

A HAPPY HOUSEHOLD.

By MARGARET LEE,
Author of *Divorce—A Brooklyn Bachelor—Lorimer and Wife—Etc.*

(Continued.)

"I think a sensitive person would suffer sufficiently for self blame." "That is my theory. Why, I have seen little children frightened into falsehood, and then punished for being liars. Naturally, children are honest and truthful. Their souls are murdered in youth, and then we look about us and ask why the age is so material. I assure you, Everett, that fault-finding is the bane of domestic happiness. It will wreck at last even a home where all the cardinal virtues are practiced. What thoroughly mystifies me is how people can shut their eyes to its effects. A woman will risk her life to have a child and then torture it with her tongue until the little creature is an example of distorted humanity. And this fatal error seems to be a thing of temperament, a constitutional disease. One of the happiest men I know is a fellow who could not construct a grammatical sentence, and I think his spelling is phonetic; yet he carries with him an atmosphere of joy. It is a perfect delight to visit him. His wife is an embodiment of health and good humor, and she looks like an elder sister of her own great boys and girls. I just watched his method, and found it was not a matter of chance, although it had become second nature. He discovered the good everywhere. He told me, one day, that he had grown up in an old-fashioned family of blue Presbyterians. The propriety of a child's laughter was a question of grave discussion. He was then, as now, merry-hearted, full of health and hope. He concluded that nothing worth having is got by quarrelling, and finally left the house, having registered a mental vow never to find fault with anybody. If he saw nothing to praise in the conduct of another he could at least, refrain from condemnation. His wonderful rule has worked to perfection. He has conquered peace and he bears it about with him. His children are trained not to carp at each other or find fault with the servants. Now, Everett, I want you to consider these remarks at your leisure."

"I shall begin at once to test your friend's rule."

"Do. You will find it magical in its tonic results. You will be amazed at the good that is in human nature, and as its beauties increase its frailties disappear."

"I had a very nice talk with father just before I left the house. I needn't tell you how delighted he is, and he wants you to feel perfectly at ease about the financial side of the subject. I have never earned a dollar."

"Oh, I don't think that you and Rose will be in great need of any of the comforts of life. The average man, if he is industrious, can make headway in this country. We are surrounded by money-getters. That is a minor consideration; people can be wretched in a palace and supremely happy in a garret. The question is one of temperament and mutual sympathy."

"Encouragement."

"Yes, I'll send Rose here. I suppose you two have a great deal to say to each other."

"Yes, and Monday morning will have to be faced. However, I am going back this time with a new theory of the future."

Everett's smile was beautiful to reflect upon.

CHAPTER XIV.

Mr. Pounce took great comfort out of his house which held the chief place in his affections. Inanimate objects excited his curiosity, roused his admiration, absorbed his attention, and even won his devotion and inspired his love. Many of his leisure hours were spent in old curiosity shops and among the treasures of pawn-brokers. In unredeemed pledges he read strange stories of romance and riddles. For these silent witnesses of the secrets of broken hearts he arranged the most beautiful receptacles. Satin and velvet lined cases, protected by glass, contained the costly, delicate objects that he desired to possess and willingly rescued from sad obscurity. Disappointed in love, his admiration and appreciation of the beautiful took refuge in works of art. His collections were his pets. He handled them, sat with them, watched them with jealous eyes, and only exhibited them to a select few among his visitors. Rose followed him eagerly when he proposed showing her his rooms, and was glad to hear that he had purposely named an earlier hour for her visit so as to enjoy her society before the arrival of his other dinner guests.

His pride in his home was natural. He had certainly designed a beautiful dwelling for his own convenience and satisfaction. Each room, in finish and furnishing, was an example of a certain wood, carved and polished to display its peculiar beauties. Rose could only laugh and shake her head when he wanted her to name her favorite. The oak hall was massive, and the great fire-place quite suggestive of historical romance. The white drawing-room was charmingly delicate. Then again, the ebony oval gallery, with its wealth of pictures, challenged her verdict. He took her into a library, where the dark mahogany seemed the most beautiful and appropriate of backgrounds to the rows of valuable books. Yet the dining-room in black walnut was a study of harmonious colors.

"How did you ever plan it all?"

"It took time, but I enjoyed every moment of it. I think the music-room will delight you. It is maple. I have over one hundred different woods in this house."

