

Literature, &c.

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

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THE LLOYDS.

By Mrs. S. J. Hale.

CHAPTER I.

'To me, what's greatness when content is wanting? Or wealth, raked up together with much care, To be kept with more, when the heart pines, In being dispossessed of what it longs for Beyond the Indian mines?'

MASSINGER.

ARTHUR LLOYD was about twenty-two when, by his father's death, he came into possession of property worth, at least, a million. His father died somewhat suddenly, and the young man, who was then in Paris, partly on business for his father, partly to see the world, was summoned home by the cares which such an inheritance naturally involved. There are few scenes that more deeply try the spirit of a man than a return to a desolate home. The mind can support the separations which the common current of human affairs renders inevitable without much suffering. One may even dwell in the midst of strangers, and not feel lonely, if the heart has a resting-place elsewhere. But when we open the solitary apartments, where everything we see calls up associations of dear friends we can hope to meet no more forever, a blight falls on our path of life, and we know that whatever of happiness may await us, our enjoyments can never be as in days past.

It was late on Saturday night when Arthur Lloyd reached the elegant mansion in — Street, New York, of which he was now the sole proprietor. The domestics have been expecting his arrival, and every arrangement had been made, as far as they knew his wishes and taste, to gratify him. Wealth will command attention, but in this case there was more devotion to the man than his money; for Arthur was beloved, and affection needs no prompter.

'How sorry I am that this pretty *mignonette* is not in bloom!' said Mrs. Ruth, the housekeeper; 'you remember, Lydia, how young Mr. Lloyd liked the *mignonette*.'

'Yes, I remember it well; but I always thought it was because Miss Ellen called it her flower, and he wanted to please the pretty little girl.'

'That might make some difference. Lydia, for he has such a kind heart. And now I think of it, I wonder if Miss Ellen knows he is expected home so soon.'

'She does,' said Lydia, 'for I told her yesterday, but she didn't seem to care. And I do not think she likes him.'

'She is melancholy, poor child! and who can blame her when she has lost her best friend?'

'Why, Mrs. Ruth, cannot young Mr. Lloyd be as good a friend as his father? I am sure he will be as kind.'

'Yes, no doubt of that. But, Lydia, it will not do for a young man to be so kind to a pretty girl; Miss Ellen is now quite a young lady; the world would talk about it.'

'I wonder who would dare to speak a word against Mr. Arthur?' said Lydia, reddening with indignation.

When a man's household are his friends, he hardly need care for the frowns of the world; and even the gloom of sorrow was relieved as Arthur shook hands with the old and favored domestics, whose familiar faces glowed with that honest, hearty welcome which no parasite can counterfeit. But when he retired to his chamber, the silence and solitude brought the memory of his lost friend sadly and deeply on his mind. He felt alone in the world. What did it avail that he had wealth to purchase all which earth calls pleasures, when the disposition of enjoy them could not be purchased? The brevity of life seemed written on every object around. All these things had belonged to his parents. And now they had no part in all that was done beneath the sun.

'And yet,' thought Arthur, 'who knows that their interest in earthly things is annihilated by death? Why may not a good man receive much of his heavenly felicity from witnessing the growth of the good seed he has planted in living hearts? Why may he not be gladdened, even when singing the song of his own redemption, by seeing that the plans he had devised for the improvement of his fellow-beings are in progress, carried forward by agents whom God has raised up to do their share of the labor in fitting this world for the reign of the just? If my good parents are ever permitted to look down upon the son they have trained so carefully, God grant they may find he has not departed from the way their precepts and example have alike made plain before him.'

There is no opiate, excepting a good conscience, like a good resolution. And Arthur slept soundly that night, and passed the Sabbath in the tranquillity which a spirit resigned to the will of heaven, and yet resolved to do all that earth demands of a rational being,

cannot but enjoy. But one thought would intrude to harass him. His father's death had occurred while Arthur was far away.—He had not heard the parting counsel, the dying benediction. Perhaps his father had, in his last moments, thought of some important suggestion or warning for his son, but there was no ear turned by affection to vibrate at the trembling sound, and catch and interpret the whispered and broken sentence, and so the pale lips were mute.

With such impressions on his mind, Arthur was prepared to read eagerly a letter, directed to himself which he found deposited in his father's desk, purposely, as it appeared, to meet the notice of his son, before beginning the inspection of those papers business would render necessary. I shall give the entire letter, because the character of the father must be understood in order to comprehend the influence which had modelled that of the son.

It is on the very rich and the very poor that domestic example and instruction operate with the most sure and abiding effect.—We find the children of parents in the middling class, removed from the temptation of arrogance on the one hand, and despair on the other, are those who admire and endeavour to imitate the models of goodness and greatness history furnishes, or the world presents. Such may become what is termed self-educated; but this process the very rich think necessary, and the very poor impossible. Therefore, when the early training of these two classes has inclined them to evil, they rarely recover themselves from the contamination. But the letter; it ran thus:—

MY DEAR AND ONLY SON: I informed you in my last letter that my health was declining. I felt even then, though I did not express it, that I should never see you again in this world; still I did not anticipate the rapid progress which my disease has since made. However, I have much cause for thankfulness. I endure little pain, and my mind was never more calm and collected, I have resolved, therefore, to arrange some of my thoughts and reflections for your perusal, knowing that you will prize them as the last expression of your father's love.

