

CONSCIENCE TROUBLED HER

And She Was in Hot Water All Her Life.

A Plain Way of Telling the Truth Made Her Unpopular but She Could Not Help It.

"It's a troublesome thing to have, is a conscience abnormally developed," ruminated Olivia. "Next to being commonsensible or trying to be dignified there's nothing so likely to render one ridiculous and unpopular. I almost wish it was possible to have one's conscience shaved like a beard, or amputated like a corn, or pulled out like a defective tooth. Personally, I'm rather tired of being a perpetual slave to the thing called conscience."

"What's the matter now?" I queried. You see, I knew Olivia very well—have known her since she was an infant in arms, in fact—and I could read the signs of her mental unrest, I knew she had been "opening her mouth and putting her foot into it" once more, as the Irishman said. Olivia is rather unfortunate that way always. If there's any tongue trouble going anywhere, she's pretty sure to pick it up somehow or other.

"Oh, it's nothing new—at least not more than a half a dozen new brain pangs or conscience pains," she replied. "I have been merely reflecting—rather sadly—upon the dolefulness of possessing a conscience in good working order when such an article is distinctly and decidedly out of fashion and when one doesn't know how to control it in the least."

A dear little girl is Olivia, all the more lovable, perhaps, because of the inconsequence which is naturally hers. She "rambles on sweetly," as her sister says of her when conversing with her intimates—just thinking aloud. I knew I should get to the bottom of her latest trouble presently if only I didn't interrupt and send her off on another track at a tangent, so I merely smiled sympathetically and waited in silence.

"When I was a child," she sighed presently, "I don't believe I was a bit popular, although I think most people liked me. And I know I didn't have half the fun some of the other girls did, and all because my conscience was 'bloated,' as my older brother said."

"I never left my Sunday school lesson unlearned or my music lesson unpracticed because I wanted to go violet hunting or coasting Saturday afternoon," she continued with a sigh. "I was too conscientious for that. And I always owned up to the mischief I'd done and refused to share in the trifling consequences of the mischief I hadn't done for the very same reason. When I became a trifle older, I passed low in many an examination because I wouldn't make use of borrowed language or look at my books the very last thing. A little later I earned popularity among my fellows because I never would say I was glad to see any one when I could not say so honestly."

And now—
"And the worst of it all is that I don't believe I ever was or ever will be one bit the better for all these conscience troubles," was the commencement of the next "ramble," for the sake of which she left the previous one unfinished. "As a little child worrying over my Sunday school lesson I certainly sinned just as much on the side of spiritual pride and childish 'puffed-upness' as I would have done on the grounds of neglect of duty had I enjoyed my Saturday afternoons as the other children did. It is an open question if I wouldn't have been a really better girl had I sometimes kept still about my own small wrongdoings as well as tacitly owned up to a few which I hadn't committed. The slight pharisaical attitude of mind came strongly into play again over the 'exampada' I wouldn't borrow and the crib knowledge I would have none of, and, although I never did say I was glad to see any one falsely, I've strained the truth and cracked my conscience's funny bone many a time trying to think of some other conventionally pleasant thing to say. And now—"

"Well, what is it?" I pressed her, determined to fathom the trouble at last. "What has happened 'now'?"

But she merely shook her head mournfully and rambled on.

"It's a point of conscience with me, it always has been, to look at all things from both sides, and, in consequence, many a time I've looked at a given question from both sides of the fence until I've impaled myself upon it and have writhed under the knowledge that

people thought I was sailing with the wind, and so on.

"You run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, don't you?" a girl said to me last week, and, mean as she was, I understood just how she thought it was true. And yet I was only following out the dictates of my abnormal conscience and trying to be just.

"Another girl last week asked me if the powder on her face showed, and when I said yes she fairly hated me. My conscience didn't allow me to say no, and it never occurred to me until long afterward that I might have pleasantly brushed off the powder for her which did show and left the powder which didn't show alone without saying anything at all. Two days ago my brother's wife asked me what I thought of her complexion, and because my conscience compelled me to tell her the truth she went home without bidding me good night or speaking to me again. She hasn't spoken to me since, in fact. And things have gone after this fashion until I am tired of it."

"When Robert Elsmere first came out, it was a point of conscience with me not to read it, and every one called me 'saint' and 'prig' until life was a weary burden. A week or two ago some of us were talking of it, and it occurred to me that it was a point of conscience not to condemn a thing unread. The consequence was that I suffered tortures on account of dislocated religious principles for a whole week. Then it occurred to me that it was a point of conscience not to let anything shake my faith or interfere with my religious stability, and that particular conscience trouble gave way to another. I always have one or more on hand, as you know."

