

which are taking the women of the continent than would years ago, for England how their and how eagerly of the opportunity for a wider life. In this, says writing in the help and ap- tured and best gentlemen, es- have been accus- eign ladies who at the lives of be more in ac- prevailing in

only returning to s, for in earlier allowed them They spoke in m were recog- vered addresses their own sex in figured in the ntry, and the s, Zehneb and e fifteenth ce- people. Gradu- rictor and their , until at last ish woman be- pe for all that retrograde. A sion has exist- ever, and the Turkish lady's exaggerated. ildhood she is onship of mem- r, with the ex- and nearest male r admitted in- e manages to leasure out of average Turk, ebeard story- is a courteous, e the waters on ue spot where -party. The public baths, er club.

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The Things That Count.

By Owen Oliver.



ON the evening of the day that Sir John Forrington's knighthood was announced I called to see him. My congratulations had too much heart in them for pen and ink. I wanted a grip of the hand, and a smile to my smile.

His grip was hearty enough, but there was something missing from his smile. There often is when one comes to forty years.

"It is—an honor," he said, with the slightest touch of bitterness in his voice.

"Well, it's only the hall-mark," I admitted; "but one is glad to be the stuff they stamp."

"Thanks, old man," he acknowledged. "Thanks. There's always a fly in the sugar, isn't there? It seems cheap to profess indifference. I suppose I'm pleased really. It's just—live. Come into the den and talk."

We went to his handsome study, and took luxurious arm-chairs. Time was when our studies were bare attics. Now the signs of prosperity are around us; but life isn't Turkey carpets and cigars.

"You've been looking up ancient history?" I charged him. "We always do when we come to a new volume. Well, there are some good chapters in volume I. of John Forrington."

I recounted the steps in his career, with a friend's enthusiasm, till I came to the rung of knighthood. Then he turned round and faced me, with his chin on his hand. I had often thought what a fine face he had. A man's life writes on his features. Clever and strong, and clean-living and kindly; that was what one read on the face of John Forrington.

"They aren't the things that count," he stated. "You leave the honors behind. A few withered rose leaves go in the coffin."

"Ah!" I said. "So it's rose leaves, old chap."

"No," he said slowly. "It's a hairpin. I did you an injustice. I thought you'd laugh."

And then I laughed.

"If you asked me what counted most," I told him, "I'd say a handkerchief spotted with red. I bound someone's finger when she cut it once."

That ought to encourage you!" I laughed again, and so did he. You get into a way of laughing when you have an ache to hide.

"It's in that drawer," he mentioned. "If anything happens to me, you'll know what to do with it."

"Yes," I said. We were silent for a long time. Then he told me this story.

I met her ten years ago at Gibraltar. It was on one of the trips that helped me a step up the ladder. She was only eighteen; not much more than a child. I didn't think she was anything more. That was my mistake. I was careful enough with women. A married man separated from his wife—well, you know about that.

You can understand that I didn't want to talk about my domestic life. I forgive her for all but one thing. Well, I try to forgive that now she's gone. She made me a worse man than I might have been. Ah! but I know! . . . I didn't see why it mattered to other people that I was married, unless I wanted to be friends with a woman. Then I said just enough to let her infer that I was. It didn't seem necessary to take precautions with a child.

The way I came to know her was this. We were staying at the Bristol, and in the evenings they used to sit in the strip of garden across the road, against the cathedral. I mean the little girl and her mother and elder sister. They were sitting there that evening, and I was in the smoking-room with Young Reeves. You know Reeves. He was

with me as a sort of secretary-assistant. He was a good boy, and keen on his work; but pretty girls distracted him. That's what they're for!

The distraction at the moment was the elder sister. He kept fidgeting, hearing her voice through the open window as we drank our coffee; and I saw that my instructions were going in at one ear and out of the other.

I was explaining to him about taking some levels in the morning. Gib. is all ups and downs.

"Well, Charlie," I said at last, "I've wasted a lot of good breath on you."

He muttered an apology, and grinned.

"It's confounded hard lines when you don't know people," he remarked.

"It's confounded stupidity if you want to know them and don't," I retorted.

"Oh, well!" He shrugged his shoulders. "Of course, you find a chance, sooner or later, if you look out. I'm going to. But I'd like to talk to them now."

I was just going to load my pipe, and an idea struck me; and I laughed aloud. I'd been pretty hard hit; but I was younger then, and I could raise a real laugh.

"Come along, young innocent!" I said. "We will go and talk to them forthwith."

"You won't offend them?" he begged; "but of course you won't."

"Not a bit," I promised. "If they want to talk to us—women generally do want to talk to men, that's what you boys forget—it will be all right. If they don't they won't anyhow. 'Faint heart,' you know, Charlie."

We walked out and sat down near them. I fumbled about with my pipe. Then I turned to the mother. I could see that she was a cheerful old soul, and I guessed that she'd see through my dodge, and wouldn't mind.

"Excuse me," I said, "but could you by any chance lend me a hairpin to clean my pipe?"

She looked at her daughters, and all three laughed. Their laughter had the real ring.

"My little girl could," she answered. "She is always losing them, so she carries a stock in her pocket."

They laughed again. The little girl's hairpins were evidently a standing jest with them. She flushed a little, and looked at me.

"They aren't in my pocket," she explained—what a pretty soft voice she had!—"I keep them in my hair—the spare ones. That is why they tease me. But I will fetch you a new one."

She rose quickly, but I jumped up and barred the way to the gate.

"As if I would let you run up three flights of stairs for me!" I protested. "I am sure that you always run."

"Yes!" She laughed gaily. "I don't mind."

"But I do. Besides, I should like one out of your—pocket!—much the best."

"Of course he wouldn't, dear," her mother observed.

"Of course he would!" said her sister. She was a very attractive girl, and evidently used to badinage.

"Naturally he would," Reeves added. The young girl looked round at us with her eyes sparkling, and still flushing a little.

"Now which am I to believe?" she asked.

"Me!" cried all the rest. I held out my hand. She took out a hairpin and gave it to me.

"It's nearly new," she told me, with a little amused smile. If I were to try to describe her look in a word, it would be just that—amused.

"And you needn't clean your pipe with it, if it doesn't want cleaning," her sister remarked daringly. "Daring" is the one word for her.

We all laughed a little guiltily. "No," I admitted. "I needn't. It is—a way of eating salt together." I looked at her mother, and she nodded.

"I am an old traveller," she said, "and I have eaten salt with many people."

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