

What a number of bulky volumes might be written, by the way, about those eyes that express much and those red lips that murmur forth words and words! A glance from a laughing eye and a vague turn to a careless, soft spoken speech! they mean nothing, they are done in all innocence; but, alack!—men are so conceited.

But let me not encourage false hopes. There is in this narrative no fair coquette. I did but make a small depression—none of my characters are given to ogle and sigh with innocence in their hearts. Sidney's love affair was no mockery, good people; it was a case where the heart was stirred. And Sidney himself was one whose heart could not be stirred without his whole nature responding. Indeed it is possible that tendency of his to be governed more by imagination than by a reckoning of actual facts will work a great change in him some day. And it may be that the change will have in it the blankness of despair. For a sensitive, high-strung nature like his is not like other men's.

The moment Sidney's eyes rested on Miss Smiling, he thought he had a key to Frank's somewhat obscure sayings and doings a few minutes before when they were making themselves presentable, and he decided maliciously that he would pay the schemer out for the same. Accordingly he anticipated his friend; he advanced quickly to the younger girl and dropped into a seat by her side. When he had made sure of her attention by this move, he began to wonder vaguely what he should say.

"Must keep up my reputation for originality," he thought (it has already been stated that my hero was not wanting in conceit.) "It will never do to mention the weather," he concluded dismally. "Ah I have it!" and he nodded his head, looking her over the while with exaggerated appreciation.

"How do you do it, Miss Smiling?"
 "How do I do what, Mr. March?" And the young lady beamed upon him questioningly.

"How do you contrive to look so cool and fresh in this hot weather? Positively you are as good as—as an ice cream! You refresh one so, after one has been out all day in the glare."

She laughed. "I don't know that it is quite complimentary to be likened to an ice cream; certainly it is a forcible way of expressing how my coolness effects you."

"Your coolness is many sided—" began Sidney mischievously. But before he could proceed, there was a rustle, and another person entered the room through an open French window that was behind him. Sidney turned at the sound, and again his pulse throbbed violently. It was she, the unknown charmer! And how gracefully she bore herself—so perfectly unstudied in her movements! How she was dressed, he did not know—few men do—but he felt that everything about her was in good taste. He was not impressionable as a rule, but there was an indescribable something about this girl that fascinated him. Whatever it was, it caused him unspeakable transport. He had on one or two previous occasions pretended to experience unspeakable transport, but the thing had been a failure, and the object of his mock admiration not a whit impressed. And at divers times, when he had devoted a few short moments to self-examination he had told himself proudly that his was a heart that was not made to beat faster for any one particular girl than for another. Has it ever come to any of you who read, to find, after years of scoffing, that there is in your life a new influence? Even the sweet agonizing doubt—"Do I—can it be possible that I love her?" And, oh how much more agonizing, how much more doubtful the doubt!—"does she love me?"

Sidney had eyes and ears for none but this newcomer now. Her face wore a look of shy composure—the words may seem contradictory; nevertheless they were the only ones he could think of with which to describe her. Evidently she had not noticed that there were two strange young men in the room until she had advanced too far to retreat. And so she entered reluctantly, the force of habit making her mask the distress she experienced by a calm dignity that sat well on her erect, graceful figure. Her eyes were dark; they had a sad, half-abstracted expression, a look that seemed to

betoken the fact that their owner was one who dwelt much within herself. Evidently hers was a nature that took most pleasure in solitary contemplation. She loved not the frivolous society into which she was thrust by the force of circumstances. And she preferred, when possible, to escape from it, and revel in a dreamland where men were men, and spoke not merely to fill up a blank pause in a conversation.

Some such notion as this was conveyed to Sidney as he watched her entry. He was not of course infallible in his judgment of character.

But, like other frail mortals, he steadfastly stuck to a first impression. And the idea of her disposition thus engendered was one that appealed strongly to his inner self. He also had imagination; and his fancy was wont to take strange flights sometimes. How delightful it would be to have a companion in these fantastic trips, and that a beautiful sympathetic young girl!

These thoughts flashed through my hero's mind, and he continued to gaze open-mouthed at the girl. And suddenly it came home to him that he was behaving abominably; he was staring stupidly at her like any dull clown. Moreover, try as he might, he could not master himself so as to preserve an unconcerned demeanour, and he felt instinctively that his companion had noted his confusion.

Mrs. Cowan, in a half-hearted, hesitating way, introduced the young beauty as Miss Caldwell. Sidney saw that this was a response to Frank's unmistakable admiration. And heraged inwardly, for he knew the ardour was assumed to pay him

up for monopolizing Miss Smiling; and perhaps—who knows—to try and get even with her for some supposed slight.

(To be continued.)



ECONOMY IN CLOTHES.