

WOMAN A PHYSICAL WRECK

Tells in Following Letter How She Was Restored to Health by Lydia E. Finkham's Vegetable Compound.

Milwaukee, Wis.—“Before taking Lydia E. Finkham's Vegetable Compound I was a physical wreck. I had been going to a doctor for several years but he did me no good. A friend told me about Lydia E. Finkham's Vegetable Compound, so I decided to give it a fair trial, and it gave me relief from bearing down pains which had been so bad that I would have to lie down. I also used the Sanative Wash and it has done me a great deal of good, and I am not troubled with a weakness any more.”—Mrs. P. L. BRILL, 1299 Booth Street, Milwaukee, Wis.

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“The Die is Cast”

For Better or For Worse.”

CHAPTER VI
A Change of Air.

“Mr. Levison would not get me to listen to him, father,” she said, with a quiet dignity, which seemed to impress De Courcy Norton's fuddled mind, for he looked at her and nodded approval.

“That's the tone,” he said; “that's the proper tone. You speak like a lady. But you might yield, Kit; there's a beastly fascination in the thing, and—by Heaven, I'd rather see you dead than on the stage! I've good reason for saying it, mark me!—and I want you to promise me that—that whatever happens, you'll keep off it! I want you to promise, do you understand?”

She was silent a moment or two, then she said very quietly: “I promise, dad. Yes—” slowly and very gravely, “I promise.”

He drew a long breath of relief, and was silent a moment, frowning moodily over his pipe; then as she kissed him, and was moving away, he said:

“You've been a good girl to me, Kit, and I've been a damned bad father.” She flew back to him. “Yes; I have; and I've known it all along. You ought to have had a first-rate education, instead of which—Kit, should you like to go to school again? I think I could manage it, yes; for a while, at any rate.”

“Too late, father,” she said, gravely. “No; I couldn't leave you.”

“I suppose not,” he said, with a sigh. “Besides,” she laughed, “I shouldn't be able to stand it. No; if you're bent on improving my mind—the way she said it compelled a smile from the careworn man—there's another way, as the cookery-books say, I've got some books, lesson-books from the last school, you know, and I can have a worry at them. In fact, I have had

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Hence, scientists are now agreed that you must cure the skin through the skin. The medicine must be in

turn at them once or twice later. Yes, that is what I will do; and presently you will find that you have such a highly finished article for a daughter that you won't know her.” Her voice changed suddenly, and took to itself a highly refined tone, just a little prim, but scarcely an exaggeration of that which she had heard used by the leading ladies at the theater, and by the ladies, who were the real article, in the stalls. “Do you not think it is time to retire, father dear?”

He rose unsteadily and laughed at her. “By George, Kit, education, o no education, you can do it! It might be Lady—” he stopped. “Lady any body. There—be off with you! I do think it is time to retire, my chieftain!”

In his own mimicry of her mimicry it was easy to see from whom Kittle had got her undoubted histrionic ability. She lay awake for some hours after she had “retired,” thinking of her father's arrested disclosure about their family, and the promise she had given. She had yielded it readily enough, though she had an intuition that the profession which her father detested was the one to which she was most suited. The stage being closed to her, there remained, if she should need to earn her livelihood—what?

With a newly awakened ambition for something vague and indefinite, she hunted up the books she had brought away from the last of the schools at which she had put in a fitful attendance, and fell with avidity upon a course of what is called “self-education.” It was unfortunately cut short by the modern fiend before which the bravest of us quail and tremble.

“It's influenza, father, right enough,” she said, when he came home one night, and found her in bed with a flushed face and unnaturally bright eyes. “I nursed Hagnes Hevangeline through it, and I know,” as the song says; and now, to her infinite satisfaction, Hagnes has to nurse me. So everything comes square in this best of possible worlds. Oh, how not I am! Don't come near me!—don't dream of kissing me, or you'll catch it—”

Norton hurried off for a friendly doctor, who was always ready to desert one of his best-paying patients for one of his Bohemian pals; for he was a bit of a Bohemian himself; and he at once endorsed Kittle's diagnosis.

You may have influenza badly or lightly; but the after-effects are pretty much the same, however you have it; and at the end of a week Kittle rose from her bed the mere shadow of her old self; so wan and weak, indeed, that her father was almost beside himself with terror and anxiety; he spent most of his time in the sick room; abjured or—er—almost abjured whisky, and neglected the Bohemian haunts in which he shone as a bright and particular star. But his friends did not desert him; and daily the faithful little band of literary men and artists came round to inquire after Miss Kittle, knocking gently, and holding whispered conferences with Hagnes Hevangeline in the narrow, giddy little passage.

Teddy Wilson brought flowers; Percy Vilorne sent half a dozen of “Invalids” port, addressed in a disguised hand; and a little later, Herbert Mandeville lugged round a parcel of the latest “stixpensies” where-with the convalescent could while away the tedious hours; no one of them—these men, whom, with a smile, he noble born reader, should speak of as—er—not quite gentlemen, you know—came empty-handed; and Kittle, to whom tears came readily just

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then, used to cry a little over the flowers and the rest, and send loving messages to her devoted worshippers. But notwithstanding the skill of the clever doctor, the unremitting care of Hagnes Hevangeline, the strengthening qualities of the port, the flowers, fruit, and other offerings, the young goddess tarried on the road back to health.

“She'll have to go away,” said the doctor decisively. “London's the healthiest place in the world, excepting in the summer, and most parts of the other seasons; but you'll have to send her into the country, Norton; and send her at once.”

