

UNCLE DICK;

Or, The Result of Diplomacy and Tact.

CHAPTER I.

The advent of its regatta is usually the herald of a sea-side season's demise. Wivernsea, as yet, is not sufficiently developed to justify indulgence in a water festival. So far, its carnival flights have been confined within the limits of flower shows and the treats of its Sunday school.

The builder—his surname is Jerry—is around with a rule though. His conspiracy with the man who plots lands and dispenses free luncheons and railway tickets, will possibly wreck a change on that part of the map's countenance. Increased population may render the place more famous—or infamous. So very much depends on one's viewpoint.

The houses of Wivernsea are built in its bay. Stuck in round the fringe of it like teeth in a lower jaw. Picture to yourself the long ago—the bay's origin—and the present appearance of the place may come before you. If possible to introduce a belief that there were giants in the earth in those days it will make realization simpler, because it looks as if a mammoth had snapped at the coast just there and bitten out a huge mouthful.

If your imagination is sufficiently elastic to give play to it, conceive houses being dropped into the marks left by the giant's teeth—a sort of dental stopping. So may be garnered a fair idea of the presentment of this particular indentation in the land.

When the goose of Michaelmas is shaking in its scales, Wivernsea lodging letters encroach on the farmer's privilege. The closing time of their harvest is near enough to be grumbled at. It is painful knowledge to them that visitors scuttle away as September ends. The exodus is due to some absurd relief that the weather then—like a school at the advent of the holidays—breaks up.

In the ears of one man—William Masters by name, binder-together-of-sensational-incidents—in book form by profession—such grumbles tinkled pleasantly. Because the usual October Wivernsea weather is mild and bright and rainless. Being a non-regretful man, the place shaped before his eyes as a land flowing with milk and honey. He knew it to be good then.

Knowledge is the wing on which we fly to heaven. In this instance, the author's flight from London was via the London and South Western Railway Company's terminus. Later on he told himself that it was proving veritably his Waterloo.

Wivernsea's wall is known locally as the Esplanade. Euphemisms—sacrifices to vanity at the expense of the seashore. The walk terminated eastwards with the abruptness of a cinematograph view. A private owner claimed the land there.

It was not an undisputed claim. Opposition made the owner handle the matter with mailed fist. To make his position stronger he erected a high wall. If it did not prevent his opponents going further, with their liberal opposition, it effectively prevented them from going further along the parade.

The embellishments of the wall were, apparently, the outcome of deep thought. Its top was artistically embroidered with spikes and broken bottles. This sharply jagged crown was known locally as a shiver-freeze. Give the average man an opportunity to mispronounce a word and his success may be equaled on every time.

Warnings to trespassers and threats of prosecution garnished the wall's face with the liberality of almonds in a piece of French rock. The everyday man might well be excused a fear that there was danger in letting an unguarded eye rest on it.

Amongst others, the wall barred the easterly progress of William Masters. In this instance, no character resulted. It was a boast of his that he possessed "views of his own"—the things which other people smile at unpleasantly and label "eccentricities." The owner of the wall was a man after his own heart. Undoubtedly a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind.

It is not good that man should be alone. But the author had not yet realized the greatness of his truth. He had been heart to voice the nature of his. Ultima Thule—undisturbed existence in a spot, not beside the hill, but in the centre of a big field. The situation to be enhanced by possession of a shotgun, a veritable pepper-trespasser on his solitude.

Strangers, who heard Masters speak so, felt inclination to move away a pace; were prompted to thoughts of Hanwell and Coney Hatch. His friends—another host of his—was the poverty of their number—smiled. The idea of Masters

hurting a fly appealed to the humor in them.

But, as the blackets hat may have a silver-paper lining, so the wall served a good purpose. It acted as a shelter from the one thing which disturbed the enjoyment of October in Wivernsea: that wind which is said to be good for neither man nor beast. Thoughtful hands had placed a comfortable seat within the wall's shelter.

Knowledge of these things had inspired Masters' journey to Wivernsea. Where he had stayed before the landlady had rooms vacant. She knew his requirements and, hitherto, had suited him admirably. Had even acquired the knowledge that his visits to Wivernsea were not prompted solely by a desire to hear her talk.

Having done justice to a hastily prepared luncheon, Masters' slipped a note book into his pocket and sallied forth. His route was easterly, its termination his favorite seat at the end of the Parade. There were some hours left of warmth and sunshine; the author's intent was to avail himself of them.

