

the motley crowd that filled the pages of a big, unwieldy book, and the laughing assurance of his companions that he would never hear of it again. But the one chance in a hundred had come to him, after so many months that he had forgotten all about the annoyance felt at the time.

'I hope the other fellows have forgotten the circumstance, too,' he told himself, thinking of all the comforts and conveniences that amount of money would provide for him and the dear ones in the little country home.

He was well aware that he had not come into this money legally, that it was against the laws of the country either to operate or patronize swindling concerns that took from the many to enrich the few; the purpose being to fill the coffers of the men who operated the machine. Still the temptation to have as much money as he needed once in his life was great, and he tried to bribe his conscience to keep silent by an assurance that in his hand the money would be put to a much better use than the swindlers would make of it.

'It certainly paid me to attend the St. Louis exposition,' he told himself, cheerily, in his enthusiasm, forgetting the unfair means by which his good luck had come.

Looking around the little cramped room, with its dingy walls, he caught a glimpse of the sweet face of his mother, looking down with tender, pitying eyes upon him. Shrinking from the reproving gaze that held him spell-bound, he forgot that it was only a picture, and pleaded wistfully, 'It was only a mere chance that won me all this luck, good or bad, mother, dear, and if it is your wish, I'll never take such a risk again.'

If he had expected the explanation to turn the eyes from him, he was disappointed, and after waiting a little time he got up and moved his chair to the other side of the room out of range of the picture on the wall. But the eyes seemed to follow him, and though farther away, the pleading expression was intensified rather than weakened.

Turning away from the accusing eyes, Harold said, irritably, 'I have as good a right to this money as any one else; better, in fact, than those in charge, since I paid the price demanded for a draw, and took the risk. Don't you understand that, mother?' he asked, standing erect before the picture with his eyes on a level with those looking out from the little old-fashioned gilt frame. 'Just think of the relief you will experience when that dreadful mortgage is lifted,' he urged, as if arguing with his mother instead of her inanimate likeness. For a moment he imagined that the dark, tender eyes softened, but when he looked again they seemed to have grown sterner than ever. 'I am ashamed of myself to-night,' he said, with an effort to throw off the spell that seemed to bind him. 'It would be bad enough for a girl to give way to her imagination, but for a great, strong six-footer to play the coward and actually tremble in the presence of his mother's picture, is unpardonable. Even mother would laugh at my superstition were she here to see me now. It's that hot office that has worked me up to this nervous pitch, but with all this money at my command I can now afford to take a much needed rest.'

With the question settled as he wished it to remain, he dipped his pen in the ink to fill the voucher blanks, determined to mail the letter at once.

'I'll not venture a glance at the picture until the letter is safe in the mailbox,' he said, under his breath, as if afraid his words would reach the ears of the listening picture. He meant what he said, too, and for a few moments kept his eyes on the letter he was writing. Then, with a quick, nervous movement he lifted his head, as if drawn by some invisible power, he raised his eyes, meeting those of the picture gazing pityingly down upon him. Instinctively his fingers closed over the written page, as if to hide it—an agreement with dishonor—from those pure mother eyes. The next instant the compact with the swindler was ablaze in the open grate and with a fascination in which defeat and victory struggled for the triumph Harold watched the fiery page puff up, into a pale flame and then slowly die out, leaving nothing but a tiny heap of gray ashes to tell of the luck that had failed.

'You have won out, little mother, he said softly, looking up into the lovely eyes beaming so tenderly upon him.



—Selected.

'There is no friend like a mother, no love like hers, pure, unselfish, Christlike,' he added, his thoughts with the dear mother, who at this very hour was wont to kneel at the throne of grace, bearing in her arms of faith her dear ones, her sons and daughters, 'Lest they forget,' and wander far from home and God. 'She is praying for me at this moment, I am sure, I feel her here, holding me back from sin as with an angel's hand. It must have been of mothers the psalmist in the long ago wrote,' and he repeated softly, 'For he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.'

Don't Fear to Question.

The girl who is superior to the interrogation point courts disaster. If she is ashamed to ask questions she will get in trouble.

If she tries to appear that she is not ignorant she is very apt to walk into a trap.

So if people talk about books or plays or characters in history with which you are not familiar, don't appear knowing. It is nothing to be ashamed of that you are not familiar with everything.

You may be able to talk to them of people and things of which they do not know. It is not only foolish to appear to know everything but it is also unwise. There are

people who are not above setting a trap for the unwary and then laughing at the victim.

More girls are afraid to ask questions from shyness rather than any design to appear cleverer than they are. They are afraid of being laughed at. But the wise thing is to put as many questions as you want when people are talking about things of which you know nothing.

If you have ever talked to a really clever and well-informed man or woman you will be surprised to see how many questions he or she asks you. This type of person gets well informed from finding out what every one else knows.

In this way the mind is stocked with information. It is the most cultured person who always frankly says she has not read this book or does not remember that poem or forgets the name of some great author. You see, she is not afraid of letting any one think she is ignorant, for she knows she is not, and they know it.

If you will appear, therefore, to be well informed, ask questions. After a few years of this you will be informed. People are always glad to tell you what they think you don't know, and even the most learned are flattered by being asked the details of some subject to which they have referred.

Carry this out in everyday life. Don't confine it to literature, history, and art. Don't be afraid of seeming ignorant. If you are you will remain ignorant.—The 'Times.'