

pling them as she met a curlous twinkle in the orbs of her love, and adding in a meek voice "oh please don't; not even in fun."

"Never was more serious" returned Dugdale "pray when do you intend that Mr. Van Higgin shall leave this house?"

"Next week I think—but what is the matter—why do you look at me like that?" cried Madeline feeling there was something she did not understand. "Here is a daughter!" exclaimed Dugdale "who owning a house and furniture like this talks of turning her father out of doors next week and waiting ever so long before she can marry."

Madeline started back trembling in every limb, and would have fallen, had not Dugdale placed his strong arm round her.

"Tell me—tell me—what you mean" she gasped in broken accents but making no resistance.

"My dear" cried Dugdale soothing her as he would a child, "when I came back a few days ago, and found how matters stood with your father, I felt I had only one course to pursue.—I owed everything to him in this country; my fame and wealth were due to his kindness and influence, and I was glad of an opportunity to prove my gratitude.—We had worked together and though he had lost, I had won, which was hardly fair. So Madeline I purchased this house and furniture and made them over to you knowing it would be just the same, except that at present, he could not hold the property,—whereas you could. That is all the story."

"All! oh why did you keep this secret?" asked Madeline sobbing with very joy.

"Why you see I wanted to know first 'whether you cared for me,'" Dugdale answered.

"Cared for you! Suppose I had refused you John?" calling him so for the first time.

"Then we would have cried quits," said Dugdale "whereas, as it is, I shall still for ever be in your debt, and have only made an ordinary marriage settlement."

"Oh my darling help me to love you as I ought to do," murmured Madeline surrendering herself entirely as she was clasped to Dugdale's heart.

Thus was the second venture won, and surely we will not begrudge our friend his prize; he had staked his all and there is no fear Madeline will ever forget his generosity, indeed her pride in her husband, has often struck me as half touching, half amusing, but wholly womanly.

Presently the pair joined the others. Taking Madeline by the hand and advancing towards Van Higgin, Dugdale remarked, "Allow me sir with your permission to present you to my future wife."

And allow me Papa to present you my future husband without any permission whatever," added Madeline proudly though she laughed and blushed as she said the words.

Then in the midst of the congratulations, it was discovered by the bride elect, that that she was the only one, who had not known about the recent purchase, but she exacted a promise from Dugdale, that it should be the last secret she would ever have from her, which promise has so far, I hear been faithfully kept.

CHAPTER XV—CONCLUSION.

My story is about finished, and though a couple of chapters back, dark days seemed in store for Madeline the good fairy, in the shape of John Dugdale, with a touch of his magic wand, sent poverty and hard times to the right about; but before we shake hands and part, Hymen must ring his bells, wave his banners and scatter the orange blossoms. The wedding which was not long delayed, (for Madeline could find no more excuses) was a very quiet one and I am not going to describe it, for I presume you have all seen the ceremony which binds two human beings together "for better or for worse" and one marriage has always appeared to me pretty much like another. The bride is the centre of attraction, while the bridegroom generally seems as though he had wandered into the church, by mistake or an accident, and looks as if he wished himself well out of it.

Madeline was radiantly beautiful and nobody took much notice of Dugdale—think of your own wedding my dear sir, and you will admit, that you felt yourself a kind of interloper.

So it is over, and I suppose you want me to add the words, we have so often heard repeated, "and they lived happily ever afterwards," but alas such is beyond me, for Dugdale is still in the prime of life, and his wife quite a young woman, so that neither I nor anyone else can foretell what for certain will be their lot. They will have their troubles doubtless (as we all have) but their great love will lighten their griefs as it will also sweeten their joys.

Washington Van Higgin never rose again to his former glory in the world of commerce, but he is not unhappy and in watching a little Madge who toddles to grand-papa's knee he sees her mother again, her childhood thus coming back to comfort him.

Dugdale formed a partnership with Ralston, and the two are among the leading engineers of the country.

Annette has a couple of children playing round her, or stay perhaps three is the number—I really forget—but whichever it is, she thinks them the finest in the world, and her husband the best.

Now the time for parting has really arrived, and we will take leave of Dugdale Madeline, Guy and Annette, confident that the blessing, which accompanies all true love, will brighten both their homes.—Farewell.

The end.

AMBITIOUS.

Hubby (leaving for business).—Ta, ta, dear. Shall be home early.

Wife (to herself).—To-night or to-morrow morning; I wonder which, this time?

LOOKING OUT FOR THE FUTURE.

She.—You say I may not have this dress.

He.—That's the idea.

She (freely).—You'll remember, sir, that all our money was given to us by my family.

He.—That's the very reason I want them to know that we are economical. You will complain to them, I will be applauded. See? Maybe we'll get some more some day.

SHE NEVER KNEW.

Gentleman—Good evening, my little dear. Is your papa at home?

Little Dear—I don't know; I'll see. Mamma is at home, and when she's around, I never can tell whether papa is here or not, he's so quiet.—Good News.

EXPLAINED.

Featherstone—Will your sister be down soon, Bobbie?

Bobbie—I don't know. She's putting on a new dress and it takes sometime.

Featherstone (impatiently)—What does she want to put on a new dress for?

Bobbie—She expects another gentleman this evening.—New York Herald.

WOULDN'T COME DOWN.

Jake (looking frightened, hearing a noise above).—Do you think your papa will come down?

Cora.—Not with a cent, he says, if I take you.—Yankee Blade.

"DELIGHTFULLY" VAGUE.

He.—Do you like So-and-So's poetry?

She.—Yes, I admire it very much, though I must confess I don't half understand it.

He.—No, that accounts for it. Very likely if it were properly understood it would not be admired half so much.

PROFIT AND LOSS.

Israelstein.—Doctor, mein leedle boy haf swallowed a shilling, for how mooch vill you egstract it?

Doctor.—My fee will be three shillings and sixpence.

Israelstein.—Mein Gott, but then I vill lose half-a-crown. I cannot afford to lose so mooch. I vill let the shilling remain.

Teacher.—What is a gourmand? (No answer—continues.) Suppose a little boy, like Johnny there, sat down and ate a four-pound loaf at a meal, what would he be? Small Pupil.—Thirsty.

Teacher (smiling).—Yes, perhaps he would; but suppose he had washed the bread down with sundry draughts of liquor, what would he be then?

Small Pupil.—Busted!

NEAR IT.

Bridget (who has been sent by artistic mistress for some bullrushes).—I couldn't get no bullrushes, m'm, but I've brought you some cowallips—they'ret he nearest I could get.

THE FALL.

Attalie—What was the original sin?

Travers—Eavesdropping.—The Punter.