"A combination of forests! You can imagine yourself in any part of the world."

"Precisely. Perhaps the upper floors will give you the most pleasure. There I have the odorous woods of the East."

So they examined the finish of apartments that were rivals in beauty and comfort. One was in bamboo, another in satin-wood, so smooth that it seemed desecration to step upon it. The sandal-wood was perfect, its fragrance so delightful that Rose had almost chosen it, when a small room in olive-wood asserted its claims to preference. They came to several of cedar, and one suite was of rose-wood, so exquisite that Rose refused to make a decision. A carved bench was very inviting. She sat down to enjoy the effect, and Mr. Pounce unlocked a cabinet and displayed his collection of Dresden china.

"How would you like to turn collector?"

He was standing, holding a little figure for her admiration.

"I don't know," she spoke slowly. "If one could feel sure that some one else would value the things and keep them together."

"Bah! I've spent forty years hunting up my treasures. I know the result. Don't I read the papers? As soon as I am buried my heirs will clear all these things to an auction-room, and get the dollar-and-cent value for them. I attend the sales of other collections; these objects change hands regularly."

"Wouldn't one of your heirs take care of them if you willed them to him?"

"Which one, for instance?"

"I'm sure I don't know them. You might leave the whole house, as it stands, as an educator to the public."

"The Pounce Museum, eh? That might do. That is a capital idea. What put it into your head?"

"The advertisements that you mentioned. They are so pathetic."

"Well, a man has the pleasure and edification as he makes his purchases, and he can't take them with him. Scattered in an auction-room, they serve to delight and educate others. Still, I like your suggestion. I must say that the prospect of my beautiful rooms being sublet to boarders often annoys me."

"It would take me months to really enjoy all these rooms; besides, I am too ignorant now to even appreciate what is before me. I should study, so as to profit by what you have shown me. You have acquired your knowledge so gradually that it does not seem a weight to you. Such a lovely place as this would be a charming resort for students."

"I could have a salaried caretaker here. I own books that would verify research. I think you have solved a vexatious problem for me. I want to show you my plants before any one comes. You know, the mob is a humbug! People handle and pinch my fine specimens and break off leaves and steal blossoms; so I keep my door locked. Now, I have noticed that you have used your eyes only."

"I was taught to look and never touch."

"I see. By the way, that is a good ruby. How long have you had it?"

"Since last Saturday. It was put on with a wish."

"That's all right. A ruby! Hum! I seldom ask questions. As a rule, I take no interest in such affairs; but is this significant?"

"Yes."

"Do I know him?"

"Yes, and I know we can trust you. It is Mr. Everett."

Rose flushed and looking up from her lovely ring, saw an odd expression flash in Mr. Pounce's eyes; his cheeks reddened unbecomingly.

"I know of him."

"Yes, I remember hearing him say that he rarely met you."

"Where is he to-day?"

"In New Haven. He graduates this year."

"Oh, I see. What is his bent?"

"I don't know that he has any in particular."

"Versatile?"

"I couldn't tell you."

"Another idler in the family?"

"Why do you judge him on no acquaintance?"

"Well, partly because my critical powers are active. A good naturalist can construct the entire animal from one bone."

"So I read. Mr. Everett is not a solitary bone; neither is he an old curiosity to be analyzed and classified. He belongs to the period, and he uses his own head." Rose laughed merrily.

"He seems to have made very good use of it in one direction. So you like him for himself."

"You would, too."

"You flatter me."

"I think if you studied him carefully and without prejudice that you could form a just estimate of his character."

"What do you consider his strong point?"

"His thoughtfulness for others."

"He must be a unique!"

"Yes; when you arrange your living specimens, he will be quite an addition to the collection."

"My dear young lady, human curios are not so interesting to me as these that I live among. These do not change, and time improves them. Here is a bit of baked clay, with a little decoration done by a master's hand. The hand is dust, the art lives. This is here to charm us after a lapse of three centuries. Think of the human beings that have come and gone within that period!"

"This is the imprint of a soul on china."

