



The Doctor's Ideal.

(Maggie Fearn, Author of 'That Maid of Monsoons,' 'Tempted,' etc., in the 'Alliance News'.)

CHAPTER I.—'NO EQUIVALENT.'

'Doctor, if you should ever meet your ideal in a bright attractive Temperance house, where the working man could have every possible pleasure and all his wants met—minus, of course, that all-powerful glass of beer—would you "own up," and admit that the thing could be done, and the needs met without alcohol?'

Dr. Gordon moved a step or two in good-tempered impatience.

'But I shall never meet it.'

'Now, you are cowardly, and begging the question. Would you, doctor?'

'Well, yes, of course. However, I am pretty safe in promising, so I don't fear the issue of events.'

'Doctor, I wish alcoholism were more generally regarded in its true light, and dealt with as a disease. It is more often dipsomania, and a case for professional treatment, than a deliberate outbreak of wilful indulgence.'

'You are right, but until this is more uniformly recognized the whole matter will remain what it is—a huge enigma. You think you have found its solution in total abstinence, but until total abstinence has something better to offer than I have at present seen, I fail to accept your theory, Miss Sinclair.'

He extended his hand with the frank cordiality which won him so many friends. He had spared a long time from his professional duties discussing this question; but the cosy fireside had not been without fascination for him, and the sonnie face near by was not unworthy of regard. Miss Sinclair lifted her eyes with a smile in them.

'Doctor, don't be too hard on me if I cherish a rising and urgent desire to do battle with your prejudice. You have levelled a heavy broadside against our army's colors, and I must do my little best to protect their honor. Give me one month's grace before you again cross swords with me, and you will see what you will see.'

The doctor laughed heartily.

'I must make a note of the date,' he said, 'and enter a mem. in my diary. A month then, Miss Sinclair—not a day more!'

'And then you will not know what to expect.'

'It will be something worth expecting if it emanates from you,' he answered, gallantly. 'So I am content to call a truce for one whole month.'

CHAPTER II.—THE IDEAL REALISED.

Left alone, Miss Sinclair sat quite still in her pretty cushioned chair for the space of an uninterrupted half hour. The fire had burnt itself into dreary caverns, and the room was growing chill; but she did not move. And when at length she roused from her long reverie, and set to work to remedy her neglect, the absorbed look was yet lingering in her eyes, and her face had taken on it a strong look of resolution, and the little square chin was held with a determined air.

'Dreaming will not bring about what I desire,' she said to herself. 'I must do more than dream. To convince such a man as Dr. Gordon were worth far more than a month of hard work, surely.'

It is possible that Miss Sinclair's friends, or those not let into the great secret, marvelled somewhat at the scant leisure she seemed to have at her command during the next few weeks. She did but little visiting. If her friends called upon her, she was rarely at home. As for her favorite walks, they were not even haunted by her shade, for Miss Sinclair had more belief in the natural than the supernatural, save where the human sought

the Divine. But those weeks were full of business, and business of a character which called for caution and energy. There was a large amount of confidence in the underlying principle of the affair in question also required for the whole thing taken at its true centre, signified a financial experiment such as many older and wiser than Miss Sinclair might have hesitated before risking. Happily, her faith in her cause was a very strong and unwavering one. She believed in it, and it is wonderful how signally such a belief helps one on the road to success. It is not too much to say that it was one of the bulwarks upon which Miss Sinclair's new undertaking leaned; it is also as well to confess that a second was her laudable and determined resolve to be in a position to meet Dr. Gordon's proposed passage-at-arms at the expiration of the month; and happily she was ready.

On the morning previous to the eventful day, a sudden doubt seized her. Not doubt as to her own share in the transaction; she would allow herself none of that. But she was confronted with the wonder as to whether Dr. Gordon would remember. Suppose he regarded it merely as the jest of a moment, and had let the bantering talk slide from his memory, as a thing not to be referred to again? Well, then, Miss Sinclair told herself she must resurrect it, and she would.

There was no necessity for it, as the events of the day subsequently proved. Later on a note was handed to her, and she recognized with a quick bound of her heart Dr. Gordon's superscription on the envelope. Then he had remembered. The note ran thus:—

'Dear Miss Sinclair,—It will be a month to-morrow since I called upon you. Will you be disengaged, if I drop in for five minutes, when on my morning rounds?—Faithfully yours, Leonard Gordon.'

