

THE LESSON HE LEARNED

Mr. Jack Connyngham, aged forty-five, and his nephew, Jack Connyngham, twenty years younger, lived in Washington City.

They belonged to the same club, and, in spite of the difference in their ages, went in the same set. How it came to pass that the elder man was not called "Old Connyngham," and the other "Young Connyngham," is not known. But it was a singular fact that the uncle retained the prefix "mister" that had been attached to his name for so many years, even after the nephew had grown to man's estate and might also lay claim to it. He was simply called Jack Connyngham. This rule was generally adhered to. Had there been no exception to it, we should have no tale to tell.

Angela Morningstar was a beautiful girl, accomplished and bright, the only child of indulgent parents; she was much sought after. Jack Connyngham was foremost in her train of admirers; but although Angela was kinder to him than to any of the others, he yet lacked courage to risk a possible rejection. He felt ashamed of his indecision, and at last resolved to know his fate at the earliest opportunity. Two days after this determination the British Minister and his family gave their annual ball.

Jack attended, hoping to find his divinity there, and he was able to tell his love in the mazes of the waltz or in some propitious nook in conservatory or *l'ete-a-ete* room. It was late when he arrived, and he looked anxiously around for his lady love. He discovered her quite at the end of the room, conversing animatedly with his Uncle Jack. He started leisurely towards them, but the crowd was large, and it was several minutes before he could reach the corner they were ensconced in.

In the meantime, Mr. Jack Connyngham and Miss Morningstar were talking. "The decorations are extremely lovely tonight," said the lady, glancing as she spoke at a mass of gorgeous blossoms near her. "The roses are simply superb."

"But see those orchids, Miss Angela; did you ever see beauty more fully developed in a flower, though?"

Miss Morningstar was silent for a moment, then, evidently yielding to an impulse, turned to her companion and said: "I'm ashamed to confess it, Mr. Connyngham, but I actually do not care for them."

Mr. Connyngham was shocked. He had an unbounded admiration for orchids, and thought everyone else should see their beauties. Desiring to make this charming girl a convert to his views, he said, leaning towards her, in his zealous way: "Why, my dear Miss Angela, do you know I positively adore Morningstar, but this is our waltz," interrupted a distinguished attaché of the legation, and Angela, with a graceful adieu, glided away from him, and Mr. Connyngham lost his chance of telling her why he adored—orchids.

Jack reached his uncle's side just as the young couple disappeared. He walked about, vexed at himself for missing his chance, until the evolutions of the dance brought Angela almost to his side as the last strains of the music died away.

Going up to her he offered her his arm and led her to the conservatory. There, amid the sweet odors of the flowers and the silvery tinkle of the fountain, Jack fondly imagined his tale of love could be easily told.

Not so! The glowing words of the speech he had so carefully composed forsook his tongue. He sat by Angela's side for some moments, talking of indifferent things, trying in vain to recall them. At last, in despair he spoke:

"Miss Angela, you know I adore you! Can't you love me a little, and—marry me, Angela?"

"I have found you at last, after a fearful hunt, Miss Morningstar," broke in a joyous voice, and the tall form of one of Jack's friends loomed up before them.

Until now Jack had counted Frederick Trewayne a prince of good fellows.

"Confound the man!" he muttered beneath his breath; then turned to Angela, who, though inwardly annoyed, had managed to put on a smiling face.

As she rose, Jack rose, too, determined to say something more.

"Ah! Miss Angela, that little matter we were discussing, you know. Would you kindly drop me a note at the club in the morning, telling me what you will do?"

Angela was almost convulsed with mirth at Jack's confused manner, but she loved him and intended to make him happy. Repressing her mirth, she promised to send the note, and passed out of the conservatory with Frederick Trewayne, leaving Jack to cast imprecations on that "confounded idiot!"

Miss Morningstar's chaperon was taken ill, and they left the ball early. Jack heard the unwelcome news while searching for her in hopes of continuing their interesting conversation. He had to content himself with the thought of her note in the morning.

It was late that night when he fell asleep; as a consequence, he did not wake until quite late the next day. His first waking thought was of Angela's letter awaiting for him at the club.

Dressing hastily, he rushed off to get it. It was now noon. The winter sun was shining brightly, the sky was blue, and Jack's heart felt happy and light as he hurried into the club-house.

"My mail, please," Billings, he said, going up to the old servant.

"Nothing for you this morning, sir," said the old fellow, with a shake of the head.

"What! Nothing! Are you quite positive, Billings?"

Yes, Billings was quite positive.

Jack sank in a chair in a dark corner of the room and tried to think. Suddenly the thought flashed over him that Angela's silence meant a refusal. She intended to refuse him, after all, and could not bring herself to write the unkind words. He had been deceived. She did not love him.

Then came a wild desire to get away—away from his thoughts, from all that might remind him of her. Acting on a hasty impulse he sat down and scribbled a note to his uncle:

"Gone to New York. Wire me at the Fifth Avenue if wanted. JACK."