Seated, he for a time succumbed to the charm of the water as it stole out and away. Listened to its lapping as it broadened the ribbon of sand at each receding wave. Then, turning a deaf ear to the charm, and his eyes on to his note book, he buried himself in the particular chapter on which he was engaged.

The writer's concentration was not of the plumbless kind. Sound of a girl's voice roused him from his depth of thought. It should not be gathered from that that the sex had any extraordinary influence over him—save when it was very young.

He loved children. Loved them best before the rubbing off of what is called their corners: the sweetness of what is actually the innocence we all come into the world with—which it seems the business of the world to destroy.

Masters guessed from the voice that it belonged to a very little girl. Looking up, saw standing in front of him proof of the correctness of his guess. A blue-eyed—wide-open-eyed—with-astonishment too at seeing him there—little maid. She had turned the parade corner and so come on him unexpectedly. It was plain that she pulled up suddenly at seeing him there. Just as suddenly called out in her clear, childish treble—

"Oh! There's someone on your seat, Miss Mivvins!"

The young lady so addressed came into view at that moment, round the bushes planted at the corner—the little one having run on ahead.

Miss Mivvins flushed a little. Becoming, for otherwise the face might have been considered a trifle too pale. The possibility of the child's speech being considered rude induced her to say in an undertone:—

"Hush, Gracie, dear!"

The speech reached Masters' ears. He was struck by the singularly sweet voice the governess had. When he looked at the place whence the voice issued, he thought it the sweetest mouth he had ever set eyes on. The little droop of sadness at its corners mellowed rather than took away from the sweetness of it.

The lips—ripe red in color, Cupid's bowed in shape—enchanted as they were, did not hold his attention in iron bonds. His glance wandered to her eyes and hair. From that inspection was formed an opinion—one which he never changed.

The features were the most beautiful and womanly ones he had ever seen. Just as sweet a face as a woman with golden hair—that peculiar tint of gold which the sun ever seems anxious to search amongst—and forget not eyes, can possess at the age of three-and-twenty. She was good to look upon.

Observation was a trick of Masters' trade. The practice of it enabled him to paint a picture in a paragraph. What he saw in one glimpse of Miss Mivvins' face was eloquence itself. But of that gentle, outward-going radiance in her eyes the merest layman would have been sentient. It was the kind of which one felt even a blind man must be conscious.

Details appealed to Masters' just then. He happened to be engaged at the moment on the description of a heroine. When he saw Miss Mivvins his difficulty about shaping the book-woman vanished. In flesh and blood she stood before him. All he needed was to describe what he saw; she would fit in all respects.

Save her name. He was not particularly struck with that.

CHAPTER II.

Proverbially women love men's approbation. Something of the feel-

ing within him must have evidenced itself to Masters' eyes. His attentive scrutiny—despite all there was of respect in it—did not, apparently, please Miss Mivvins. Possibly, she was inclined to consider his admiration rudeness. Anyway she called—

"Come, Gracie!"

Taking the child's little hand in her own neatly gloved one as she spoke, the woman turned, evidently intent on walking back in the direction whence she had come.

That brought Masters to his feet in a moment—cap in hand, and apology in mouth. Full of crudities as was his character, he possessed an instinctive courtesy. In all the arrangements for his breaches of Society's unwritten laws, impoliteness had never figured. He spoke; said—

"Pray do not let me drive you away! Possession may be nine points of the law, but we may consider ourselves beyond the pale of its practise here. If, as I hear—from lips the truth of which it would be absurd to doubt—that this is considered your seat"—his smile was not an unpleasant one—"I should never forgive myself if trespass of mine interfered with the owner's use of it."

"Is that pen you are using," inquired Gracie suddenly, a propos of nothing, "one of those you put the ink in at the wrong end, and trickle it out of the other?"

A softness blended with the smile of Masters' face, merged into that kindly expression of the strong for the weak. It was the successful catching of just such tenderness which made Landseer's name figure so prominently in the world of Art.

As the author looked down at the mite from his six-foot altitude, the look on his face was an irresistible reminder of a St. Bernard's kindness to a toy terrier.

"You have accurately described it, little woman," he answered. "But it does not always trickle when you want it to—though it generally does when you don't."

The child looked mystified; evidently deemed further explanation necessary. Miss Mivvins was still standing, waiting to go. Masters hesitated; looked from one to the other. Politeness made him say—

"I am leaving—pray be seated."

