

## A LITTLE COWARD.

"Such a little coward!"

The words came floating up to me from a group of children playing under my window and carry me back two years, to the summer I spent in Westonville and the "little coward" I met there.

I had been in practice as a physician for several years, when Aunt Jane, the rich aunt of the Hutchinson family, wrote to invite me to spend a few weeks with her. I was rather amazed at the invitation, as Aunt Jane had never had the slightest affection for me; but the letter was cordial enough to tempt me.

"I have three young ladies visiting me," she wrote, "and you may fall in love with any of them, with my consent. They are all well-bred and well-bred, which is more than can be said of most girls nowadays. Serena Maybury is the woman for a physician's wife, self-possessed, calm, courageous and yet perfectly womanly. She is very handsome, too. Julia Strong is a literary girl and writes for the newspapers. She is pretty, but abstruse, lives in a poetic region above my reach. Susy Markham is scarcely more than a child, eighteen years old, and small as a girl of twelve, fair-haired, blue-eyed, gentle and loving; but will not attract you, as she is the worst little coward I ever saw—creeps at a mouse, faints at a mouse, and gets as white as a ghost if a horse prances. But come and see me and the girls, and stop poisoning patients, saving bones and prancing about sick rooms, for a month at least."

So I went. I had been in Aunt Jane's in my boyish days, and the large, beautiful house, with its wide, high-ceilinged rooms, its broad porches and airy halls, was quite familiar to me. Lying near a river and in the shadow of a mountain, Westonville was a most charming summer residence, and Aunt Jane had visitors from the first warm day to the last one, so that I was not surprised to find others beside those mentioned in my letter of invitation.

Pleasant days were the rule in that sunny July weather, and we boated, rode, drove, clambered up the mountain for picnic parties, played lawn-tennis and croquet, and enjoyed life as youth only can enjoy it in summer days free from toil or care.

Aunt Jane gave me a most cordial welcome, and the first time she was alone with me, she said:

"It is time you were married, Harry. I have thought it all over, and I mean to give you a house well furnished as soon as you introduce me to Mrs. Hutchinson. No! You needn't gush about it. I can afford it, and you deserve it! But don't imagine from my letter that the girls know of my match-making intentions. They would pack up and leave at five minutes' notice, if they suspected it. And they are all popular in society, making a sacrifice of other pleasant invitations to come to Westonville. Serena is the wife for you, if you can win her."

And I cordially admired Serena. Certainly she was the most quietly, self-sustained, beautiful girl I ever met. Nothing flattered her, or moved her from a calm composure. It was impossible to imagine Serena in hysterics, and her health was absolutely perfect.

I devoted myself to Serena, and found her most attractive as her face. She was well-read, and had a keen interest in the current topics of the day. I never met any one who so thoroughly read and understood a newspaper, and she could converse well on all the political, foreign and domestic affairs.

Julia was in agonies of composition, gathering scenes and incidents for her first novel, and going about as it sleep with her eyes open.

And Susy, the first time I saw Susy she was in the orchard, dressed in something blue and thin, all ruffles and bows. She was standing under an apple-tree absolutely paralyzed with terror, and gazing at a huge caterpillar creeping up her arm. Hearing my step, she raised a colorless face, with stained blue eyes and quivering lips, to say:

"Oh, take it off! Oh, please take it off!"

Another minute found her sobbing hysterically, and with a choking word of thanks she ran away.

It all passed so quickly that she was gone before I saw how pretty she was, leaving behind a half-picture of short golden curls and frightened baby blue eyes. The next time I saw those eyes they were full of tearful gratitude for my heroic handling of caterpillars.

It was odd how they haunted me. Quite resolved to win Serena, if persistent wooing would accomplish it, I sought her on all occasions, but, being a united party of friends, we were not often *tele-a-tete*. And it was to me, always, that Susy turned, in hours of peril, when a toad sat upon the white dress, when the boat tipped a hair's breadth more than usual, when horrible crawling things crossed our paths, and crows lifted their heads to contemplate us. On all such occasions, two tiny hands, white as milk, soft as satin, suddenly clasped my arm, and "oh! oh!" called my attention to the terror.

And it was not done for effect. You cannot deceive a physician to that extent, and my professional eyes noted how the pretty face blanched, the pulse quickened and the whole little figure trembled. She really was the worst little coward I ever saw.

And yet, although I chided myself for it, I could not share Serena's openly expressed contempt, or sufficiently admire her own scornful indifference to toads and grasshoppers, boat-tipping or fractious horses. She rode well, a magnificent figure on horseback, while Susy trembled and shivered, and clung to the gentle animal she rode with desperate energy.