"So you deduce immortality. Ah! well; if one could reach souls the effort might meet repayment. It is beyond me now. I am happy with memories of those whose souls are beyond. My girl, I have here the quintessence of what we call genius. Does it not culminate, bubble, overflow and crystallize in these treasures—in books? In pictures, in every work of art? The best do we want with the merely commonplace attributes of these exotics in Nature's conservatories? You receive the best of the artist in his work. There isn't time nor opportunity to find what is worth having in exceptional people. They are sensitive plants to the average individual. But don't misjudge me. Look about, and you will see pictures by living men, Americans. I buy what suits me. The paint may be wet or it may be cracked, with age, sympathy and praise and ostentations hospitality are well enough in their place; but I have lived an active, business life. If you want to show your appreciation for genius, buy an author's books and an artist's pictures. There is a ring of sincerity in your bit of silver or gold. They buy bread and butter."

"You and Mr. Powers think alike about the subject. I am going with him and a party to visit the studios."

"Well, you'll be astonished, if you are at all absorbing; at what you will see. Read between the lines, and you will find the cause of the times. Humbug and cleverness apparently on top, filling the canvas. The legitimate in art is off somewhere, hibernating. The fact is that the man whose heart and conscience are in his art finds himself isolated and in danger of starvation. Your man who temporizes is the man of the hour. He makes his appeal to what he recognizes in human nature. He has a certain amount of ability with some business tact, and he is going to make the two combine to give him a living. He fits up a room that would put a man of genius into a lunatic asylum, and calls it his studio. When you see it and examine the monstrosities that cover the walls and lumber up the floor and hang from the ceilings you can form a fair estimate of the owner's artistic calibre. The next thing in order is to induce people with money and the art craze to visit his exhibits. He affects society, goes here and there, sees his name in print, and feels that he is making a good beginning. Then Mrs. So-and-So sits for her portrait. When it is finished he issues cards for a reception, and folks flock to drink his tea and discuss his method. He can crowd his room regularly with pretty, chattering women, who beguile him with flattery and show him their beautiful costumes. They have no money, and if they had they wouldn't invest it in pictures. I am telling you some sad facts, but you are a sensible girl. You must have read that success—real, honest, money-making success—is earned by dint of solid achievement. You can't jump for it and clutch it like a big apple on the top branch. Presently, our artist finds himself going with the big crowd. He is having a very good time, apparently; you meet him everywhere; but his debts are growing faster than his success. His charming friends who invite him to dinner and fritter away his money in his studio are ruining him. They absorb all that he owns, and give him nothing but words in return."

"Still, there are true artists who are queerer and devoted to art for its own sake."

"Yes; but a true artist knows that art is what she always was—a lovely, coy maiden, who must be sought and won in sacred privacy. Your man of genius is independent. In a garret, with a few colors and brushes, he sits before his canvas and unconsciously becomes immortal. His inspiration is within him; his pictures are the poor reflection of his exquisite mental images that torture him in their effort for delivery. They are born on canvases. He isn't thinking of fame—he isn't coveting wealth. He is possessed with the desire and determination to produce for his own delight these sweet brain fancies. But see what results! He is slowly building a temple that rises gradually above the common level, and finally the whole world sees the sunlight playing on its dome."

"Are these temples can be built anywhere?"

"Yes—and there is plenty of room for them in this country. I am afraid I am tiring you, but it is quite novel to meet a girl willing to listen to me."

"I hope you will go on talking. You are explaining things that I have heard discussed."

"So! How?"

"Why, only yesterday at dinner, I listened to a conversation about our artists. Their pictures are not selling well this fall."

"Do you know why? They are not worth buying. There's nothing in them, nothing to them. Our artists, individually and collectively, are conspiring against art. They have adopted a system that is rotten from the very foundation. Let me give you an idea of it. A few days ago a man called upon me to contribute to a fund, the interest of which is to support an American with artistic talent while he studies abroad. We sat down and ventilated the whole opinion of it. I gave him my humble opinion of it. As soon as a man exhibits a fair ability for drawing and coloring he is advised to go abroad. So he borrows the money, if necessary, and goes. Now, then, he reaches Paris and joins a small army of men engaged in the pursuit of art. In the first place, he suffers physically. He wants to economize, and cheap food is not good for the brain. His morals deteriorate; he is away from home influences, and without intending any great harm he becomes familiar with people and things that have nothing in common with art. The impressions that he receives are injurious; he cannot shake them off or rid himself of their effects. His mental status is changing. He is one of a class that follow a leading French artist. The teacher may be dead, but his pupils are all copyists. So our American burles his one chance of

fame in a French grave. I hear that we have three thousand men in Paris living a hard, false existence, under the illusion that they have adopted the short cut to fame and fortune. I told this to my enthusiastic friend. I said I would aid a fund to keep a talented youth at home."