Miss Sinclair read the brief lines thoughtfully, then sitting down to her desk penned the following:—

'Dear Mr. Gordon,—I am glad you have not forgotten the date of the month. It proves your accuracy in keeping your diary. Instead of calling to see me in the morning, will you try to find some leisure to look in at No. 19, Charlotte-street, somewhere about 7 o'clock to-morrow evening? And, if you have leisure to call upon me afterwards, I shall be delighted to have the proposed "five minutes" you are good enough to offer me.—Very truly yours, DAVINA SINCLAIR.'

Then she duly sealed and despatched her note, and awaited with much pleasurable perturbation the coming day. She had honestly worked for great results, and faithful labor should ever be followed by honorable reward.

At 7 o'clock on the succeeding evening, Dr. Gordon put on his hat and overcoat, and prepared to walk as far as No. 19, Charlotte-street. He felt amused and interested, and was never too busy to enjoy a 'bon mot.' The present seemed likely to be of an unusual character.

The evening was stormy and cold, such an evening as makes a man pull up his coat collar, and hasten to his home, to enjoy warmth and shelter; or if he cannot reasonably hope to secure these comforts there, to seek some other place where they were at command—a public-house Dr. Gordon would have suggested; a bright, cleanly coffee restaurant Miss Sinclair would have urged.

Something of this probably occurred to the handsome doctor, as a high wind and a sudden squall of sleet met him with considerable force as he turned the corner of Charlotte-street, and caused him momentarily to lose his breath and slacken speed.

(To be continued.)

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'Hard to Shake Off.'

The consciousness of being in the right brings with it a great power, a power that has upheld the martyrs of all generations.

The question was one day asked of Abraham Lincoln, 'Why is it that you are always called "Honest Abe?"' He replied:

'In my law practice I never was worth a cent when I thought I was in the wrong.' Then, rising to the full stature of his giant frame, and clenching his mighty fist, he added, 'But when I think I am in the right, I am mighty hard to shake off.'

Painting the Brewery.

(Alphonso Alva Hopkins.)

They've painted up the brewery, and rightly made it red—
I think you'll quite agree with me, when all is done or said—

For red the danger signal is, and always lurking there
Is danger for the young and old: that color says 'Beware!'

They've painted the brewery; its color tells the truth;
Within its peril legion lurks, for Manhood and for Youth;
Because with pride it lifts itself, and swells its lordly size,
Full many a hope that blossomed bright with bitter blighting dies.

Within its walls the gladness goes of many a weeping wife;
Beneath its roof the secret hides of many a ruined life,
To give it again, and make it great, full many a home knows lack,
For Love and Life gone sadly out that never again come back.

To make its walls rise high and brave too many walls are bare,
Too many cupboards empty wait, with Want and Hunger there;
Where pictures might be hanging, and where carpets might be spread,
There is no grace or comfort, and the children cry for bread.

To feed its greedy, cruel maw goes grain from golden fields
That God's own sunlight ripened well for helpful harvest yields,
And God's own hungry go unfed, and want, and starve and die,—
That Walls of Greed may proudly rise beneath His bending sky.

They've painted up the brewery, and red of danger speaks,
And blood as well. They stole the tint from sorrowing mother's cheeks
That paler grew as boys went bad, and from the hearts that ache
With love and grief past all relief, and then in anguish break.

Perhaps from Murder's blood-red hand they took the blood-red hue—
The hand that once was pure and white as mother-heart was true—
The hand that held the fatal glass which fired the fuming brain,
Till madness mastered Manhood quite, and Love and Life were slain.

Perhaps four flames unseen by men those walls their color take—
The fiery flames of Thirst that burn and Hell's own torment make;
Perhaps reflection they may find from fires we may not see,
Where, round lost souls accursed by Drink, Rum's demons dance in glee.

They've painted up the brewery; painted on it the hopes of youth,
The hearts of love, the needs of life, the wrecks of Home and Truth;
It stands a Monument of Greed, when all is done and said—
A danger signal for us all—and rightly painted red.

—Waif.