I did know. I never knew Olivia when she didn't have a whole sheaf of such trials and tribulations on hand. I was dying to hear all about the last new conscience wrench, and she would not come to the point. I did not dare to hurry her or fear of never hearing of it at all.

"When my friends and relatives make fun of Delicate exercises or the newest form of athletics, my relentless conscience always impels me to try these things personally, just so that I can discuss them intelligently and without prejudice. In consequence, I'm seldom without a backache or a sprained muscle or something equally pleasant. Let a politician a private individual, a cause or anything else, for that matter, become unpopular, and my tyrannical conscience compels me to champion it or him or them. As a result half the people I know are continually writing me down as a miserably disputatious and disagreeable person."

Which was putting the matter entirely too strong. But then that Olivia's way. It's a point of conscience with her to make the worst of herself for fear she should be untruthfully complimentary.

"It's always been so," she moaned now, beginning to sob a little, "but now it's worse than ever. Now—"

"If you don't come out with it now," I broke in, unable to restrain my impatience much longer. "I shall go stark, staring, raging, raving mad and either kill you or myself. Now—"

"Now," said Olivia, breaking down utterly and crying as though her heart would break, "now Charley and Harry have both proposed to me. They did it a month ago. I put them both on probation because I liked them both, and it was a point of conscience with me to treat them both just alike and fairly, although I can't help saying that I really like Harry a little bit the better, and now they both accuse me of flirting, and neither of them will speak to me at all. And it's all because my unfortunate conscience won't let me alone."

"Well, dearie there's one recompense anyhow," I volunteered consolingly when I had comforted her by promising to set matters right with the one she "liked a little bit the best." "People can't help respecting any one who's so intensely conscientious and so very, very much in earnest about it as you are."

"Oh, I don't know about that," retorted Olivia, relapsing into a modified condition of gloominess again. "I don't know about that at all. Of course, the men who like you say that sort of thing to your face very often, but they're a great deal likely to call you a silly little priggish idiot behind your back, and the girls one knows don't even pretend to respect one. They simply say you're a miserable, contemptible little prig to try to be so much better than other folks and that you make everybody uncomfortable about you and let it go at that. No, there isn't much comfort in being more conscientious than other people, and I sometimes wonder if the best people in the world, as well as the happiest, aren't the people who have only just enough conscience to keep them rea-

sonably honest and kind and not too big an allowance to live comfortably with."

And really, despite the fact that I firmly believe ironclad consciences to be necessary, in great numbers, to the proper conduct and salvation of this gay and sinful but altogether adorable world, at least in this present day and generation, it seemed to me that Olivia had either proved her case or something very like it. I don't in the least know how to reconcile the two aspects of the subject, however. Perhaps some of the rest of you can help me out.—Chicago Evening Post.

English as She's Written.

A lamentable unfamiliarity with English as she is idiomatically "spoke" on her native heath is responsible for a bad quarter of an hour which a certain young lawyer of this town will not soon forget. His wife has most pronouncedly correct tastes in everything, including dress. Such of her gowns as do not come direct from London town are built in New York by the most correct of English milliners. When she made ready to go to Long Branch last summer, the young wife laid in a supply of clothes that should dazzle the natives: Her English milliner was, however, provokingly slow about delivering things, and she was forced to set off without several of the frocks she had intended taking with her. For the first week after she went away she wrote to her devoted husband at home every day. For the second week she wrote every other day. In the third week four days passed without a line from her. On the fifth day a telegram was delivered at the young lawyer's office.

"Wife's body forwarded this morning."

The signature was a scrawl, but the message was enough to chill the very marrow of that young's husband's bones. It had been sent from New York. He saw, in his mind's eye, his dainty little wife running up to town for a day's shopping. He thought of the frightful heat. He knew just how it had all come about, and with a horror-stricken face he dashed out into the street and fairly ran to the house of his wife's sister to acquaint her with the frightful news. He was past speech when he reached the house, but he held out the fatal telegram. The sister read it.

"Well," said she, "it's time he sent it. She's been expecting it for six weeks. It's the one that goes with the pink chiffon skirt, I suppose."—Ex.

Abraham's History.

A schoolboy at a prize examination furnished the following biography of the patriarch Abraham: "He was the father of Lot and had two wives. One was called Ishmale and the other Hagar. He kept one at home, and he turned the other into the desert, where she became a pillar of salt in the daytime and a pillar of fire by night."—Woman's Journal.

Sanguine of Success.

Topeka, Kan., Dec. 12.—J. M. Newman, chairman of the Santa Fe grievance committee, arrived here today to confer with the striking operators. Mr. Newman is very sanguine about the ultimate result of the strike.

