

"Sharp as he was, he counted without the law. He thought that things were still, with regard to married women's property, as they had been long ago, when the husband could say to the wife, 'What's yours is mine; what's mine is my own.' He showed his hand too soon. After a week he grew careless of her. This nearly broke her heart. In a month he told her about the legacy, and steps were taken to realize. Seeing how the thing was now, the landlady penetrated the whole design. The good woman's husband brought Mrs. Ryland privately to me. When he found this out, he turned from indifference to threats, and from threats to the most atrocious and inhuman cruelty. To sum up, we proved the will, got the money, and I invested it in stock. By this time I found out that he owed large sums of money; he had been speculating through another, and had got heavily let in. He continued his bad treatment of her, and at last, just when her baby was about to be born, we gave him £2,500 to take himself off and leave her in peace. All I could do would not induce her to have a legal separation. She seemed to think that such a step might in some way, goodness knew how, injure the future status of her unborn child. I may tell you that for a whole month I resisted giving him the money unless I obtained from him something more binding than a written undertaking not to go near her or molest her in any way. I did not consent until I saw that to hold out any longer would be to imperil her life. Of course, the undertaking given by him has no more legal value than the ashes in that grate. Her whole soul, her whole nature now seems centred in that child. When she had made up her mind that no man would ever woo her, he came. He was above her station at the time, handsome, as you saw, accomplished, as I know, and fascinating you may have guessed. He became her sweetheart, and she knelt down and worshipped him. He became her husband, and spurned her as she knelt. He told her he thought less of her than of the lowest of her sex, and she drew back from him after an ill of inhuman abuse and violence; one only dream of life gone forever into the world, a vile waste or dead hopes that festered in a sickly sun. She would have worked for him, given him her heart's blood; but he told her he did not want her presence, and that he loathed the very street she lived in. He derided her folly for ever supposing that any man such as he could dream of enduring the presence of such a frightful caricature of nature as she. He heaped every insult and contumely upon her, but he did not break her down; for, Baird, she knew she was soon to be a mother. He might leave her, and did leave her, but the baby came; in the winter of her life, in her worse than widowhood, the baby boy came. She had given money to the husband to go away, but the baby had come instead, and lay in her arms all day and all night, sweet for her kisses, sweet for all her love, the companion of her worse than widowhood, the unconscious confidant of all her sorrows, the antidote which, when pressed against her bosom, healed her of her memories."

"Get me back my child, or kill me—here." "I sprang up and turned round. The woman was standing in the doorway. Both her arms were stretched towards Langton. Her eyes were staring and fixed, addressed to him mechanically, but not looking at him. She was rigid as a statue, and at each corner of her mouth. Langton had turned round, but did not approach her. We were both petrified with fear and surprise."

"Get me back my child, or kill me—here," she repeated in the same tone as before, a tone that made us shudder. There was no passion in it, no anger, no entreaty, no command. It seemed as though her heart had died, and her lips were mechanically repeating its dying wish without owning any human sympathy for the dead heart."

"Still she stood rigid in the doorway. Langton looked at me in consternation, and whispered: 'This case is now one for you. Go to her and speak to her.' "I approached her and took one of the outstretched hands. It was damp and cold. As I led her into the room I slipped my finger on her wrist and looked into her eyes. The pulse was low and weak; I had expected to find it high and strong. The semi-transparent, ruby-colored flaws in the eyes had dilated and gathered deeper fire; the expression was one of intense subjective occupation. Perhaps I may better convey my meaning by saying that it seemed as if she were dealing rather with the formula for an idea than with the idea itself. At a rough guess, I said to myself: 'A shock has numbed the perceptive power of the faculty, but has left uninjured the power of pain. She has the sickening sense of want and the formula for her loss, but she does not acutely appreciate her loss as one who contrasts bitterly the memory of possession past with the realization of present dereliction. She has no well-defined notion of what her child or death is, but she knows she wants either; that less than either will not quiet the unusual clamorings in her heart.'"

"Death or her child, it was all one to her; the peace that was gone with her baby, or the peace that was to come—in the grave. 'A bad case,' I thought to myself; 'the child and the image of the child are gone; this always means insanity. This woman will be numbed as she is now until either the child is returned to her arms or the image to her mind.'"

"How did this happen? I asked of her in as gentle a voice as I could."

