

An Unexpected Confession;

Or, The Story of Miss Percival's Early Life.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

How lovely she was, as she circled round and round in her rich, shimmering robes, her jewels flashing back in a thousand rays, the lights above, her fair face slightly flushed, her eyes dazzlingly brilliant with the pleasurable excitement of the moment, keeping graceful step to the languorous rhythm of the music and evidently enjoying to the utmost this, almost her first, taste of social life and its triumphs.

Donald Lancaster's heart was heavier than it had ever been before, during his whole life, as, with fascinated gaze, he watched her every movement, for he believed her the happy wife of another—for no one could look upon that smiling, care-free face and not feel that she was happy.

Then it suddenly occurred to him that it was somewhat singular that she should be there without her husband, and mingling so freely with young people.

"If she is really my Lady Irvington, where is my Lord Irvington?" he mentally questioned. "Surely any man should be proud of such a wife to wish to attend her in society, and participate in her social triumphs. Perhaps, however," he added, with curling lips, "that she has sold her beauty to some old man in his dotage—as my mother suggested—for his money and a coronet, and that is why she is here without him, so gay and light-hearted."

Then he almost as quickly repudiated the thought as utterly improbable.

"No," he said, "I will not believe it; she was always too true, too conscientious, to be guilty of an act so mercenary. But solve this tantalizing mystery I must before I leave this place," he concluded, with an air of resolution.

Presently he saw her leave the ballroom with her partner, and together they bent their steps toward a marble court in the midst of which there played a beautiful fountain surrounded by palms, ferns and other plants.

The duke conducted Esther to a seat beneath a great feathery palm, after consulting with her for a few moments, he bowed and disappeared in the direction of the supper room.

Now was Donald's opportunity. With a quick, elastic step, he crossed the space between them and presented himself before the woman he loved.

"Am I mistaken, or are you really my old friend, Esther?" he inquired, in a low tone, that was tremulous from emotions which he could not wholly control as he bent down to look into her face.

Esther started as the first sound of his voice fell upon her ears; a soft flush crept over her neck and arms and deepened the tint in her cheeks.

The next moment she had risen and bowed courteously, though somewhat distantly, to the man whom she still loved with all the purest affection of her true and loyal heart.

"Yes, Mr. Lancaster, I am Esther," she gravely replied, yet without offering him her hand—it was trembling so she dare not.

"Have I changed so much that you did not know me?"

"No—oh, no; I should know you anywhere," he answered, with a quick in-drawn breath; "but I could not understand—I could not reconcile your being here, with—"

"With what you know of my past," she supplemented, as he faltered, hardly knowing how to proceed.

"Ah, yes, there has been a great change in my circumstances. Have you been long abroad, Mr. Lancaster?" she inquired, now having entirely recovered her self-possession.

"And you are really Lady Irvington—you are married?" the young man eagerly questioned, and ignored her query, which, indeed, he hardly heard.

"Yes," she responded, smiling slightly, "I am married—it is true that I am Lady Irvington."

"How long is it since you were married, Esther?" demanded Donald, and utterly unable to repress the note of anguish that rang through his tones.

And looking him steadily in the eye she slowly replied:

"Three years ago the twentieth of last February, Mr. Lancaster."

Her companion started as if some one had smitten him a terrific blow.

"Good Heaven!" he exclaimed, "that was the very day that I believed—the very day that I met you in New York, and—"

"Yes," Esther quietly interposed, "it was the very day that I learned of your engagement to Miss Dexter. Ah! you have returned, Lord."

"Lord," she continued, addressing the young duke, who appeared

at that moment, followed by a servant bearing a tray of ices. "Allow me to introduce a countryman of mine; Mr. Lancaster—his grace, the Duke of York."

Donald had been nearly paralyzed by the astounding declaration which Esther had made but a moment before, but with a painful effort he recovered his equanimity and returned his lordship's salutation with more composure than one would have supposed possible.

But of course he could not continue any conversation of a personal nature, with Esther, in the presence of a third party; therefore, after exchanging a few courteous sentences with her and her companion, he excused himself, and left them to enjoy their ices by themselves.