"I have just received a report from the Chicago division," said Mr. Newman, "stating that we have had numerous accessions to our ranks, and that the boys there are jubilant over the good condition of things."

"Repeated messages from trainmen on the Chicago division assure me that most of the operators are out. Conductors say they have great difficulty in running their trains, some of which are late."

"The company claims that all the places are filled by new men. Some of them may be, but when the class of men filling them is taken into consideration, the situation is materially changed. Most of the so-called operators are students, who never saw the inside of a railroad office before, and they are utterly incompetent to fill the positions."

This statement of Mr. Newman seems to be substantiated by the difficulty attending the operations of the new men here. In the Topeka depot office three men and one woman are at work. None of these has had experience. The best one in the number can send fifteen words per minute, and the others much less.

The officials have been in the depot all day, with loads of instruction books, blanks and the like, endeavoring to make the amateur operators acquainted with their duties. Before the strike two ordinarily competent operators could care for all the business in the depot office, and have time to spare.

In the general office here three new men are working. None of these has had experience. Positions in the general office have been very difficult to

fill, even by men who have had years of experience on the road.

Mr. Newman has been on the road for two days, and has not been at any one place long enough to receive complete dispatches from all parts of the system. All he has received, however, indicate that the strike conditions are decidedly favorable for the operators.

Permanent headquarters for the strikers have been established in a Topeka hotel, where messages can be constantly received from all parts of the system. The headquarters will be maintained as long as there is any occasion for them.

The operators here appear to be very jubilant and claim they have something up their sleeve which will develop soon.

The Swede's Grievance.

"When Swift said that it was impossible to get an idea into a Scotchman's head without trepanning him, he spoke without knowledge of the average Swede, at least as we find him in his country," said a prominent builder in an up town hotel recently. "I think I can tell a story that carries out that theory," he went on, "and it relates to an experience a friend of mine, an architect, had with one of that nationality not long ago."

"The architect in question had erected a handsome dwelling for his own use in a nearby suburb, and one day, after it was completed, he went out to look it over. The frescoing had been completed and some of the carpets and rugs laid, and you can imagine his feelings when he discovered that a water pipe had burst in one of the halls and the overflow was gradually ruining his property."

"My friend dashed out of the house, greatly perturbed, and brought back with him the first plumber he found in the village. He pointed to the ruined walls and told the pipe doctor to get to work at once."

"The plumber, however, seemed to be in no hurry to save the premises. He looked around calmly and then drawled:

"Well, dat been a pooty big job. I gotten take out d' washboards and d' floors. Dat been a pooty big job."

"Well, for heaven's sake, get at it," fumed my friend. "Don't you see the place is being ruined? Get to work!"

"Yes, I seen dat," remarked the imperturbable plumber, "but dat costen pooty big. Dot a big job."

"Nothing apparently could move the fellow so my friend, after telling him

a few honest, hard facts, kicked him down stairs and out of the house. The plumber repaired at once to the village saloon, where he told his tale of woe."

"Say," he drawled, "vat been de matter mit dat feller up dere? I guess he moost been crazy. He got me up dere in dot new house to make a job of work, and 19 times he called me a Norwegian fool, and all de time I vos a Swede."—Ex.

Stowaway Brides.

Stowaway brides are not as rare at the barge office as one would believe. It is quite easy for a girl to slip aboard an outgoing steamer and stow herself in one of the bunks below decks, lying quietly there until well at sea.

A case happened a little while ago, the girl coming to meet her fiancée here. As both were poor, the former resorted to this perilous expedient to accomplish the desired end. One would think that such a heroic endeavor would deserve a better reception. But on arriving, having been worked very hard on shipboard for passage, worn and worried almost to distraction, the maiden was so changed by her ordeal of love that when her betrothed met her he refused to marry her. A few days later, while being taken back to the ship for deportation she leaped into the bay. Rescued gallantly, she lingered a prisoner in the charity hospital, but died some weeks later, literally of a broken heart.—Ainslee's Magazine.

Notice.

Notice is hereby given that a list of all placer mining claims in the Yukon territory which were sold at public auction and which have not been taken up, is being prepared for publication at once, and after the first publication thereof no grant will be issued, under such sale as aforesaid, for any claim so advertised. All purchasers are, therefore, notified to apply for their grants immediately.

(Signed) J. LANGLOIS BRILL, Assistant Gold Commissioner. Dated at Dawson this 14 day of December, 1900.

Candles for the Millions.

I have enough candles, nuts, and toys to supply the whole population of the Yukon country. My stock is complete. Plenty of Lowney's chocolate and Gunther's bon-bons in any quantity; cigars by the box. Bring your friends and as I am a Missourian, I will show you the finest store in the Yukon territory. GANDOLFO, Third st., opp. A. C. C.

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