"He waited for me outside. He took the child from me—I did not let it go until it cried

—until it cried—until I knew he hurt it. Well, it cried, and I let it go. There were people around, and I asked a policeman to get me back my child. But he said he was my husband, and that the child was his. The policeman asked me was he my husband and was the child his, and I answered yes. The policeman shook his head and walked away. Then he got into a cab and drove away—do you understand what I say? He got into a cab and drove away with my child in his arms—you find it hard to understand? I don't, for I felt him do it. I felt it here in my breast, where my child used to lie asleep—I felt the child drawn out of my breast, and, sir, while he drove away, as there's a God above me, my child cried—as he drove away—drove away. You find it hard to understand, sir; but my child cried as he drove away—drove away."

"I dropped her hand, and, having left her, whispered to Langton, 'Is there any means of compelling that scoundrel to give up the child at once?'"

"He shook his head and muttered a malediction."

"Then," said I, 'you had better send her home in charge of some one.'"

"You don't think she'll do violence upon herself?" he whispered.

"No. But some one should always be with her until the crisis arrives."

"What do you expect to follow the crisis?"

"She will either be cured or grow violent."

"My dear Baird, I can't leave here just now. Would you see her home; tell her landlady to get some one to look after her, see her own doctor, and ask them to send all bills to me?"

"I had nothing very particular on hand, so I did as he requested. We got a sober, honest, elderly woman I knew to look after her. I found out her doctor, and we had a chat about her; he promised to take particular care of her, and to let me know from time to time how the case went on. As soon as I had made all as comfortable as I could, I came back to town and called upon Langton, knowing he would like to hear how I had got on."

"When I arrived at Langton's outer office the clerk beckoned to me and said, 'Our client's husband is inside again.'"

"Without stopping to knock, I turned the handle and went in. Ryland's back was toward me, and Langton, as formerly, stood on the hearth-rug. This time, however, there was no straddle. He stood upright, with his feet and his lips close together. He was deadly pale, and, I could see at a glance, in a deadly rage. Ryland was speaking as I entered; he bowed with great politeness to me, paused, and then resumed."

"As I was saying, Mr. Langton, the boy is now in safety, quite as safe as if he were with his mother, and I am come to say that I am prepared to answer for his safety until the money—1,200l.—is paid over to me."

"So," said Langton, with a great effort to control his rage, 'you propose charging an additional 200l. upon the estate for the success of your last infamous trick, you sorry swindler!'"

"As a lawyer, you ought to know that your language is illegal and—"

"Take an action; do," cried Langton, now losing all power over his anger. "Take an action, and go into any court you please, and I pledge you my word as a man and a lawyer that there isn't a jury in England but would lynch you, and not a Judge on the bench but would applaud them; and by heaven! if you don't get out of this instantly, I'll not leave the job for Judge or jury, but do it with my own hands."

"He seemed about to spring on the man. Ryland slipped his hand behind him, backed toward the door, and said, 'Don't come near me, Mr. Langton. Well knowing the violence of your temper, I was compelled to be a little un-English, and come—armed.'"

"Un-English!" shouted Langton, striding up to him. "There's nothing human, not to say English, in your corrupt carcass. Get out, man, or they will be hanging you for killing me, or putting up a statue to me for having killed you. Get out! They pay for killing venomous reptiles in India—why not in England, too? Get out, man, I say, or I shall be claiming blood-money before night."

"With the revolver held across his waistcoat, and pointed at nothing in particular, Ryland backed out of the door, and was gone."

"So far as there was anything of moment connected with this affair, I heard nothing more from Baird that night."

I did not see Baird again till the week after Christmas. He then continued the history, as follows:

"For some weeks after those scenes in Langton's office they heard no more of Ryland. During that time his unhappy wife continued in the same mental lethargy, repeatedly asking for her baby, but betraying no emotion and giving no sign of violence. I looked in at her lodgings about twice a week. Her doctor, Dr. Sherwood Freeman, and I quite agreed as to the case. There was little or no hope of a mental rally until either the child was restored or her mind received some shock which should counteract the one occasioned by its loss. In the meantime Langton had, as soon as possible, instituted legal proceedings against Ryland. I don't know what the nature of those proceedings was, but he held out slight hope of speedy relief; the case, it seems, was one full of difficulties at best, and the block in the courts filled him with despair."