He was wretched, however, and he had really learned nothing more than he already knew, beyond the date of Esther's marriage. He was perplexed beyond expression.

She had learned of his engagement to Miss Dexter? On the very day when he had virtually declared his love for herself!

Who could have reported such a falsehood, and how could she have learned of it, on that day of all days? How could she have believed him so base, so lost to honor and capable of such double dealing?

He had been so sure that she returned his love at that time that had no misunderstanding arisen, she would have become his wife, even though a prince of royal blood had sued for her hand.

But how, when, where could she have met this lord whom she had married! How could the union have been consummated so suddenly—and who could have so turned her against him, and wrought upon her proud, sensitive spirit in such a way as to drive her into deciding so vital a question upon the impulse of a moment, as it were?

Some one must have wrought this mischief with willful and deliberate intent, and before she had given up the idea that night at the theatre when she had seen him with Miss Dexter. Good Heaven! she must have been married, even then! and oh! it had never occurred to him before—the man with whom he had seen her was perhaps her husband.

These intensely perplexing and harassing thoughts flashed through his mind after he had left Esther and her companion, and while he was slowly making his way from the marble court and trying to solve the problem which so troubled him.

Suddenly he stopped short, a light breaking in upon him, as he remembered that his mother and Marjorie had passed him and Esther upon the street, that day, in New York. He remembered their rude stare and look of displeasure, and now, putting this, that, and other together, he now felt sure that his mother had been the mischief maker.

"She surely lost no time in trying to carry out her wretched plot, and she has ruined my whole life," he muttered, with exceeding bitterness, as he paused beneath an archway and glanced back to see Esther gracefully entertaining her companion and apparently unconscious of aught save the present, and her immediate surroundings.

She was so bright, so full of vivacity and apparently so care-free, he could not judge her anything but happy, and he groaned in spirit over his irreparable loss and the belief that another possessed the treasure he so coveted. As he was crossing the spacious hall in search of his own party, he met his mother coming to find him.

"Donald! what is it?" she exclaimed, in dismay, as she caught sight of his white, drawn face.

His heart was full of bitterness—he was desperate and reckless, and he retorted, sharply:

"I have seen her—Lady Irvington; I have spoken with her, and she is Esther."

"Well, yes, I suppose it is true," Mrs. Lancaster admitted, her eyes shifting restlessly beneath his sullen, accusing gaze. "But how did it happen? Who and what is this 'lord' that he could stoop so low—"

"Stop!" commanded Donald, with angry authority; "you shall not speak of her like that, for a lovelier, purer, or more innately refined girl than Esther Wellington does not live. I do not know how it happened, merely know that the only woman I ever loved, whom I ever shall love, is lost to me. Mother," he continued, in a fierce undertone, as he caught her wrist in a viselike grasp, "did you meddle between her and me? You told me once that you would move heaven and earth to prevent my marrying her—"

"Donald, how wildly you are talking!" Mrs. Lancaster here inter-

posed. "You will surely attract attention, and you are hurting my arm."

He instantly released his hold upon her; but his face was terrible in its sternness and pallor.

"If I ever discover that you did make mischief between us I will never forgive you," he whispered, bending his lips close to her ear.

"Esther Wellington was all the world to me, and in losing her I have lost all—henceforth life will be but a blank to me."

"Hush, Donald; here comes Marjorie. Have you asked her to dance yet?" questioned his mother, in an anxious tone.

"No, and I do not intend to; I am going home," he curtly returned; and, turning his back upon both women, he walked away.

But he did not go home. Some magnetic influence drew him back to the ballroom, where, hiding himself in a corner, he continued to watch the movements of the woman he loved.

He was not hidden, however, for Esther saw him. She seemed, intuitively, to know that he was there; but, woman-like, she made no sign to betray the fact, or that his presence produced the slightest effect upon her. Instead, she appeared only the more brilliant and completely absorbed in her pleasure of the hour.

The sight of her beauty, her grace, her enjoyment, drove him wild, and finally, as she stopped to rest after an inspiring galop, he made his way, in a fit of desparation, straight to her.

"Lady Irvington," he said, bowing before her, "will you favor an old friend with one of the coming dances?"

