

Choice Literature.

HE THOUGHT IT EARNEST.

"Oh! do not talk in that way," she said. "I hoped you were in love with somebody else."

"Then you must have hoped I was playing her very false," he retorted, trying to hide his anxiety by taking a graceful attitude. "I have been devoting myself to you in a most lavish way, Miss Warely."

"Why, of course; you all do," answered the girl, who was a beauty of eighteen, and was entertaining her visitor with the air of a woman polished by experience and cynicism. "Do you suppose I think even the married ones who bow down before me are really in love? You would bow down before a rare piece of bric-a-brac in a drawing-room without, I should hope, a thought of appropriating it. And in the same way quantities of people who pay me compliments do not dream of appropriating me. In fact, I am not to be acquired at present, Mr. Stanton."

"Are you ever in earnest?" Stanton demanded.

"Always both; I mean, I am a mixture of earnestness and badinage that makes a delicious combination. You can't tell how I am done, but you like the result."

"I should think I did!" the young man ejaculated. "But I will confess to you that one reason why I want you to love me is that I want to satisfy my curiosity—I wish to find out whether you can be wholly in earnest!"

Stanton was one of those men who, with their heads a little on one side, can say all sorts of sharp things delightfully.

"Dear me!" cried the piquant, lovely girl, suddenly changing her indifferent position and looking at him with all her immense capacity for looking. "Perhaps I will some day be wholly in earnest with you; but it may be too much—you may die of the effects."

"Winifred!" Stanton returned, with great temerity. "Die for need of it, you might have said."

"Oh, please put your answers at the *staccato* pitch. You know nothing could kill a person of such health as yours except a commonplace accident. If you want to win my heart, utter airy nothings," the girl insisted.

"If you go on like this, I can quite imagine your driving me to desperation," Stanton moaned, taking one of her hands.

"Don't drop into *Hamlet*!" was the quick response, as she coolly withdrew her hand, looking far away from him.

Stanton flapped his knee with his glove and was gloomily silent, although he looked too young and prosperous for such a mood of chagrin.

Quick as thought she turned back to him, leaning lazily in her chair, and exclaimed: "You must have been refused a great many times; why do you take it so hard?"

Stanton's cheeks were striped white and red, like the flag, in a moment, and his gray eyes fixed themselves upon her steadily.

"I have never offered myself before," he replied.

Winifred laughed, and asked: "Isn't that an airy nothing? I'm so perverse that I wanted the truth that time."

"It is the truth. I don't fall in love as easily as you suggest; and, besides, should probably have been taken at my word, if I did! I should have been engaged long ago."

"How dare you say so? It is very impertinent toward the charming girls of your acquaintance!" she cried.

"I'm merely telling you that I can only love perfection, such as you—"

"You must have been a terrible flirt," was all the answer he got.

The young man started to his feet and marched to one of the windows of the great, rich room, in which their voices had sounded like a twitter of birds. He was gnashing his lips all to himself.

"Good-by!" he heard her say; and he turned. She had risen. He came back, with his clear eyes fixed again upon hers.

"Now, don't look so frightened! I am not going to refuse you," she said, dimpling. "I'm not going to do anything." Only such beauty and fascination of manner as hers could make her audacity bewitching, which it certainly was. It is the way things are said that makes all the difference. "I can't bear scenes and you must find out whether there is any chance for you or no."

Stanton tried to speak, stamped his foot, tugged at his moustache, and deliberated, still gazing at the tall, roguish creature.

"You can hate me for being so unfeeling," she went on, taking up a novel as if to find her place in it; "and then it will be settled quietly and definitely, here and now."

"Is life such a slight matter, such a frolic as this?" he demanded, hoarsely and melodramatically, thinking himself eloquent.

Winifred put her hands behind her and pretended that the novel she still held was a school book from which she had been studying.

"Life is made up of melodious oxygen from Strauss, and pulsations of light from a time previous to Noah," she recited, with her nose elevated and her eyes shut. "It is extremely difficult to separate life from novels, bonbons, and seaside frivolities, with which its threads are constantly getting entangled. Some people are needlessly angry because life does not resemble the Jurassic Period, containing traces of serious monsters that weighed enormously. However, there are unfortunately isolated examples of these bores, even now, to alarm the normal individual who took French or English, and prefers lots of things that wear out to anything that wears upon."

She opened her eyes, and added: "Please go, now."

"Of course," growled Stanton. "I would rather have you make fun of me behind my back, if it has to be done at all."

He turned away.

At that moment a servant brought Winifred a card.

"Show Mr. Danforth into the Rose parlour," she directed.

Stanton whirled about. He was surprised to observe that she had become very pale; but, as he could not understand this, he overlooked it, and cried, breathing deep:—

"You will see him in your Rose parlour? It is said that you have not refused any one yet in that sanctum, but that it is reserved for the fortunate man."

