

It takes a very little thing sometimes to raise a man to the very pinnacle of heaven or thrust him down to hell.

And so it was arranged. He would allow her ten dollars a week for board and spending money, and if that were not enough she need never be afraid to write or ask him for more. He would ask no questions.

In spite of this assurance, he was surprised to receive three or four requests for money during the first year. First twenty, then thirty, then fifty dollars.

But he asked no questions. At first he thought her fondness for dress, or the temptation of the jewelers' windows were at the bottom of it, but as he could see no sign either about her person or in the knock-knacks around home of new purchases, he could not help wondering what she was doing with it.

This was continued during the second year with even greater frequency and urgency. Was it her parents who were in trouble and whom she was trying to help? A few questions deliberately put to them satisfied him that not only were they not borrowing from her, but that they were not charging her anything for board. Was she making up a private purse?

During the third year he began to miss trifles of jewelry and bric-a-brac, and yet the extra demands for money were not diminished. The private purse theory would not account for these facts. Three or four times he had missed money from his pocket. Was she a thief?

This question could never have formulated itself in his mind only for one thing. At every succeeding visit home she seemed more distraught. She had a hunted look, as if she were afraid he would make some unpleasant discovery about her. But he could not doubt her love, for many times of late when he would caress her tenderly she would put all her soul into the responsive embrace, and usually end in a fit of almost hysterical emotion.

At such times she would say: 'O, Hector! I wish you would take me with you. I am dreadfully lonesome and unhappy when you are away.'

These frequent pleadings had decided him to abandon the road and go into something for himself. He had made his last trip, and she had tried to poison him. Had she?

This was the question he debated as he went forth with the phial of coffee in his vest pocket on the morning we have introduced him to the reader.

He made his way straight to an analytical chemist and asked him to test it. The chemist found nothing deleterious.

A great wave of thanksgiving surged in his heart, but only for a moment. The unmistakable evidence of his wife's guilt could not be gainsaid.

'Have you tested for everything? Aren't there some new medicines and poisons, and things just come into use? Have you tested for all those?'

'You are right. I had forgotten those.' Then after a half-hour of careful analysis he reported a faint trace of sulfanol, nothing more.

'And what is sulfanol?'

'It is one of the products from the distillation of coal tar. It is a favorite hypnotic in the practice of some; others are shy of it and consider it less reliable than bromide of potassium, and more dangerous than hydrate of chloral. It has not been long enough in use to be thoroughly understood.'

'But is it a poison?'

'Oh, as to that, all medicines are poisons. But it not in the same sense that strychnine, or arsenic, or opium, or prussic acid are poisons. It is simply a sleeping powder, an overdose of which may cause death.'

Did she intend to poison him or simply to put him to sleep? This was the question he debated on his way home. How could he find out? She was thoroughly frightened, he could see that. He would make her sign a confession as a condition of escaping arrest. But he had no notion of arresting her.

With this intention he approached the house. She answered his ring at the door. When she saw him she would have fallen, but a strong arm clasped her waist, and a pair of sad eyes looked down with infinite tenderness into hers as he led her again to the sofa and seated himself by her side.

'O, Hector! don't look at me so tenderly. Scold, storm, swear at me, kill me, anything but that.'

'Do you confess then?'

'Yes, yes, I confess. I have been mad. I have given away to the influence of a bad man; yet, as God is my witness, I never loved any man but you, and now I have lost you and lost my own soul. Oh! oh!' and with a hand pressed over her heart she fell limp and lifeless at his side.

When she recovered a cool soft sponge was being passed over her brow and her wrists were being chafed. A noble face in which love and anxiety were equally blended was bending over her. She just caught a glimpse of this, then closed her eyes tight and remained motionless. It was bliss, and she would prolong the waking up time if she could.

When she opened her eyes again she felt wondrously strong. The crisis seemed to have passed, and she was not dead, she was not in prison, she was not in hell. She was now prepared for anything with that strong, kind face bending over her.

It was well she was, for the next question was a very trying one.

HOW TO GET A "SUNLIGHT" PICTURE.

Send 25 "Sunlight" Soap wrappers (wrapper bearing the words "Why Does a Woman Look Old Sooner Than a Man") to Lever Bros., Ltd., 43 Scott St., Toronto, and you will receive by post a pretty picture, free from advertising, and well worth framing. This is an easy way to decorate your home. The soap is the best in the market and it will only cost 1c postage to send in the wrappers, if you leave the ends open. Write your address carefully.

'Nettle,' he said, 'you have just told me you have given way to the influence of a bad man. I want you to answer me as you will answer at the day of judgment when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, for the destiny of two souls depends on your answer. How far have you given way? Has there been any immorality?'