But the woman saw through that. Would have been very wise had she failed to do so. It really was quite too transparent an utterance. When truth is sacrificed on the altar of politeness the ceremony needs skill, otherwise the lie becomes ever more offensive than the act it was to cover.

His little speech induced her to take a step forward; made her say—

"Oh, no! Do not let me drive you away!"

She spoke impulsively; hurriedly. Masters thought with everything in the tone that was desirable in a woman's voice. He smiled as he expostulated—

"But you remember, surely—it is not many moments ago—you were quite willing to allow me to drive you away."

Then she smiled too. Smiles which brought into play mouth and eyes and dimples in her cheeks. From his own face the gravity of some people called it austerity—had already departed. There was a peculiarly softening influence about Miss Mivvins. Perhaps his own relaxing was the result of that.

"It is a long seat."

He indicated its measurement with a sweep of his hand as he spoke; continued—

"Let its length be our way out of the difficulty—it is a long lane that has no turning. How will it be if we make it large enough for both?"

It was a tentative sort of invitation. An invisible olive branch to which her hand went out. Again she smiled. A moment's hesitation—then seated herself.

From a bag depending by silken cords from her wrist she drew a book. Having given the little girl sundry directions as to the assumption of preternatural virtue, the woman commenced to read.

Masters resumed his place at the other end of the seat. Had book in hand too; manuscript book. He had come out with intent to write; told himself that fulfilment was necessary. But he had Grace to reckon with.

The sharp eyes of that four-year-old little maid were furtively fixed on the magic pen. She was trying hard to fulfil the injunction—to be good—from the adult standpoint. But gradually the admonition was fading from her mind—she was very human.

After a while—a courage-summoning period—the little hands were laced behind her, and boldly facing the owner of the attraction, the little one addressed him, in a kind of I dare you voice—

"I could write with a pen like that!"

For a second time the child's voice brought the man's attention away from his work.

"Could you?"

He smiled as he spoke. Looked up from his book as he did so. Then infusing a note of doubt in his voice inquired—

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, quite!"

Then, as an afterthought, possibly by way of redemption of the hesitation, the child continued—

"If I had one!"

Finding her first venture had not roused the lion, but fearing him a little still, she went on defiantly—"I saw a man fill one once!"

Such a statement as that surely could not fail to crush a mere user of the pen! Seeing that astonishment was expected of him Masters assumed an appropriate look of surprise. His wearing of it pleased her mightily.

"Perhaps," he said, "you would like to make quite sure you could write with one, eh? Would you like to try with this?"

The blue eyes brightened; she was at his side in a moment. Shyness is readily overcome when our summers have not numbered five. Trustfulness at that age has rarely been shocked.

Therein, perhaps, lay the secret of the attraction children had for Masters—the sweetness of their suppositionless existence. Viewed from the standpoint of the after life, when—if we act up to the anxieties of the world we live in—we trust no man, it is apt to brush across us as refreshingly as a gust of country air.

Turning the leaves of his book till he came to a blank page, Masters twisted and rested the cover on his knee. So the open leaf was level with the intending—eyes-sparkling—with-excitement—writer. Then he gave the child his pen.

She drew a capital G—a bright little point of tongue protruding the while. The head, too, seemed to follow the movements of the hand. Her intent was plain—to write her own name.

That was compassed. It took a little time—entailed a huge expenditure of concentrated energy—but she got through with it at last. There figured on the paper the words—

Gracie Seton-Carr.

The child's glance came off the page; she moved away a pace. Looked up into his eyes, her own flashing like diamonds. Such little things please in the time of happiness when we are little ourselves.

After drawing a long breath she ejaculated triumphantly—"There!"

Once more Masters gladdened the little one, by acting as he was expected to act. No man on that coast could have worn a larger-sized look of astonishment; he cried—"Won-der-ful!"

A clapping of hands in her glee, and the child danced along to the other end of the seat.

"I've written my name with one of those funny squitter pens, Miss Mivvins! What do you think of that?"

"I think you have a funny way of keeping your word, Gracie. You professed anxiety to finish your castle on the sands, yet you are spending your time on the wall!"

"Oh-h-h!"—prolonged and drawn out—"I had forgotten all about it!"

Attention diverted from the pen, the child ran down the steps on to the beach. A few minutes after, Masters, looking up, saw her busily at work with a spade and pail. The implements had evidently been left there in the morning.