Something in his tone smote Esther's heart with sudden pain. She glanced searchingly into his clouded eyes and white, set face, and what she saw there well-nigh destroyed her presence of mind for the moment.

She read there grief, regret, almost despair, and knew that the man loved her still, in spite of everything.

Her heart bounded with a thrill of exultation at the knowledge; and then there came a terrible reaction as she remembered the beautiful woman whom she had seen driving with him only a few days previous.

But, recovering herself almost immediately, she responded, with a polite smile of regret:

"Thanks, Mr. Lancaster; but my tablet is full," and she held it up before him, that he might see for himself.

Even in his pain he noticed what a beautiful little toy it was, composed of a couple of leaves of carved ivory set in a frame of gold and suspended from her girdle by an exquisite chain.

"It is a delightful ball, isn't it?" Esther continued, brightly, to conceal the rapid beating of her heart.

"Is Mrs. Lancaster present with you to-night?"

"Yes," Donald unwittingly answered, without a suspicion that she referred to his supposed wife, rather than to his mother.

Then, determined that he would have an interview with her at any cost, he began to frame a request that he might call upon her, when her partner for the next figure appeared, and interrupted him.

"Excuse me, please," Esther said, with a smile and bow as she allowed the newcomer to lead her away.

Donald could endure no more, and, quietly leaving the house, he returned at once to his hotel, where he passed a sleepless, wretched night.

The next morning he disappeared before breakfast, and was absent all day, much to the annoyance of his mother and the mortification of Miss Dexter, who began to have a suspicion of how matters stood.

Her chagrin was, however, succeeded by a sense of exultation in the belief that her rival could no longer interfere with her own schemes for the future.

"Thank goodness that she is married, and beyond Don's reach!" she muttered, while brooding over the situation. "He may be upset for a while, but he will get over it in time, and perhaps he will be so piqued that he will be ready to do the fair thing to me at last."

This way of reasoning was rather sorry comfort to her, but, like a drowning man, she was ready to grasp at any straw of hope which she could find floating upon her troubled sea.

(To be continued.)



Choosing an Investment

If you have a few hundred saved and want your savings to grow faster than they will by compounding interest at 4 or 4 1-2 per cent., the selection of a medium for investment is a serious matter.

Some of the accepted investments are these—

- Municipal Debentures, paying 3 3/4 to 5 per cent.
- Corporation Bonds, paying from 4 1/4 to 6 1/2 per cent.
- Bank Shares, paying from 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 per cent.
- Steam and Electric Railroad Shares, paying from 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 per cent.
- Manufacturing and Industrial Stocks, paying from 7 per cent. up.

Bonds vs. Industrial Stocks.

Bonds bear only a stated low rate of interest, usually from 4 to 6 per cent., do not increase in value, and at the end of a stated number of years return you only the money invested.

Industrial Stocks always yield 7 per cent. or over, with extra dividends as the business prospers, increasing in value as the business grows, and after a term of years can be sold for more than the original investment.

Some Record Breakers.

Industrial Stocks have always been the biggest money earners. Among the big ones are: Standard Oil, Western Union Telegraph, Bell Telephone, Singer Sewing Machine and Westinghouse Air Brake.

You are too late to reap the benefit of investing in these "record breakers," but you can participate in Toronto's Taxicabs—a new industrial which after six months' operation has proven that it can pay, beginning January, 1910, a dividend of 1 1/2 per cent. per annum, or 2 1/2 per cent. quarterly, and is constantly increasing in value.

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The Farm

SUBSTANCES IN HAY.

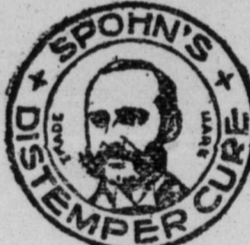
The nutritive substances in hay or feed may be divided into two classes—flesh-formers and fuel or energy-producing substances. When the proper amount of these two classes of substances is fed the ration is said to be balanced. If an unbalanced ration is fed, as one containing more fuel or energy-producing substances than are needed and less flesh-forming material, the ration is partially wasted, and such unwise feeding will not bring as good results as the feeding of the same amount of a balanced ration. Each class of substance has different offices to perform in the body. If not enough flesh-forming substance is fed, the body suffers, because it is absolutely necessary to keep the body in good condition. Thousands of horses are fed all they can eat, yet are poorly nourished because the food contains little except fuel substances.