I have often endeavoured, in my hours of health, to bring the final scene of my departure from this world vividly before my mind. I have thought I had succeeded. But the near approach to the borders of eternity wonderfully alters the appearance of all earthly things. I often find myself saying, 'What shadows we are, and shadows we pursue!'

Shadows indeed! But it would not be well that the veil should be removed from the eyes of those whose journey of life is, apparently long before them. The duties which prepare us for heaven must be done on earth. It is this moral responsibility which makes the importance of every action we perform. Considered in this light, the example of every rational being is invested with a mighty power for good or evil; and that good is productive of happiness, and evil of misery, we need not the award of the last judgment to convince us. The history of the world, our observation, our conscience, and our reason, all prove that to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before God is the perfection of man's felicity. The great error lies in mistaking our true interest. We separate earth from heaven by an impassible gulf, and in our labors for the body think the spirit's work has no connection. This false philosophy makes us selfish while we are young and superstitious when we are old, and consequence unhappy through life. But these things may be remedied. If the wise man spoke the truth, there is a way in which we should go, and we may be so trained as to walk in it when we are young, and prefer it when we are old.

It has, my son, since you were given me, been the great aim of my life to educate you in such habits and principles as I believe will insure your present and final felicity. When I speak of what I have done, it is with a humble acknowledgment of the mercy and goodness of God who has supported and blessed me; and I would impress it on your heart that Heaven's blessing will descend on every one who seeks it with patience and with prayer. But I do not always have these views. I was not educated as you have been, and it is for the purpose of explaining to you the motives which have governed my conduct towards you that I shall enter into a recital of some incidents, which you may know as facts, but of their consequence you are not aware.

My father, as you have often heard, left a handsome fortune to each of his twelve children; but as he acquired his property late in life by lucky speculations, we are none of us subjected to the temptations of luxury in our childhood. We were all educated to be industrious and prudent, and an uncommon share of these virtues had, as the eldest, been inculcated to me. So that when, in addition to my well-won thrift, the share I received from my father's estate made me a rich man, I felt no disposition to enjoy it in any other mode than to increase it. I did not mean to dudge always in the service of mammon; but I thought I must wait till I was some-

what advanced, before I could retire and live honorably without exertion; but, in the mean time, I would heap pleasure on my family.

Your mother was a lovely, amiable woman whom I had married from affection, and raised to affluence; and she thought, out of gratitude to me, she must be happy as I chose. The only path of felicity before us seemed that of fashion; and so we plunged into all the gayeties of our gay city. And for eight or ten years we lived a life of constant bustle, excitement, show, and apparent mirth. Yet, Arthur, I declare to you I was never satisfied with myself, never contented during the whole time. I do not say I was wretched—that would be too strong an expression—but I was restless. The excitements of pleasure stimulate; they never satisfy. And then there was a constant succession of disagreements, rivalries, and slanders, arising from trifling things; but those whose great business it was to regulate fashionable society contrived to make great matters out of these molehills. Your mother was a sweet tempered woman, forbearing and forgiving, as a true woman should be; but, nevertheless, she used sometimes to be involved in these bickerings, and then what scenes of accusation and explanation must be endured before the matter could be finally settled and harmony restored! and what precious time was wasted on questions of etiquette which, after all, made no individual better, wiser, or happier.

We lived thus nearly ten years, and might have dreamed away our lives in this round of trifling, had not Heaven awakened us by a stroke, severe indeed, but I trust salutary. We had, as you know, Arthur, three children, a son and two daughters. Fashion had never absorbed our souls so as to overpower natural affection. We did love our children most dearly, and every advantage money could purchase had been lavished upon them. They were fair flowers, but, owing to the delicacy of their rearing, very frail. One after the other sickened; the croup was fatal to our little Mary; the measles and the scarlet fever destroyed the others. In six months they were all at peace.

Never never can the feeling of desolation I then experienced be effaced from my heart. A house of mourning had no attraction for our fashionable friends. They pitied, but deserted us; the thought of our wealth only made us more miserable; the splendor which surrounded, seemed to mock us.

'For what purpose,' I frequently asked myself, 'for what purpose had been all my labor? I might heap up, but a stranger would inherit.' My wife was more tranquil, but then her disposition was to be resigned. Still she yielded, I saw, to the gloom of grief, and I feared the consequences. But her mind was differently employed from what I had expected.

She asked me one day if there was no method in which I could employ my wealth to benefit others.

I enquired what she meant.

'I am weary,' said she, 'of the pomp of wealth. It is nothingness; or worse, it is a snare. I feel that our children have been taken from the temptations of the world, which we were drawing around them. There is surely, my husband, some object more worthy the time and heart of Christians than this pursuit of pleasure.'