Then, calling a cab, he drove to the station just in time to catch the New York train. Thirty minutes later, when his uncle arrived at the club and found his

message, he almost tore his hair in desperation.

Jack's train was not wrecked, as he in his wretched state of mind almost hoped it might be. He reached New York safely, and, worn out by his emotions, went to bed and slept a dreamless sleep.

When he awoke there was a telegram awaiting him. It was characteristic of Mr. Jack Connyngham that the "message" contained only three words:

"Come home instantly."

There was something new to think of. The telegram gave vast scope for imagination.

Jack was able to catch the early morning train, and reached Washington a few hours later. He was met by his uncle, who drove him to the club, remarking that they could talk while they lunched.

After freshening himself up, Jack sat down and waited impatiently. He felt instinctively that Angela was concerned in the matter.

The elder gentleman seemed to have a hesitancy about beginning. Finally he spoke abruptly:

"Five thousand dollars is a neat little sum, isn't it, Jack? It shall be yours, my boy, if—dropping his voice to a confidential whisper—"if you will take a charming girl off my hands."

Jack stared in amazement, unable to speak.

"She's everything that's sweet, good, lovely, and every way desirable," he continued, in nervous haste. "But you know, Jack, I would not marry for all the gold in the world."

In spite of his wretched feelings, Jack burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter. His uncle looked the picture of woe and anxiety as he told his story.

He waited until Jack had subdued his ill-timed mirth, then continued:—

"You see, Jack, at the ball Tuesday night I was talking with Miss—well, we won't mention names yet—and we spoke of orchids; she said she didn't care for orchids."

"You know my weakness for orchids. I wanted to make a convert of her. I leaned over her, alas! I fear too devotedly, and said, 'My dear Miss—, I positively adore—' and before I could finish and say what I adored, an idiotic attaché came up and took her away. Don't laugh, old fellow; it's turned out pretty serious business. Yesterday morning I received a note from her saying she accepted my interrupted offer, had loved me a long while, and called me 'Dear Jack.' Do you understand? She thought I meant I adored her instead of orchids. Angela Morningstar has always been a great favorite of mine, but she is too progressive; possesses too much imagination."

At Angela's name Jack started, and a light began to dawn upon him.

"Let me see the letter, uncle," he said; and it was handed to him.

Scanning it eagerly, Jack saw with joy that it was his longed-for letter. A mischievous late had tossed into his uncle's unwilling hands. With subdued emotion he read the sweet words Angela had penned for his eyes alone. His heart bounded with joy, but he repressed his feelings and put the letter absent-mindedly into his own pocket. Then turning to his distressed relative he said:

"I'll do my best, Uncle Jack, to help you out. Today's sun shall not set before I offer myself to Miss Morningstar and endeavor—to take her off your hands."

"Remember the five thousand," called the elder man, as a further incentive, as his nephew stepped out of the door and walked with a firm, rapid step in the direction of the Morningstar residence.

Miss Morningstar entered the reception-room in a dignified and stately manner. Jack rose eagerly to greet her. Giving a distant inclination of her lovely head, she ignored his extended hand.

"Angela," cried Jack, in tones of deepest reproach, "what does this mean? Why do you meet me in this manner?"

"It means," said Angela, coolly, "that I accept your offer, and gave you permission to come last evening and talk it over. I waited, but you did not come. This evening you put in a tardy appearance. Have you anything further to say to me, Mr. Jack Connyngham?"

At her last words Jack actually laughed. Miss Morningstar drew herself up to her full height and started to leave the room. In a moment Jack was upon his knees before her, explaining:—

"You see, darling, Uncle Jack is 'Mr. Jack Connyngham' to everybody; I'm only Jack."

Then as rapidly as possible he told the history of his disappointment and despair when the letter failed to come; of his hasty trip to New York and of his recall, to find that his precious letter had been given to his uncle. Before he was through, Angela's coolness had quite thawed, and Jack was in possession of her hands.

"So you are only Jack, are you?" she asked. "Ah, well, it's only Jack I want, you know. But in spite of your uncle I shall be Mrs. Jack Connyngham, after all," she said, with a wistful toss of her pretty head.

When Jack returned to the club his uncle was still there. He came up to him, and his eyes asked the question his lips dared not ask.

"Oh, it's all right, uncle," announced Jack, joyously. I have Miss Morningstar's promise that she will be my wife."

"God bless you, Jack! You are a noble, self-sacrificing gentleman," cried Mr. Connyngham, as he dropped into a chair with a long sigh of relief.

Drawing out his check-book he began to write the promised cheque. There was an air of lightheartedness about him that Jack had never before seen.

When the pen was dipped in the ink Jack interposed:

"I guess you'd better not write that cheque, uncle. The fact is, it's due to Angela to tell you that the letter was never intended for you. I was proposing to her that night at the ball, when we were interrupted. She promised to send me her answer at the club. Old Billings gave the letter to you. You didn't want it, but I was wild when I thought she had not written. Now, uncle, I absolve you from your promise."

It took several minutes for Mr. Jack Connyngham to recover from his astonishment. Then he took up the pen he had dropped and wrote the cheque as he had intended.