"In about six weeks from the day I was in Langton's office, Ryland wrote to say the child was ill, and that he would deliver it up on condition of getting 1,000l."

"Ah!" said Langton to me the evening he got the letter, 'so the threats of law have already beaten him down 200l. The illness is a lie to force us to terms. I shall not answer that letter.'"

"Well, Melton, as you may guess, I was by this time greatly interested in the case, legal and medical. In a week I called again upon Langton, and, to my astonishment found Mrs. Ryland there."

"The explanation was very simple. The child had really been ill of scarlet fever, all possible care had been taken of it, but, nevertheless, it had died, and was to be buried that day; and Langton and the vacant-eyed woman were setting off now to the cemetery."

"Ryland would not allow the mother to approach her dying child, but when it was dead he seemed to think he might run some ugly risk if he did not allow the mother's attendance at the interment, and Langton and she were now going. I examined her closely, but could observe no change; the channels of her reason were frozen up, and in precisely the same condition as on the day of her bereavement."

"May I go?" I asked.

"Certainly," said he; and in a little while the three of us got into a cab and drove to the cemetery Ryland had named."

"The same unbroken shadow of mental gloom hung over the unhappy woman. During the whole drive she never spoke a word. Her eyes were cast down most of the time. On the few occasions when she lifted them they sought Langton's face, but there was no question, no excitement in them. It was plain from their appearance that reason was an exile, but the land reason had left behind remained still unoccupied by anything save the spirit of the void."

"When we got inside the gates of the cemetery, we ascertained that the body of the child had not yet arrived."

"Langton turned to me and asked, 'What do you think will be the result of to-day?'"

"I think," I answered, 'that it will bring about the crisis, followed by perfect sanity or violent insanity; but there is no telling which.'"

"After awhile a mourning coach drove in. I will not drag you through all the small events of the interment. It will be sufficient for you to know that the father of the child was not present, and that during the whole time it occupied she never altered in the least."

"I felt greatly disappointed. I had been quite confident of the lifting or development of the affection now paralyzing her brain. When it was all over, we returned to the cab as sober as could be. I had been greatly deceived, and I could see that Langton's last hope was gone."

"When we had got about half-way back, she suddenly looked up into Langton's face, and said:

"We have left something behind us."

"Langton and I looked round the cab. The three umbrellas were all right."

"No," answered Langton; 'I don't think we have left anything behind.'"

"In the cemetery?" she asked.

"No," I said. "No."

"We have," she said. I know it, I feel it. As he drove away, I heard my child cry. As we drove away now, I heard my child cry. Ah, gentlemen, let us go back and take my child up out of the wet grave. If you give him to me and let me hold him against my breast he will get warm. Ah, gentlemen! let us go back for my darling! My baby son! My own! My own!"

"She threw her arms out towards us with the anguish of a mother's broken heart on her face, and the knowledge of her childless fate in her eyes. Then all at once her body began swaying slightly, and with a low moan she buried her face in her hands and burst into tears."

"She had lost her child, but had regained his image, and her brain was healed. She had lost her child and regained his image, and her heart was broken. The mad live long and howl about our paths; the broken-hearted creep quietly into the shadows and silently dig their own graves, and in a little while crawl into the earth with gentle sighs and gentler smiles."

"There is now no heat in her poor breast to warm her poor babe. She has been dead a week."

"Four days ago I saw Ryland buying gloves—dark-green gloves, a very quiet colour—in the Strand. He was looking very well. God bless me, Melton! but sometimes this world is too much for me!"

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE for June makes a speciality of articles depicting social life and manners at home and abroad. In "State and Society in Ottawa" we have an entertaining description of the vice-regal court, with illustrations of the Parliament Buildings, the State Apartments at Rideau Hall, the Boudoir of Princess Louise, etc. The second of Mrs. Wister's two papers on Paris brings the splendors of the Old World into juxtaposition with those of the New. "Housekeeping in Texas" presents a graphic picture of domestic life in the Southwest before and since the war. Somewhat in the same vein, and not less amusing, is the continuation of Miss Porter's papers on "Village Life in the South." An article on "American Fiction," by M. G. Van Rensselaer, shows keen critical sagacity, and a paper on Sir William Johnson deals with an interesting episode in colonial history. There are two striking short stories, "A Strange Story from the Coast," by Rebecca Harding Davis, and "Played Out," by the author of "The Clifton Picture," and other popular novels.