'Oh, no, a thousand times no. My God! that you could ask me such a question. But I deserve it. He tried me with all the hellish arts that Satan himself could suggest. He even traduced you, told me you had a wife in Guelph, another in Sarnia, offered to prove it if I would go with him to Guelph. We both registered at the same hotel. I did not even then know how compromising that was, not till the next morning, when he called my attention to it, and pointing to the register with a leer said, 'That will make a pretty picture if Hector ever sees it. You have played fast and loose with me long enough, now I have you in my power.' Since then I have been in hell. He has been incessant in his demands for money. I have given nearly every cent of your allowance, of your extra allowances, have stolen money from you, borrowed from my father, sold my trinkets, only to sink more deeply into the power of the villain. But my woman's nature revolted from the idea of pollution. I have been true to you as God is my judge.'

'And what did you put in my coffee this morning, and why?'

'I don't know. He said it was a sleeping powder. I forget what he called it, but when I saw you take the first sip a horrible suspicion seized me that it might be poison, and I was glad to see you refuse it, and horribly anxious to get it away from you. Did you taste anything amiss?'

'Not a thing. It was the expression I caught in your eye that brought the horrible misgiving to my mind. Sulfanol is all but tasteless. But why should you give me a sleeping draught in the morning?'

'He wanted twenty dollars to-day. He said it (the powder) would not take effect till about noon, and if I could get him the money it was positively the last he would ask for. And you'll not have me arrested?'

Two big tears were quivering in her eyelids as she asked the question. Before replying he drew her to his bosom and kissed them away, wiping them more gently afterwards with a soft silk handkerchief. His own eyes required a similar attention.

'Let us kneel down together, my darling, and thank God for His mercies.'

And there, side by side, with hearts made tender by emotion, they each poured out their thanksgivings to God for having lifted the great cloud of trouble which had overshadowed the morning of the day, and prayed for the guiding eye and the protecting arm to keep them from evil in the future, and even as they prayed, the peace that passeth all understanding filled their souls.

'You are a thousand times more precious to me to-day than when I was courting you,' said her husband, later in the day.

'Ah! but I shall always think a thousand times less of myself than I did in those days,' was the reply. 'And a thousand times more of you,' she added after a pause. 'I couldn't tell gold from dross in those days.'

'But you must not worship me for all that. Let there be no more idolatry on the part of either of us. Let us give the good Lord the first place in our affections, then no more punishment for idolatry will be necessary.'

A day or two afterwards the evening papers contained the following item:

A VILLIAN FOILED.—The inquest on the remains of Jasper Congdon, found dead in his bed a day or two ago, brought out the following facts: He had been for some time levying blackmail on several ladies whom he had managed to inveigle into compromising situations, among others a highly estimable lady who shall at present be nameless. He had drained her of all available resources but an insurance policy on the life of her husband of \$5,000. He laid the diabolical scheme of having her poison her husband, and to this end purchased two powders from a King street druggist, one containing eight grains of sulfanol, which he was in the habit of taking himself as a sleeping powder, the other a similar amount of strychnine. He intended the latter obviously not for himself, yet in handing it to her, great as his power over her was, he knew she would recoil from crime. Hence he repented that it was only sulfanol and explained its action. As the two powders were put up precisely alike, it was really the sulfanol he gave her, and owing to the same cause he took the strychnine himself as a sleeping powder in mistake and thus furnished a subject for the inquest. 'The mills of the gods grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly small.' No one who knew him well will question the justice of the fate meted out to him.

Hector Cameron read the item aloud to his wife. She listened with her eyes almost bulging out of her eyes in horror. At the conclusion of it she raised her clasped hands and eyes towards heaven as she exclaimed, 'O God! how horrible!'

'Yes,' was the reply. 'The way of the transgressor is hard.'

If we could get a glimpse into their home to-day we should discover a model household over which no suspicion of a cloud sits. Nettie Cameron is so much more adorable than Nettie Burlingham ever was, not only as a wife but as a mother, to which dignity she has only recently attained, that her husband finds it more difficult than he imagined it would be to steer entirely clear of Christian idolatry, and all husbands who are suitably mated will know how to sympathize with him.

THE END.

THE SAMBRO LIGHTHOUSE.

At Sambro, N. S., whence Mr. R. E. Hartt writes as follows:—"Without a doubt Brunlock Blood Bitters has done me a lot of good. I was so sick and weak and had no appetite, but B. B. B. made me feel smart and strong. Were its virtues more widely known many lives would be saved."