These observations may seem only the commonplace remarks of a saddened spirit; but to me they were words fitly spoken. They opened a commune of sentiment between us, such as we had never before enjoyed. I had often felt the vanity of our fashionable life, but thought my wife was happier for the display, and that it would be cruel for me to deprive her of amusements I could so well afford, and which she so gracefully adorned.—And I did not see what better use to make of my riches. But the spell of the world was broken when we began to reason together of its folly, and strengthen each other to resist its enticements.

Man is sovereign of the world; but a virtuous woman is the crown of her husband; and this proverb was doubtless intended to teach us that the highest excellences of the human character, in either sex, are attainable only by the aid of each other.

I could fill a volume with our conversations on these subjects; but the result is the most important; we resolved to make the aim of doing good the governing principle of our lives and conduct.

And these resolutions, by the blessing of God, we were enabled, in a measure, to fulfil. Our fashionable friends ascribed the alteration in our habits and manners to melancholy for the loss of our children; but it was a course entered on with the firm conviction of its superior advantages both of improvement and happiness. We realize more than we anticipated. There is a delight in the exertion of our benevolent faculties which seems nearly allied to the joy of the angels in heaven—for these are ministering spirits. And this felicity the rich may command.

In a few years after we had entered on our new mode of life, you, my son, was bestowed to crown our blessings. We felt that the

precious trust was a trial of our faith. To have an heir to our fortune was a temptation to selfishness; to have an heir to our name was a chord to draw us again into the vortex of the world. But we did not look back. We resolved to train you to enjoy active habits and benevolent pleasures. It was for this purpose I used to take you, when a little child, with me to visit the poor, permitting you to give the money you had earned of me by feats of strength and dexterity to those you thought needed it. And when you grew larger you recollect, probably, how steadily you would work in the shop, with your little tools, finishing any boxes, &c., that your mother or I paid you for at stated prices, which money you appropriated to the support of the families in — Street. By these means we gave you a motive for exertions which improved your health and made you happy, and we gave you, also, an opportunity of taking thought for others, and enjoying the pleasure of relieving the destitute. The love for our fellow-beings, like all other feelings, must be formed by the wish, and improved by the habit of doing them good. We never paid you for mental efforts or moral virtues, because we thought these should find their reward in the pleasure improvement communicated to your own heart and mind, aided by our caresses and commendations which testified the pleasure your conduct gave us.

Thus you see, my son, that in all the restrictions we imposed, and indulgences we permitted, it was our grand object to make you a good, intelligent, useful and happy man. We endeavored to make wisdom's ways those of pleasantness to you; and I feel confident that the course your parents have marked will be followed by you as far as your conscience and reason shall approve.

You will find yourself what the world calls rich. To human calculation, had I rigidly sought my own interest in all my business, I should have left you a much larger fortune. But who knows that the blessing which has crowned all my enterprises would not have been withdrawn had such selfish policy governed me? I thank my Saviour that I was inspired with a wish to serve my fellow-men. And my greatest regret now rises from the reflection that with such means I have done so little good. Endeavor, my son, to exceed your father in righteousness. The earth is the Lord's; consider yourself only as the steward over the portion he has assigned you. Enter into business, not to add to your stores of wealth, but as the best means of making that wealth useful to the cause of human improvement. And let the honorable acquisition and the generous distribution go on together. The man, whose heart of marble must be smitten by the rod of death before a stream of charity can gush forth, deserves little respect from the living. To give what we can no longer enjoy is not charity; that heavenly virtue is only practised by those who enjoy what they give.

I do not undervalue charitable bequests. These may be of great public utility; and, when they harmonize with the example of the testators, they deserve grateful acknowledgement and everlasting remembrance. But I cannot commend as a model the character of a man who has been exclusively devoted all his life to amassing property, because he acquires the means of leaving a large charitable donation at his decease. This seems to be making virtue a panacea rather than a pleasure.

I wish you, my son, to frame for yourself a system of conduct, founded on the rational as well as religious principle of doing to others as you would they should do unto you; and then your life as well as death will be a public blessing. Another great advantage will be, you can hold on your consistent, Christian course to the end. You need never retire from business in order to enjoy yourself. But I must shorten that I would wish to say were my own strength greater, or my confidence in your character less firm. There is one other subject to which I must refer.

Your dear mother, as you well know, adopted Ellen Grey, and intended to educate the girl in every respect like a child. After your mother's death, I placed the child under the care of Mrs. C., where she has ever since remained. You know but little of Ellen, for you entered college soon after she came to our house, and have been mostly absent since, but when you return it will be necessary you should, as her guardian and the only friend she has a claim upon, become acquainted with her. She is now at the winning age of seventeen, and very lovely in person and disposition; one that I should be proud to call my daughter.

Her mother was the dear friend of your mother, and that circumstance, which first induced us to take the orphan, joined with her own sweetness and affectionate gratitude, has deeply endeared her to me. And now when I am gone, she will feel her loneliness, for she has no blood relation in the world. You, Arthur, will have a delicate part to act as the son of her benefactor, and the person whom in the singleness and simplicity of her pure heart she will think she has a right to confide in, to preserve that just method of kindness and dignity which will satisfy her