"What an ingenious legend!" she answered, with formality.

"This," Stanton scolded, "this is the way you treat a poor wretch who has adored you all summer. You let a rival enter your Rose parlour before his eyes, which have never caught a glimpse of it. Is that report I speak of true?"

"You might ask one of the servants. Good-by."

Winifred appeared to be incensed.

"How can you be so cruel with such a face!" he sighed.

"Frivolous girl, I wish I had understood you earlier!"

"It takes a great deal of intelligence to understand me," replied the beauty, demurely, looking at a large ring on her finger, and adding in a murmur: "A great deal of intelligence." She cast a wonderful glance at him.

He flushed with anger. "Oh, no; I can see through you, even I," he declared. "But do not fear that I shall not love you—I am a finished victim. Good-by, then." He held out his hand.

Winifred clasped hers and laughed and swept round from him, saying over her shoulder:—

"You're so cross!" She all at once sailed out of the room, with her buoyant lace draperies fluttering.

Stanton stood stone still. Then, thrusting a chair out of his way so fiercely that it rolled over with a smash, he took himself off.

Winifred sailed into the Rose parlour (a Pomadour paradise, fragrant with an abundance of roses) and met Mr. Danforth, reserved and graceful. She saw at a glimpse that he was full of the determination to talk of his suit with her, which they had already considered at some length.

"Oh, how heavy the air is from these flowers," she laughed. "Let us come out on the balcony; don't you think so? This September weather is like an improved summer, outside."

The balcony was on a grand scale, like everything else about the Warely house, and was bevined over with lattices into a haven of mellow quiet. A mocking-bird was warbling in a thrush-like tone among the ivy and bronzed woodbine, in a cage that looked like a huge cobweb.

"And so your cruise on the *Sea Serpent* is over?" the girl began, arranging herself comfortably between pink and white cushions, and looking up at her visitor with a straight, radiant regard.

She refreshed and delighted Danforth beyond anything. He said:—

"That duty is over, yes; and here I am at your feet—or would be if you would permit it. Shall I kneel there in person, as I do in spirit?"

She did not seem to hear what he was saying.

"I hope you did not have any narrow escapes," she observed, arranging her cushions anew, as if it were a sort of pastime.

"From the sea? No; I was reserved for greater dangers from you. But, did you mean—"

"No," she interrupted; "I did not mean that I wished they had been narrower. The last storm did some damage among the yachts; and I thought you might have been shaken up a little. Seaside you never could be, I know."

"If you refuse me, Miss Winifred," cried Danforth, bravely, "I do believe it will be because I changed colour that day off Bar Harbor, when I was finding you a good seat. It is so hard in this prosaic century to make one's love appear as dignified as it is. I would rather show you that I love you than say so: yet I sit trembling before you, that is all!"

"One would suppose you had been peeping into some romance of chivalry, Mr. Danforth, and were longing to take your shield and spear in a sort of courage prepense. Do let me know your sister's decision about studying music in Leipzig or Paris."

"Paris! But she said she had written you that she should remain at home, if you were going to be merciful," Danforth ventured.

"I am quite sure she will go," was Winifred's rejoinder, with a mirthful smile. "Mamma is saying she shall take me. It is three years since I was abroad, a mere girl then."

"Going abroad?" the young man repeated. He was pale with consternation. He pictured his fair and accomplished choice as transferred to the hemisphere where she would make such an impression as he believed she must, and where she would be caught up out of his reach, no doubt. It was a fearful blow.

"We thought London would do very well for my first season," she said, as if she were not reflecting a bit upon the subject.

(To be continued.)

WHAT CURES?

What is the force that ousts disease; and which is the most convenient apparatus for applying it? How far is the regular physician useful to us because we believe in him, and how far are his pills and powders and tonics only the material representatives of his personal influence on our health?

The regular doctors cure; the homœopathic doctors cure; the Hahnemannites cure; and so do the faith cures and the mind cures, and the so-called Christian scientists, and the four-dollar-and-a-half advertising itinerants, and the patent medicine men. They all hit, and they all miss, and the great difference—one great difference—in the result is that when the regular doctors lose a patient, the patient grumbles, and when the irregular doctors lose one the community stands on end and howls.—*Rochester Union and Advertiser*.

Nature cures, but nature can be aided, hindered or defeated in the curative process. And the *Commercial's* contention is that it is the part of rational beings to seek and trust the advice of men of good character who have studied the human system and learned, as far as modern science lights the way, how far they can aid nature and how they can best avoid obstructing her.—*Buffalo Commercial*.