MY LOVE AND I.

I.

A gliding river 'neath a morning's sky;
Gently we're gliding down, my love and I.
The oars lie idle as we float along;
Softly I sing, and this my tender song,
"O lady, life is short, and love is strong!"

II.

The banks shine green, a willow's bough hangs low,
A swallow skims across, a black-winged crow
Caws loud, and wakes a soft-voiced distant throng
Of warblers sweet, to join with me in song,
"O lady, life is short, and love is strong!"

III.

The sun mounts higher in the cloudless sky,
Still we float on, my gentle love and I.
A rustling wind the slender reeds among
Bends their light forms and wingles with my song,
"O lady, life is short, and love is strong!"

IV.

The noontide changes to the golden gleam
Of parting daylight, and the rippling stream
Shines with a wondrous radiance. All along
The dark'ning banks echo rings back my song,
"O lady, life is short, and love is strong!"

V.

The mists are gathering now, the rose red light has fled;
A mournful bird trills low that day is dead;
The flowers hang limp and brown, and shadows long
Creep through the sombre pines; yet still my song,
"O lady, life is short, and love is strong!"

VI.

In tears and dimness on the banks we part;
Night hides the shining stream; time stills the heart;
Only its chords vibrating yet prolong
The soft sad cadence of my tender song,
"O lady, life is short, and love is strong!"

C. L. P.

HEARTH AND HOME.

TO PREVENT ANGER.—As a preventive of anger, banish all tale-bearers and slanders from your circle, for it is these that blow the devil's bellows to rouse up the flames of rage and fury, by first abusing your ears, and then your credulity, and after that steal away your patience and all this perhaps for a lie. To prevent anger, be not too inquisitive into the affairs of others, or what people say of yourself, or into the mistakes of your friends, for this is going out to gather sticks to kindle a fire to burn your own house.

WIFELY TACT.—Whenever you find a man about whom you know little oddly dressed, or talking ridiculously, or exhibiting any eccentricity of manner, you may be tolerably sure that he is not a married man; for the little corners are rounded off, the little shoots are pruned away, in married men. Wives generally have much more sense than their husbands, especially when the husbands are clever men. The wife's advice is like the ballast that keeps the ship steady. They are like the wholesome, though painful, shears snipping off little growths of self-conceit and folly.

TRUTH.—Truth, taken as a whole, is not agreeable. Every man, woman, and child dislikes it. There are agreeable truths and disagreeable truths, and it is the province of discretion or sound judgment to make a selection from these, and not to employ them all indiscriminately. Speaking the truth is not always a virtue. Concealing it is very often judicious. It is only when duty calls upon you to reveal the truth that it is commendable. A tale-teller may be a truth-teller, but everyone dislikes the character of a person who goes from one house to another and intercommunicates all he sees or hears.

HEALTH.—To retain or recover health, persons should be relieved from anxiety concerning disease. The mind has power over the body—for a person to think he has disease, will often produce that disease. This we see when the mind is intensely concentrated upon the disease of another. We have seen a person sea-sick, in anticipation of a voyage, before reaching the vessel. A blindfolded man slightly pricked in the arm has fainted and died from believing he was bleeding to death. Therefore, persons well, to remain well, should be cheerful and happy; and sick persons should have their minds diverted as much as possible from themselves.

ECONOMY.—Everybody talks about retrenchment now-a-days, but particularly the men. They take it for granted that women must do the saving, however, and masculine writers on domestic economy are particularly vigorous in their advocacy of woman's inalienable right to work and save. One of the pet notions is that every woman should become her own milliner and dressmaker. "If the ladies," they say, "would make their own bonnets and dress, a very desirable point would be gained." No doubt of it. And the principle involved in the gaining of this "desirable point" is too good to be limited in its application to the ladies alone. The gentlemen who have discovered it should be permitted to share in it. This they can do by making their own hats and clothes. Thus would another "desirable point" be gained. In these hard times, the more desirable points that can be gained in domestic economy, the better.

THE HON. MR. TILLEY AND TEMPERANCE.—The present Minister of Finance has long been a member of the Temperance cause. Judging, however, from his portrait, we cannot congratulate him upon his strange neglect of the solemn warning contained in the words of the immortal Duffer, *Treble makes the shirt for you*. Send for samples and cards for self-measurement to TREBLE, 8 King Street E., Hamilton, Ont.