The flesh-forming substances are used to replace the waste that goes on in all living tissue. Energy-producing substances are used to furnish the energy required for the nervous and muscular activities of the body, and when fed in excess they may to a certain extent be stored up in the form of fat for use later, when needed for either energy or heat.

One of the most important substances in any foodstuff is protein. All nutritive substances which contain nitrogen are classed under the general term of protein. Protein is composed of nitrogen, carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, sulphur and phosphorus. Protein is the substance which builds up the body. The muscles, tendons, ligaments, connective tissues, skin, hair, hoofs, part of the bone, and in fact every part of the body but fat are made up of protein, together with mineral matter and water.

The next important class of substances is the carbohydrates, which contain carbon, hydrogen and oxygen but no nitrogen, sulphur, or phosphorus; they include starch, sugar, etc. These are used for practically the same purpose for which coal or wood is used in the steam engine, namely to furnish energy and heat.

The third important constituent



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of hay is its oils. Small quantities of oil are present in all kinds of hay. These oils serve the same purpose as the carbohydrates. A pound of these, however, will furnish two and one-fourth times as much energy or heat as the same quantity of carbohydrates. It can readily be seen when the chemical analysis of hay is considered, why the price of the different grades or kinds of hay should depend, first upon the amount of digestible nutrients contained, and second, upon the purpose for which the hay is fed. If the concentrated feed—i.e. the grain in the ration—lacks protein, then the hay that is high in this substance is more valuable than one which contains little protein, carbohydrates, and vice-versa. There is quite a range in the amount of the different classes of nutrients in the various kinds of hay.

On an average, in 100 pounds of alfalfa hay the digestive protein amounts to 10.38 pounds; in cowpea hay, 10.70 pounds; in alsike clover 7.38 pounds; in redtop hay, 4.80 pounds; and in timothy hay, 2.89 pounds.

In 100 pounds of redtop hay the digestible carbohydrates amount to 47 pounds; in timothy hay, 43.72 pounds; in alsike clover hay, 41.70 pounds; in alfalfa hay, 37.33 pounds; in cowpea hay, 38.40 pounds; in red clover hay, 36.15 pounds.

When fed for protein, timothy hay ranks last, but when fed for carbohydrates it stands next to redtop, which heads the list. If the total nutrients are considered there are a number of different kinds of hay which are equal, if not superior, to timothy hay for feeding purposes.

Procrastination is the thief of many a good time.



Give the youngster a dish of Kellogg's Toasted Corn Flakes whenever he wishes. It will put his little stomach in prime condition for other foods.

TOASTED CORN

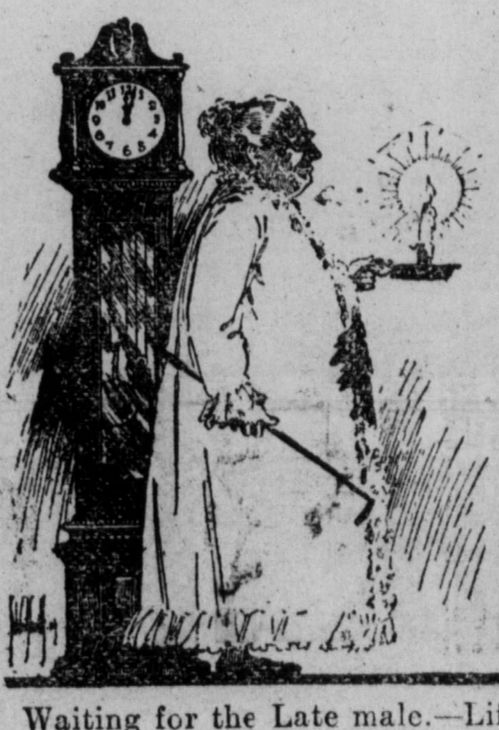
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