It is not our purpose to consider the evils that result from employing the unscrupulous, the ignorant, charlatans and quacks to prescribe for the maladies that afflict the human family. We simply declare that the physician who knows something is better than the physician who knows nothing, or very little indeed about the structure and the conditions of the human system. Of course "he does not know it all."—*Rochester Morning Herald*.

I have used Warner's Safe Cure and but for its timely use would have been, I verily believe, in my grave from what the doctors termed Bright's Disease.—D. F. Shriner, senior editor *Scioto Gazette*, Chillicothe, Ohio, in a letter dated June 30, 1890.

NATURE AND THOUGHT.

O'er wood and field, the heavy clouds, low hung
In leaden folds against the eastern sky,
A sombre shadow cast; a hollow sigh
Did move among the trees, whose branches flung
Uncertain shade upon the waters dun,
That crept with sluggish pace and waveless tide
Toward the plain—cheerless and dark the scene.
A gnarled root my seat; in thought I tried
From the dull world to turn away and glean
Some solace sweet in fancy's region wide.
I oped the poet's page that long hath been
My constant joy—a living thought out-leaped.
I raised my eyes, and lo! on every side
The earth in floods of golden light was steeped.

—Hendleigh, in *The Week*

THE OCEAN VESSEL OF THE FUTURE.

One of the most interesting papers which was read at the joint session of the British Iron and Steel Institute, the American Societies of Engineers and Iron and Steel Manufacturers, was that by Sir Nathaniel Barnaby, K.C.B., on the good and bad points of the modern iron vessel as compared with the modern ship. The chief point emphasized was that in regard to the perils arising from perforation of the hulls of ships we are greatly worse off in these days of steel and iron than we were when ships were built of oak, teak and pine. The only security of an iron or steel ship against fatal injury arising from the perforation of the shell under water depends upon two things only—size and subdivision. Size is in itself an element of safety, and is no disadvantage to merchant ships if they can be worked with financial benefit. On the contrary, the advantage arising from size in passenger ships seems so great that it is hard to predict where the growth will stop. Sir Nathaniel referred to a proposition which had been made to him to build a steamship which would not roll or pitch in a seaway, and would have a speed of fifteen knots an hour. The idea appeared to him to be perfectly practicable. Such a ship would be a steam island, incapable of entering any docks, and she would have to be fortified and garrisoned like a town. But she could be made absolutely secure against fatal perforations; and he added: "I do firmly believe that we shall get the mastery over the seas and live far more happily in a marine residence capable of steaming fifteen knots an hour than we can ever live in seaside towns. The question whether we shall effect our conquest by mere size or by mechanical devices on ships of more moderate proportions depends upon the success of certain efforts, which are now in progress in another direction." In calling attention to the accidents to the *Oregon* and the *City of Paris*, Sir Nathaniel affirmed that good internal subdivision saved the passengers in the former, and much better subdivision saved the ship and passengers in the latter case. The fact that iron or steel ships with a number of bulkheads or divisions often sink in collisions when only a comparatively small hole is made in a single compartment is really due to their internal construction, and they might as well be without compartments. In 1866 the Council of the Institution of Naval Architects decided that no iron passenger ship is well constructed unless her compartments be so designed that she would float safely if any one of them should be filled with water or placed in free communication with the sea. They recommended that all iron ships should be so divided that not only the largest compartment, but any two adjacent compartments, might be filled with water without sinking the ship. These decisions have been absolutely ignored by everybody concerned; and while it is true that there are one or more water-tight bulkheads in every passenger steamship, they exist for structural purposes only, and not to prevent the foundering of the ship when run into.

POWER OF THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

American readers may be surprised to hear that any protection for minorities was expected from the presiding officer (of the House of Commons.) In Congress the Speaker is for many purposes the leader of the majority. The majority is often advised by him, and usually reckons on him to help it to carry out its will. The bare might as well hope that the huntsman would call off the hounds as the minority expect the Speaker to restrain an impatient majority. But in Parliament the Speaker and the chairman of committees (whom, for shortness, I generally include when I refer to the Speaker) are, and have always been, non-partisan officials. Each, no doubt, has belonged to a party, and has been chosen on the proposition of a party leader; but the Speaker is deemed, once he has assumed the wig and gown of office, to have so distinctly renounced and divested himself of all party trappings that, if he is willing to go on serving in a new Parliament, in which the party to which he belonged is in a minority, the majority is nevertheless expected to elect him anew. Thus, Speaker Brand, although he had once been whip of the Liberal party, was re-elected Speaker in 1874 by the Tory party, which had then gained a majority, and served on till 1883. The Speaker is not permitted, so long as he holds office, to deliver any party speech outside Parliament, or even to express his opinions on any party question; and in the chair itself he must be scrupulously fair to both parties, equally accessible to all members, bound to give