himself was on the hustings.

It was no good, he could not get on with women. Let it be said at once that he had never tried. He had once made love in a highly platonic manner to a married woman, or rather, he had submitted while she made love to him. It had bored him. He had, a little later, entered upon a rather animated correspondence with the charming widow of a certain eloquent advocate of the franchise, and he had been struck with the cleverness of her letters. On one occasion he made up a party for her, and a dinner at Richmond. There was a drive by moonlight home from that expedition and he had sat looking extremely poetic and satisfied, while he was thinking that he would never do anything so tiresome again, and that as soon as he was safe in his study he would have a whisky-and-soda, and read a Maupassant story to pick himself up. Quiet men, without a spice of the devil in them, so often delight in Guy de Maupassant. He is a compensation to them. So many things are just that and nothing more.

He looked at the blush half puzzled; then, almost without knowing it, put his hand down on hers as she arranged her honeysuckle.

'I was thinking yesterday,' he said, 'that I saw you at the Academy view a year ago.'

'I don't remember,' she answered.

This was not encouraging, and he turned away. He walked home across the park, thinking of her all the time. He was convinced that she was lonely. She never seemed to have friends of her own age; he had an idea that her stepmother would have objected to them. She was a clever girl, too, and not a bit strong-minded. He had been struck by her reading and her longings. She had told him she wanted to travel—longed for it more than anything else in the world; but she had never been out of England. It would be excellent fun, he thought to take her everywhere, and to show her places for the first time. By Jove! what wonderful things first times were! There was nothing in the world like them; the worst of them was that they never came twice.

He stopped at his own door. There was a hansom before it, and while he was fumbling for his latch-key a young man appeared.

'You've just turned up in the nick of time,' he said to Mr. Halstead.

'I have not a silver coin in my pocket. Lend me ten shillings, old chap.'

'There you are,' Mr. Halstead said, leisurely pulling out some change.

'Thank you! I'm going to dine early at the Ives'. They have a dance afterwards, by the way. Good-bye. I've borrowed a latch-key. See you in the morning at breakfast,' and he drove off.

Mr. Halstead looked after him reflectively, and then went into the house.

A servant was arranging the sideboard in the dining-room.

'Hicks, did Mr. Merreday say how long he was going to stay?'

'End of next week, sir,' the man answered, 'then he's going down to Somersetshire.'

'We must do that river party soon, then,' Mr. Halstead thought. 'He will make it lively.'

## CHAPTER II.

Mrs. Percy Ives lived in Hans Place, and was well known to that section of society that likes enjoying itself, and shakes its head at too much seriousness in any form. She was bright and clever in a social sense, and not in the least intellectual, for which her husband was devoutly thankful. The world was a pleasant place to her, and she tried to make other people think it one. She especially took an interest in their sentimental affairs, which she knew more about than they did themselves, probably because she generally managed to take a fairer view of them. Women trusted her, which was remarkable, and men liked her. As a rule the latter fell in love when they first knew her; but when they realized that—though she listened to them with a charming expression on her well-bred face, sighed at precisely the right moment, and had even gone so far as to allow her hand to

## SUMMER WEAKNESS

And that tired feeling, loss of appetite and nervous prostration are driven away by Hood's Sarsaparilla, like mist before the morning sun. To realize the benefit of this great medicine give it a trial and you will join the army of enthusiastic admirers of Hood's Sarsaparilla.

bo held five consecutive minutes—she never went any farther, and, moreover, treasured up everything they said to regale her husband on afterwards, they drew back. They thought her most sensible and charming, but they did not care to provide amusement *a trois*. Very young men were often quite desperate about her for a fortnight, and when, on her own advice, she was replaced by somebody else, they invariably told her all about it, and if they married asked leave to bring their wives to see her. Her husband adored her, and as she had not the least objection to his flirting with other women, why he only did it occasionally, and found that it helped to strengthen his conviction that his own wife was nicer than any other man's. He was not handsome, but he was impressive in his way, big, tall and fat, slow of movement, and, like Mr. Halstead, rather scanty of speech. His wife called him a dear, sweet beloved boy when she was pleased with him. The dear, sweet, beloved boy was three-and-thirty, but that was a detail. He was secretly troubled at his increasing fatness, but she adroitly assured him that she liked it, "for you are a good old darling," she explained, "and the more room good things take up in the world the better. I hope you will grow big, and big, and bigger, till the other people are afraid of falling over the edge." He hoped he wouldn't himself, but he didn't say so, for he made a point of never disturbing her ambitions if he could help it.

'How is Merreday getting on?' he asked as they waited for dinner on the evening of their dance. 'I am sorry I missed him this morning.'

'He's as charming as ever, and as great a demon.'

'How do you know that?'

'It is evident the moment he speaks—it is in his eyes. He is a strange boy. No human being ever knows what he will do next, least of all does he know himself.'

'Is he devoted to you still?'

'Deeply, of course.'

'Sensible man,' sighed Mr. Ives. 'Is he as envious as ever of Laurence Halstead?'

'Quite. It's odd, but he always seems to want everything that is his. He is still indignant with the uncle who left him five thousand pounds some time ago, and Mr. Halstead twenty.'

'There's a difference, of course. When are we going to dine?'

'Directly. We are only waiting for him.'

'I wish he'd come, then. Oh, here he is. How do you do, Mr. Merreday? Glad to see you back again. The wife's been pining for you as usual. Is that magnificent bouquet for me?'

(To be Continued.)

## A Gentleman

Who formerly resided in Connecticut, but who now resides in Honolulu, writes: "For

20 years past, my wife and I have used Ayer's Hair Vigor, and we attribute to it the dark hair which she and I now have, while hundreds of our acquaintances, ten or a dozen years younger than we, are either gray-headed, white, or bald. When asked how our hair has retained its color and fullness, we reply, "By the use of Ayer's Hair Vigor—nothing else."

"In 1868, my affianced was nearly bald, and the hair kept falling out every day. I induced her to use Ayer's Hair Vigor, and very soon, it not only checked any further loss of hair, but produced an entirely new growth, which has remained luxuriant and glossy to this day. I can recommend this preparation to all in need of a genuine hair-restorer. It is all that it is claimed to be."—Antonio Alarum, Bastrop, Tex.

**AYER'S HAIR VIGOR**

Corner Granville & Sackville Sts.

**NOVA SCOTIA**

Steam Machine Paper Bag Manufactory.

THE CHEAPEST in the MARKET.

—ALSO—

**BOOK BINDING**

In all its various branches,

G. & T. PHILLIPS.



FOR SALE BY  
**KELLEY & GLASSEY.**