"Did you convince him that he was making a mistake?"

"Not at all! He is young. I have been watching the outcome of French influence for thirty years. It grows worse as it increases. We are deluged with so-called pictures, poor imitations of a bad school that doesn't appeal to the healthy American taste. If a man wants a French picture he naturally prefers the work of a Frenchman to the manner born. So, our artists come home to starve. Their wishy-washy work has no intrinsic merit—no soul, no money value. The spark of genius has gone out in the vain effort to do the impossible. The truth is that the French have nothing that is worth copying, whether in morals literature or art. One of these days the American schools will take form. Our young men and women will find their inspiration in the beauties of our own country. We possess the most exquisite landscapes of the earth, and I don't know where you will see such beautiful children or such lovely women. Now that athletics are properly valued our sculptors can emulate the old Greeks. The sooner the French craze is exploded the better for American art. It has served to keep our development back for at least twenty-five years. Thirty years ago we boasted of some men of genius, who found their inspiration in their native country. I'll subscribe liberally and heartily for an American Academy with American thoughts for its basis and American models the objects for study and perpetuation."

"Wouldn't it be grand to have such a thing?"

"I think so. No third or fourth rate representations of foreign subjects that have wearied my eyes annually for a short life-time! Eh! What a relief a really national exhibition would be! Fancy, if John Smith, of Virginia, would paint a Virginian scene, instead of sending a 'French flower-girl'!"

"Or a 'Fisher-maiden from Norway.'"

Mr. Pounce laughed heartily. "You understand me."

To Be Continued.

BRITAIN'S POST OFFICE.

Interesting Matters Culled From the Postmaster-General's Report

The British Postmaster General's report is not by any means as dry reading as nearly all parliamentary papers are. It is full of interesting facts and figures, and it shows that the concessions made on Jubilee Day have done what it is hoped imperial penny postage will do for the Canadian post office, increased in volume the business carried on by the post offices, of the United Kingdom. After a while the P. O. officials may agree to forward, carry or deliver anything from a needle to an anchor, and perhaps amongst the 3,318,723,000 articles delivered there were queerer things than needles, but not as cumbersome as anchors.

It took 17,282 employes to handle those billions of articles. Allowing one person to have posted one letter there were 7,699,040 people in the United Kingdom who lost their memory for that many letters had either no address or an insufficient address, so that they could not be delivered; 1,294,265 postcards and 11,620,374 book packets, not to mention 534,120 newspapers, and 175,675 parcels were in the same fix, and nine per cent. of the total number of letters dealt with in the Returned Letter Office could neither be delivered nor returned to the senders. Motor vans for conveying mails have been found to work in every way satisfactory and more economical than horses.

There were 11,128,258 foreign and colonial money orders. Postal orders to the number of 71,380,975 representing £26,014,583 were issued, an increase over 1897 of 6.2 per cent.

The Post Office Savings Bank has deposited to the number of 7,230,761, and to their credit on 31st December, 1897, there were £115,896,786, or \$79,483,930. On that date £316,716 were deposited. The telegraph was kept busy with 83,029,999 telegrams.

To manage all the departments of the United Kingdom post office requires 150,110 persons. The permanent establishment, including all head and sub-postmasters, numbers 84,309, of whom 13,069 are women; the non-established staff, many of whom are employed only a few hours a day, number 65,801, of whom 17,465 are women.

WATER IN THE LAKES.

Attention has been called to the very remarkable effect of the wind on various island bodies of water. It is not unusual for the residents in towns on the shores of lakes to be greatly inconvenienced, provided a heavy wind blowing on shore continues for any length of time. In one Baltic Sea the level has been altered for upwards of eight feet. Sometimes the water is blown out of a channel, leaving it almost dry. In one instance a depression of six feet occurred on one side of a body of water with a corresponding rise of six feet on the other. Lake Erie has been known to alter its level a distance of fifteen feet on account of heavy winds, and Lake Michigan was at one time the subject of considerable interest from the same cause. The wind was heavy and continuous and piled the water up on one side, while the other one was so low that people walked out upon the rocks where in the memory of man no feet had ever trodden.