Now, Norton, absorbed in his anxiety on Kittle's account, had done very little or no work lately, and his funds were exhausted. He was too proud to ask a loan of the doctor, and “the boys”—well, they were hopelessly and perennially stoney-broke. But the most stoney-broke of the lot—little Bickers—came forward at the critical moment with a proposal that promised to solve the financial difficulty.

“By George, Dook, it's—it's Providence itself!” he cried, in a hushed voice, for Kittle was sitting up in the adjoining work-room. “If it's the country, Miss Kittle wants, she can have it by the tons. I have a mother—”

“Well, don't bray about it,” murmured Teddy Wilson, who was at the conference. “There are others!”

“A mother who lives in one of the healthiest places you can imagine. It's a cottage by a wood—Shut up, Teddy, this is serious!”

Teddy who had begun to hum the well-known song, looked penitent, and Bickers went on to explain that his mother, a widow, lived by herself in a quiet country place; that she was the dearest of mothers, and would be proud to have Miss Kittle for—just as long as Miss Kittle liked to stay. He'd write by that night's post to tell Mrs. Bickers that Kittle was coming; and—Well, there they were, the good fellow wound up, his face flushed, his eyes all aglow.

The Dook pressed his hand. “It's a kind heart you have, Bickers,” he said, his eyes moist; “and I accept for Kittle. I can't take her away, because—”

“Of course not; there's your work,” Bickers put in quickly, and with impressive gravity. “I'll arrange it all; you leave it to me. It's not so much of a journey, and the fare—ahem!”

“I can manage the fare,” said the Dook, with simple dignity. “But you'd better tell me where it is she's going,” he added, with a laugh, in which the rest joined.

“My mother lives at Deerbrook,” said Bickers. Norton's brows came together as if he were trying to remember the name, and Bickers, repeating earnestly that the cottage was, though humble, as healthy as ever a cottage could be, hurried off to inform Mrs. Bickers of the coming of her guest.

Three days later the boys met at the station to see Kittle off, and, as the train started with Kittle clinging to her father's hand—as if she were going to Australia, as the distracted guard pathetically and indignantly remonstrated—she managed to murmur to the others:

“Take care of him. All of you! And—good-by!”

They would have cheered, if the Dook himself had not been present; and if they had done so, Kittle would have forgiven them, for her heart was tender, and her eyes were blurred with tears. At the little country station a fly, with a dear, sweet-looking and extremely near-sighted old lady, were waiting for her; and Mrs. Bickers justified her motherhood to the good-hearted Bickers by at once enfolding the thin, pale-looking girl in a large embrace.

“Ah, we'll soon have the roses back in those pretty cheeks, Miss Norton,” she said. “Well, Kittle; then, if I may, dear; and a very nice name it is, matches you to a T. Oh, I know all about you, my dear; from my son, of course. And about your good father; such a clever gentleman, my William says. Let me put this shawl round you; it's warm, but still the country air after London; and it's well to be careful. Dear, dear, I'm so glad to have you. You see”—she nodded and smiled through a sudden blur of tears—“I lost my only girl. It isn't far, but you must lean back,” and so on.

The cottage proved to be about a mile from the station, and to be quite, as Kittle called it, “a picture postcard” of a cottage. It stood, as Bickers had poetically said, beside a wood, and the air was odorous of the health-giving terebene emitted by the tall pines which shaded the little nest from the sun and the wind. It was as cosy inside as it was pretty out, and Kittle sank into a grandfather's chair with a sense of well-being, and of gratitude to the old lady, which threatened tears again.

Mrs. Bickers “did for herself,” with the occasional aid of one of the village girls, so that Kittle, as soon as Mrs. Bickers would permit it, found some employment and amusement in assisting in keeping the box of a place in the precise order which was dear to the old lady's heart.

For the first few days Kittle was not up to walking, and spent most of her time in the little garden, which was all ablaze with the simple flowers, which are so easily grown, that most people do not think them worth while growing; and so go about raving of “the flowers one sees in the cottage gardens, you know!” But as she grew stronger she went for strolls in the wood, which was so unrequited that it might have belonged to Mrs. Bickers.

“I hope I'm not trespassing,” Kittle remarked on returning from it one day. “Oh, dear, no,” the old lady assured her, with a touch of pride and satisfaction. “Sir Talbot expressly gave me permission, my dear. He is a most good-natured gentleman, one of the real kind of gentlemen, a nobleman, I suppose I ought to say; and I am sure he'd be only too pleased for you to walk there. And it isn't as if the Court were near; it's quite a long way off, at the other end of the wood, where the park begins. Some day, when you are stronger, we will go up there and see the gardens. They are very large and beautiful, of course; and I know Mr. MacDonald, the gardener. Quite a gentleman he is, I assure you. You must try and manage a whole tea-cake to-day, my dear.”

“I feel as if I could manage a dozen,” said Kittle, laughing. “Mr. Bickers was right in saying this was a healthy place; he ought to have added the hungriest.”

The old lady served up the tea-cakes piping hot, and with gratification watched Kittle devour some. Kittle had a way of getting direct to most people's hearts, and little Bickers' old mother had already grown fond of the pretty girl who had been placed under her care.

(To be Continued.)

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If your little one's tongue is coated, it is a sure sign the stomach, liver and bowels need a gentle, thorough cleansing at once. When your child is cross, peevish, listless, pale, doesn't sleep, eat or act naturally; if breath is bad, stomach sour, system full of cold, throat sore, or if feverish, give a teaspoonful of “California Syrup of Figs,” and in a few hours all the clogged-up, constipated waste, sour bile and undigested food will gently move out of the bowels, and you have a well, playful child again.

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