It was late in the season and all of my Aunt Jane's guests had departed excepting Serena, Susy and myself, and one morning we were seated in the sitting-room, discussing an important matter. A far-away cousin of Aunt Jane's had been a collector of rare jewelry and plate, and had left his valuable treasures, the result of years of purchase and selections, to her.

"And the whole lot has been sent here," said Aunt Jane. "I am not a coward, but I have let it be well understood in Westonville that I never keep money in the house, have very little plate and few jewels. There is nothing discourages a burglar more than a certainty that there is nothing to steal."

"Does any one know?" I asked.

"The editor of the *Westonville Gazette* published the whole story on Saturday. He must have seen some of the servants

who heard us talking over the lawyer's letter."

"I'll run up to the city and arrange to send the boxes to a safe-deposit company," I said.

"Do! Go now! You can come back on the five-thirty," said Susy. "I shall not sleep a wink if they stay here. Oh! and her very lips were white, 'if I saw a burglar, I believe I should die!'"

And looking into her white, terrified face, I believe so too, although Serena said, loftily:

"What nonsense you do talk, Susy!"

But, Aunt Jane consenting, I went upon my proposed errand, arranged to have the boxes sent for the following day, and was on my way to the depot, when I met an old friend and patient. The ten minutes' chat that followed cost me the loss of the 5:30 train. Not another one stopped at Westonville, excepting the midnight express, until the next day.

Fretting, reproaching myself, I passed the time as I best could until midnight, my heart sinking at the thought of the three lonely ladies at Westonville. There was but one man on the place, and he slept in a room over the stable. What if any thief attempted to obtain the valuable boxes piled in the hall? Serena could be trusted to be cool and collected; Aunt Jane was not timid; but Susy—poor little Susy!—she would die, she said; and I feared she would. As the train sped on, this thought of Susy's terror became almost maddening; and when, at last, I was at the little wayside station, quarter of a mile from Aunt Jane's, I started on a run for the house.

The hall-door stood open, and I heard a sound in the sitting-room that seemed to chill the blood in my veins. Throwing open the door, I saw Susy—little Susy!—clinging to the throat of a man roughly dressed, who held Aunt Jane in a chair, while he tried to shake off Susy's arms, at the same time keeping Aunt Jane down. Serena lay in a dead faint on the floor.

"You shall not hurt her!" Susy cried, her slender arms strained to choke the sufferer. "Let go, you wretch! I'll kill you!"

One blow on the top of his head from my heavy walking-stick brought the fellow down insensible. Susy dropped her arms and stood white as death, but perfectly calm, facing me.

"Can you find me a rope to tie this fellow?" I asked.

She nodded, sped away, and returned with a coil of clothes-line.

"Listen!" she said, speaking quietly. "There is another one in the china closet, locked in. He is trying to kick the door down. Do you see, this is James!"

James was the one man-servant Aunt Jane employed. Tying his firmly, I gave my next attention to Aunt Jane, whose whole face was covered with gloom from a wound in the head. Knowing how the sight of blood always sickened Susy, I tried to keep her back, but she said, quietly:

"Tell me, please, what you want and how to help you."

I sent her for water, rags, laudanum, and while we bound up Aunt Jane's head and restored her to consciousness, Serena came to her senses and sat up, white and shaking.

"Oh, Susy, that man will kick the closet door down!" she cried, as the blows from the next room became more violent.

It seemed as if he would, and I started to quiet him, when Susy grasped my arm.

"Don't open the door!" she said.

"There may be more than one man there. You see, we were all sitting up here, hoping you would come on the midnight train, but Aunt Jane had not told James to go to the station because she thought you had rather walk up than have us alone. So I suppose James thought you were gone for all night, and he came in at some time in the evening, we do not know when, and hid in that china closet. I went to the dining-room in the dark for some water just as he crept in. I could just see him, and that another man was creeping after him, but not out of the closet. I slammed the door, locked it, and ran in here just as James struck dear Aunt Jane on the head and tried to push her down in her chair. Then I flew at him and you came in. But there may be more than one man in the closet. The door is strong, and I will run down to the police station while you take care of Aunt Jane and Serena."

Before I could stop her she was running across the hall, out at the door and down the road, while James suddenly revived and began to struggle and curse.

My hands were full, for Aunt Jane was severely hurt, and Serena was so terrified that she could not stir, sobbing and half fainting in sheer terror.

I cannot tell how long it was before Susy came speeding back with three strong policemen behind her, but in the meantime some of the maids were roused and had come to my assistance.

There proved to be but one burglar in the closet, a Westonville man and crony of James's, and the two were marched off, securely bound. Aunt Jane was put to bed and made as comfortable as possible; Serena had gone to her own room, and the house was locked up when I turned to bid Susy good night.