That rather proved the excellence of the estimate the author had made of Wivernsea out of the season. Castle builders could leave their tools uncared for and find them when they returned. Not because of a superabundance of honesty around; rather because of the lack of thieves.

The castle creator continued her work; the pail-shaped battlements increased in number. She handled bucket and spade with the same earnestness, eagerness and engrossment with which she had fingered the pen.

Those were methods which appealed to the story-creator. But just now as he was not working with his own accustomed engrossment, eagerness and earnestness. A disturbing element had crept in.

From time to time he glanced towards the other end of the seat. There the disturbing element lay—or rather sat. It seemed that there was something magnetic about that presence there. He experienced a difficulty in keeping his eyes away.

Noting the neatness of the dress worn by the woman, he could not fail to note too its sombre hue—mourning evidently. His lively imagination was busily at work in a moment.

For him to weave a complete story with such material, was an easy task. A pretty girl occupied the stellar part in it. He portrayed her as a motherless girl forced to face a hard, cold world. Depicted her seeking a living in it as a governess.

That imagination of his had a habit of running away with him. Perhaps that was a reason why his fiction had so good a run. His books were mostly all of the many-editions kind. So, neglecting his own story for fiction of another kind, the time came of the going down of the sun. The tint of the vastly deepened; the sea grew greyer. His heroine presumptively closed her book and rose; cried—

"Gracie!"

Seeing that the child's attention had been attracted, she turned, bowing slightly, smilingly wished Masters—

"Good-day!"

From the sands, the little girl

waved a vigorous cumbered-with-bucket-and-spade good-bye to him. She evidently preferred jumping the breakwaters on the way home to the more easy path of the sea wall. The two passed altogether from the author's sight. Not altogether from his mind.

Good-day! Yes, he felt it had been—distinctly good. Till he looked at clean pages, where writing should have been. Even then, despite the unfinished chapter, he made no alteration in his verdict. It had been a good day.

(To be Continued.)

A STARTLING PROPHECY.

May Transfer Vital Organs of Lower Animals to Man.

According to Professor Simon Flexner, of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, New York, medical science soon is to solve the problem of transferring sound vital organs from the lower animals to man.

This prophecy was made in a paper by Professor Flexner, read by Dr. Ludwig Hektoen before the physiological section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The technical surgical operations involved in this kind of experimentation, on account of the necessity of maintaining unimpaired the circulation of the blood, is great, but not impossible of achievement, and no effort should be spared to reach this goal," says Professor Flexner. "The functions of transplanted organs are maintained by the method of preservation of the circulation. Hence, it now becomes possible to place sensitive and important viscera under new experimental conditions, which may aim to resemble or produce those believed to give rise to common pathological state in man and to observe the effects over a long period of time.

It is a matter of no small significance that arteries can be transplanted successfully from dog to cat and vice versa, and from man to dog, and that keeping extricated arteries under sterile conditions at refrigerator temperature for twenty or thirty days or even longer, does not interfere with the results of transplantation.

There is something extremely subtle in the conditions underlying successful transplantation within one race, since it may be determined by such minor factors as environment and mere quality of food. A tumor which grows in Danish white mice may fail utterly to grow in Berlin white mice, and one which grows in Berlin white mice and is able to grow in Norwegian mice, may lose its capacity to grow in Berlin mice transported to Christiania and kept there for a period before inoculation."

"JUST KEEP SMILING."

Treasurer of Banking Institution Has Legend on Door.

On the door leading into the private office of the treasurer of one of the Hartford (Connecticut) banking institutions may be seen by all comers a plain white card, on which are these two words: "Keep Smiling."

Ask the treasurer the significance of the placard, and he will say simply: "Just keep smiling. That makes everything easy. That's what smiles are for. A good, unfeigned, sincere smile is a veritable battering-ram to knock hard things out of the way. Sometimes I smile out loud, all to myself, when I run against anything hard; and the invitation is out to whoever enters my door. I take it that people will smile as they read the card, and I want them to continue the act while in here!"

He tells of a visitor who came to see him last winter, a Scotchman, who had served in India in the army. "My dear sir," said the visitor, "I am greeting that legend heartily. Many years ago, when the plague was raging, I was in Calcutta, and sick. The hospitals were full, and with other patients I was lying in a shed, a very sick man. On each side of me a poor chap died, when a man came around with one of the doctors to measure the bodies. As they finished the second fellow's measurement they looked at me, and the man said: 'Three of 'em, height' and whipped out his tape measure at my side. In spite of all effort, I could only stare. To save my life I couldn't speak or move. All I could do was to smile, and I just smiled. Instead of the measuring line I was given better attention and recovered. The smile did it! That's right! 'Keep smiling!'"