VIGOROUS OLD AGE.

MR. WM. ELLIOTT TELLS HOW TO OBTAIN IT.

He Has Been Subject to Fainting Spells and Cramps—Was Gradually Growing Weaker and Weaker.

From the Echo, Plattsville, Ont.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills have attained a most enviable reputation in this community. Probably no other medicine has had such a large and increasing sale here. The reason is that this medicine cures. Old and young alike are benefited by its use. Recently we printed an account of a remarkable cure of a well known lady of this place through the agency of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and since publishing that we have heard of another similar case. Mr. Wm. Elliott, a farmer living near Bright, is a well known figure there. Although an old man he almost daily walks to the village, a distance of nearly a mile, for his mail. Many years ago he came from Scotland to the farm on which he now lives and cleared it of forest. In conversation with him, he related to an Echo reporter the following: "I am 78 years of age and strong and healthy for an old man. Mine has been a vigorous constitution and up till six years ago I hardly knew what it was to have a day's illness. But then my health began to fail. I became subject to cramps in the stomach. I was treated by doctors, but received no benefit. I gradually grew weaker and as I was past the three score and ten, I thought my time had come. Next I took fainting fits and often I would have to be carried home to the house entirely helpless. The doctors said my trouble was general weakness due to old age and advised me to carry some stimulant with me to use when I felt a faintness coming on, but this I refused to do. I had read in the papers of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and thought they would be specially adapted to my case. I tried one box but they did not seem to help me. In fact I thought I felt worse. I decided to continue them, however, and after taking four boxes there was a marked improvement. My strength returned and I was no longer troubled with fainting spells. In six months time with this treatment I gained fifteen pounds, taking in all eight boxes of the Pills. To-day I am a well man and I owe my complete recovery to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills."

These pills cure not by purging the system as do ordinary medicines, but by enriching the blood and strengthening the nerves. They cure rheumatism sciatica, locomotor ataxia, paralysis, heart troubles, erysipelas and all forms of weakness. Ladies will find them an unrivalled medicine for all ailments peculiar to the sex; restoring health and vigor, and bringing a rosy glow to pale and sallow cheeks. There is no other medicine, "just as good." See that the full name, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People is on every package you buy. If your dealer does not have them, they will be sent post paid at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., or Schenectady, New York.

DOMESTIC ICE MACHINE.

A description comes from London of a hand-driven ice machine which makes small blocks of ice for domestic use. With it any one can turn out a lump of ice weighing 11-4 pounds in about twenty minutes. The only other chemical used is ordinary commercial sulphuric acid. A single charge will make from seventy-five to 100 blocks of ice, and the process is very inexpensive. In tropical climates or on shipboard, or in the country, where it is only desired to cool water, milk or other beverage, the machine can be used directly for that purpose. To cool water it is simply necessary to insert a rubber tube connected with the machine in the neck of a bottle containing the fluid and then rotate the machine. In from three to five minutes the contents will be icy cold. The cost of the whole equipment is extremely low.

COST OF THE WAR.

The war with Spain is estimated to have cost the United States about \$150,000,000, or a little more than \$1-300,000 for each of the 114 days during which it lasted. The actual disbursements for war purposes from March, when the anticipatory expenditures were made to August 13th amounted to \$98,000,000. The remainder of the estimate covers expenses on war account after the signing of the peace protocol. The cost in human life, so far as the American forces are concerned, was much less than anticipated. The navy had 1 officer and 15 men killed, and 3 officers and 49 men wounded. In the army 23 officers and 236 men were killed, and 87 officers and 1,406 men wounded. The mortality from disease cannot be accurately estimated.

AN EXCLUSIVE FAMILY.

Mrs. Forundel—What! Invite the Downtown girls to our party! Why, my dear, your father is in trade. He keeps a shop.

Miss Forundel—I know, ma, but he is awfully exclusive. He never advertises, and doesn't have to serve a customer once a week.

A BIG METEOR.

A special despatch to the London Daily Mail from Cape Town says that a meteor, that is described as being half the size of St. Paul's Cathedral, has fallen at Port Alfred. It made a hole in the ground 50 feet deep, 120 feet long, and 60 feet wide.