She was standing at the foot of Aunt Jane's bed, holding fast to a chair, her face perfectly colorless, and her limbs trembling. I mixed her a dose of composing medicine and put it to her lips.

"Don't mind me," she said, smiling faintly. "I always was a coward."

"Nobody shall ever call you so where I am," I said, and then—well, I will not add all I said, but then and there I won my darling's confession of love for me, and gave my life's allegiance to the woman I loved.

Aunt Jane was delighted. She understood perfectly the love that prompted the child to attempt to divert the attack of the ruffian James to herself, and it was a delight to her to make ready the pretty house for us. Serena comes often to visit us, calm and self-possessed as ever, and quite as contemptuous when Mrs. Hutchinson flies to my arms in an agony of terror if a mouse runs across the floor, or a spider crawls up the wall.

For, although she has proved herself a heroine, Susy is still, in such matters as mice and spiders, a little coward.

Women are not inventive as a rule. They have no eagerness for new wrinkles.

Minds of moderate caliber ordinarily condemn everything which is beyond their range.

## IS MARRIAGE POPULAR?

HOW A BOLD INVESTIGATOR COLLECTED EVIDENCE.

Howard Fielding interviewed a Number of Spinners on the Subject, and is Involving in Breach of Promise Proceedings Amounting to \$300,000.

Maudie was sitting at my desk when I entered the room, and the big tears were falling from her eyes upon a manuscript which I had recently prepared.

"My dear," said I, in a somewhat acid voice, "you needn't complicate the obscurities of my chirography by crying over that. It was intended to be funny. The facts in that article of mine came from the unmarried women who called on you after your friend Millie Smith's engagement to Tom Harris was announced. I overheard their merry prattle. They all regarded Millie as a designing person whose conduct was altogether reprehensible. They all thought that Tom was a fool. Every one of them had refused at least half a dozen offers from men much more desirable than Tom, though he's young, rich and handsome. Many of them had refused Tom himself, and they were all single from preference and from no other reason whatever. With such evidence as that before me I was able to answer the question 'Is marriage becoming unpopular?' decidedly in the affirmative."

Maudie was laughing now.

"You dear old goose," she said, "I hadn't read anything but the title of your article. If it contains what you say it does, I should advise you not to print it at all."

I couldn't quite make her out. She seemed to believe that the women I had

suits for breach of promise with broken hearts ranging in value from ten thousand to fifty thousand dollars. The total is a little over \$300,000. I am sorry for these ladies, but this is more money than I can spare. If they win their cases they will have to attach my salary, which will suffice to settle their claims within two or three thousand years.

I turned from these dreary legal documents to my own brilliant discussion of the unpopularity of marriage. It is much more interesting than the laborious composition of the lawyers, and yet theirs seem to be stronger argumentatively.

"I shall not publish this article," said I to Maudie. "My conclusions appear to have been hasty." HOWARD FIELDING.

THINGS OF VALUE.

The man born in a cabin may some day name a cabinet.

K. D. C. is a positive cure for Dyspepsia or Indigestion in any form.

The roughest roads are those we have not travelled over.

K. D. C. is guaranteed to cure any case of Indigestion even of long standing.

You can't size up an orator by the dimensions of his mouth.

K. D. C. positively cures the worst cases of Dyspepsia and Indigestion. Ask your druggist for it, or send direct to K. D. C. Co., New Glasgow, N. S.

Many handkerchiefs are moistened by sorrows that never occur.

K. D. C. relieves distress after eating and promotes healthy digestion.

In diving to the bottom of pleasure we bring up more gravel than pearls.

K. D. C. is the Greatest Cure of the Age. Its merits prove its greatness.

A bridge should never be condemned until it has been tried by its piers.

K. D. C. frees the stomach from poisonous acid and gas, and restores it to healthy action.

Women's sweet disposition is always shown by her husband's long hair.

A FREE Sample package of the Wonder Working K. D. C. mailed to any address. K. D. C. Co., New Glasgow, N. S.

A politician left alone with his conscience sees mighty little company.

K. D. C. is guaranteed to cure any case of Dyspepsia or money refunded.

Hope builds a nest in man's heart where disappointment hatches its brood.

K. D. C. has proved itself to be the Greatest Cure of the Age. Try it! Test it! Prove it for yourself and be convinced of its Great Merits!

The best helps to growth in grace are the ill usage, the affronts and the losses which befall us.—Wesley.

K. D. C. The only preparation of the kind in the market and is the Greatest Remedy for all forms of Indigestion.

When the soul is at ease it may be amused, but a hungry soul wants bread.—Evans.

When you hear a great deal of one side of a story, the other side receives from you a great deal of sympathy.

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TEEN USE

PARSON'S PILLS.