EMBARRASSING.

A colored woman of Alexandria, Virginia, was on trial before a magistrate of that town charged with inhuman treatment of her offspring.

Evidence was clear that the woman had severely beaten the youngster, aged some nine years, who was in court to exhibit his battered condition.

Before imposing sentence, his honor asked the woman whether she had anything to say. "Kin I ask yo' honah a question?" inquired the prisoner.

The judge nodded affirmatively. "Well, then, yo' honah, I'd like to ask you whether yo'-was ever the parent of a perfectly wuthless cullud chile."

The Farm

SUGGESTION FOR BETTER-MAKERS.

Butter-making is the important thing in dairying in the United States. While a great deal of attention has been given to this branch of dairying in that country there are many complaints as to the quality of butter produced. Many suggestions for improvement have been made. One of them is that butter-makers should organize and get together more than they do. Mr. C. W. Pelton of Wisconsin, writing to the Chicago Dairy Producer, on this point says:

"It is a well known fact that we are not making as good butter as we did ten years ago and who is to blame? I say the butter-makers, why? Because they are not organized. There should be a butter-makers' association in every county that would get together as often as twice a year and make rules and each one positively refuse to take cream more than three days old, winter and summer."

"My rule has been three times a week in summer and twice a week in winter, but my experience has been that I can make better butter from cream delivered twice a week in summer than I can from cream delivered twice a week in winter. In summer the cream is usually cooled in water and kept where the air is fresh; but in winter it is left where it is most likely not to freeze, but if it does freeze it is taken to the kitchen stove and thawed out before being taken to the creamery."

"Four of my patrons quit and took their cream to a neighboring creamery where they could go once or twice a week, but they got dissatisfied and wanted to know if I would take their cream twice a week if they returned. I declined, and they came back bringing their cream three times a week until we had the first cool night and since then I have seen them but twice a week."

"We often hear of certain cows that do not give enough butterfat to pay for their feed and I believe the time will come when butter will be so cheap that the best cows will not pay, and the farmers will be forced out of the dairy business, and the buttermaker looking for a job in some other line of work, unless we get together and correct our faults."

POULTRY NOTES.

Busy hens are not only the best egg producers, but their eggs show the best fertility. In order to keep them at work strew the floor of the pen with hay or straw and scatter the grain in this.

Another word about the chicks in regard to early roosting. Get them to roost as early as possible. Do not make rough roosting poles. The smoother they are the easier it is to keep them free from lice.

Chickens cannot be healthy that are cuddled up in a tiny bit of a brood coop, sweltering in the heat of the atmosphere, as well as that of their own bodies. Nothing will or twice a week, but they got dissatisfied.

Given good care, just sensible care, as common sense will ordinarily dictate poultry will return a good profit on the time and money expended thereon. Neglected, they will produce nothing but loss and disappointment, as they should.

Good layers will always be found among the hustlers. If they are active they are almost invariably healthy. Exercise creates in them an appetite, develops bone and muscle, stimulates healthy circulation and promotes digestion.

Make arrangements for fattening all birds, either cockerels or old hens, before they are marketed. If you have not a feeding crate or two, rig up an old packing box, or better still have a good solid crate which will last you for years.

Give the fowls plenty of fresh water. It is surprising how much fowls will drink if they have it fresh and where they know right where to find it whenever they want it.

This is especially true of the laying hens. Eight times out of ten a hen when coming off the nest after laying will go direct to the water and drink long and deep. This thing is produced by the muscular effort put forth in delivering eggs. During the effort great combustion takes place to produce the energy, thus depleting the tissues of water. So do not neglect the water.

RUSSIAN EGGS.

France has always been a great producer of poultry and eggs, but lately millions of eggs have been imported from other countries, especially for consumption in Paris. Of these importations by far the largest proportion comes from Russia. In 1907 about 9,000,000 pounds of Russian eggs were eaten in Paris. Austria-Hungary in the same year furnished only about 1,200,000 pounds, and other countries less. Among these Egypt contributed 250,000 pounds.

AMONG GIRLS.

"Does she know her talk to talk?" "No, only to talk about."