"Best Liver Pill Made"

Positively cure BILIOUSNESS and BILE HEADACHE, all Liver and Bilious troubles. Put up in Glass Bottles in a bottle, one a dose. They expel all impurities from the blood. Delicate women find great benefit from using them. Sold everywhere, or sent by mail for 25 cents. Price, 50 cents, six \$1.00. Sold by F. S. JOHNSON & CO., 21 Oulton House St., Boston, Mass.

JOHNSON'S Anodyne Liniment.

UNLIKE ANY OTHER

For INTERNAL as much as EXTERNAL USE.

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Drops on Sore Throat, Croup, Whooping Cough, Asthma, Catarrh, Colic, Cholera Morbus, Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Toothache, Stiff Joints, Sprains, Burns, Scalds, etc. Price, 50 cents, six \$1.00. Sold by F. S. JOHNSON & CO., 21 Oulton House St., Boston, Mass.

I had an awful time explaining the case to her. Our flat had never witnessed so fearful a scene. Our treaty of peace included the stipulation that Maudie should dictate my reply to the letters. If the recipients do not care for it as a literary

production, they can use it to freeze ice cream.

But it didn't do much good. That was over a month ago. Yesterday I was idly turning over my manuscripts in search of something which would pay the gas bill.

"Maudie," said I, "where is the copy of that article which proves that 'Marriage is Becoming Unpopular.'"

"It may be under those papers on your desk," she replied.

I picked up the papers to which she referred. They were notifications of twelve

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## STAMEN.

ON THURSDAYS the Steamer will make excursion trips to Hampton, leaving Indiantown at 9 o'clock a.m. Returning will leave Hampton at 3 o'clock p.m. same day. Steamer will call at Clifton and Bold's Point both ways, giving those who wish an opportunity to stop either way. Fare for the round trip, fifty cents. No excursion on rainy days.

International Steamship Co.

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Commencing SEPT. 16th, Tickets will be issued to OCT. 9th, inclusive, good to return 12 days from date of issue. Tickets on sale only at the office of the Company, Reed's Point Wharf.

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International Steamship Co.

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THREE TRIPS A WEEK

FOR BOSTON.

COMMENCING Sept. 16, the 8 steamers of this Company will leave St. John for Eastport, Portland and Boston every MONDAY, WEDNESDAY and FRIDAY mornings, at 7.25, standard.

Returning will leave Boston same days, at 8.30 a.m., and Portland at 8 p.m., for Eastport and St. John.

On Wednesdays the Trip the Steamers will not call at Portland.

Connections at Eastport with steamer for Saint Andrews, Calais and Saint Stephen.

Freight received daily up to 5 p.m.

Reed's Point Wharf. C. E. LAECHLER, Agent.

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BOSTON for \$3.00

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The palatial ocean greyhound, 2,500 tons, commanded by Capt. Brown, is the largest, handsomest, fitted, and best sea-going boat on the route. She has first-class passenger accommodation for 100, and cabin room for as many more. The old reliable and popular

CARROL, 1,400 tons, commanded by Capt. Brown, is without doubt, the most widely-known passenger carrying steamship plying between New England and the provinces.

These steamers make the through trip from Boston to Charlottetown, P. E. I., calling at Halifax and Prince Edward Island every Saturday, on the arrival of all the morning expresses from Maine and New York. They offer an excellent opportunity of enjoying a full week's holiday in the Hub of the Universe, and of returning home in good season to get to business duties Monday morning.

For freight of passengers, apply to JAS. F. FRYLAND & SON, Agents, Prince's Wharf, Halifax, N. S.

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On the Rhine of America.

STAR LINE.

FOR FREDERICTON, ETC.

A STEAMER of this line will leave St. John, North End, every morning (Sunday excepted) for the Celestial city at 9 a.m. Returning, will leave Fredericton at 8 a.m. Fare \$1.

Steamers of this line connect with steamer Florenceville and railways for up river counties. Return tickets, to return same day or by Saturday night steamer, Oak Point, 40c.; Hampstead, 50c.

This line will issue

RETURN TICKETS AT ONE FARE

DURING EXHIBITION,

and no return ticket shall be less than 35 cents.

On the Romantic Blue.

Bellevue Bay steamer, Springfield, will leave St. John, North End, for the above place every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday at 12.30 p.m., calling at all way landings; returning on alternate days.

G. F. BAIRD, J. E. PORTER.

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STEAMSHIP CO.

ST. JOHN AND NEW YORK.

THE S.S. "WINTHROP," of this line will re-leave weekly service between St. John and New York as follows:

Leave New York, Pier 49, E. R., on SATURDAYS, at 5.00 p.m., for Eastport and St. John; and Leave St. John (New York Pier, North End), on TUESDAYS, at 3.00 p.m., for Eastport and New York.