"It will help you to build the new home, dear boy," he said, handing it to Jack. "Take it, with my blessing. I ought to have had more sense than to suppose that a beautiful young girl as your Angela

would look at an ugly old fellow like myself when a charming young man like yourself was at her feet."

Jack and Angela were happy.

Mr. Jack Connyngham, confirmed old bachelor as he was, was happy, too. He had learned a valuable lesson.

It was, never to say anything to a maiden, old or young, that could possibly be construed into a proposal of marriage.

THE PERSONAL EQUATION.

Allowance for Every Person's Error in All Things that He Sees.

It was discovered many years ago that if two or any greater number of people undertake to note the same, incident at the same time they will not agree upon the exact moment when the occurrence took place. Astronomers, in whose observations the greatest accuracy obtainable is usually desirable, have studied this question, and generally agree to fix the precise moment of an occurrence by taking the meantime noted by a number of observers, and to this difference in the noting of time they have given the name of personal equation. The difference proceeds, of course, from physical and mental characteristics, one man being able to think and act with much more rapidity than another.

If we extend the idea of the personal equation and apply it to other matters besides scientific research and observation, it will tend to clear up many of the perplexing questions which are so common in the domain of philosophy, religion, and ethics.

We often think it very strange that one with whom we are discussing some proposition should not be able at once to reach the conclusion at which we have already arrived, or, on the other hand, that he should outstrip us and come to a decision with a quickness which we deem unbecoming and necessarily incorrect, and yet it is only a matter of the personal equation.

There are people who are quick in everything, just as there are others who are slow in everything. There are men and women who walk fast, and, for all we know, may sleep fast, while there are others for whom there never seem to be hours enough in the week for them to accomplish anything. The singular feature of this difference is that the slow people pride themselves on their slowness, supporting their way of doing things with all sorts of wise saws and modern instances, and regarding with pity if not with scorn those who are quicker than themselves. They bring to their aid all the dusty old proverbs imaginable, not caring to remember that most of them must have been devised by slow people, not as general rules, but purely as excuses for their slowness.

In questions of morals, not to say of theology, the personal equation plays an important part. There being no absolute standard of ethics, the relation must be a purely subjective one, and whether a certain thing be right or wrong must often depend on the way in which it is regarded. Just as beauty is in the eye of the observer, so the more delicate shades of ethical questions must depend on the temperament or conscience of those who are called upon to pass judgement on them. It is very much the same in theology. The dispute between Luther and Melancthon grew out of one phase of the personal equation. Luther was unable to translate "Hoc est corpus meum" in any way except literally, "This is my body," while Melancthon, with equal sincerity and devotion to the same cause, found in the phrase the figurative and symbolical meaning in which it is generally used by the protestants of the present day.

The personal equation exists universally, and always will, and we must recognize it as contentedly as we do the attraction of gravitation. Of course nothing can ever drive out of our heads the idea that we are right and the other fellow wrong; but if we concede the existence of the personal equation we may be able to look with some measure of charity upon his errors, and attribute his obstinacy, not to stupidity of ill-temper, but to something of which he may not be conscious or cannot control if he is.—*San Francisco Chronicle*.

MARCHING SONGS.

The first singers of most of these were the adventures of the Middle Ages, the free lances, whose wild life breaks out in them. If they sang of their battles it is sometimes to some old air, which is sometimes to be found with strangely different words and refrain, set to some curious song of the provinces. Many curious military traditions are preserved in these songs made by the soldiers themselves; the best collection of them, it seems, is M. Leroux de Lincy's "Recueil des Chants Historiques Français."

As the centuries pass on the tone becomes more easy, more good-humored; the music is as much country dance as march. Till the revolution, when "The Marseillaise," of course, drove everything else out of the field, French soldiers went to their campaigns singing to the tune of "La Mère Michel a perdu son chat." After the revolution, which certainly, whatever it may have done for France, has not added to her outward joy, a plaintive tone comes in with the songs of the conscripts. A few of them, but difficult to find, date back to the levees of 1793; most of them are traceable to the

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First Empire, and are still popular in the provinces.

"Is etion faiseux de bas; Et c'est heure, ils sent soldats."

M. Tiersot finds in them a "ton melange de melancolie pastorale et de gouaille soldatesque." This same gouaille, or humor gauloise, exists plentifully to this day in the marching songs of the French army, made, it seems, on every subject under the sun. In many regiments now, however, silence while marching is compulsory, and in this way it is likely that a whole series of popular songs will die out and be forgotten.—*The Contemporary Review*.

POPULAR FALLACIES.

That it is a crime to laugh at an old joke.

That all veils covers a multitude of treckles.

That authorship is the sweetest sort of fame.

That every fool knows how to swear properly.

That police court judges write for the comic papers.

That marriage brokers charge the legal rate of interest.

That the study of aesthetics is a sure road to happiness.

That the modern Sunday newspaper is a liberal education.

That men hide themselves in garrets to read realistic novels.

That it is better to be a cornet player than an habitual snorer.

That there's more music in a cracked violin than in a buzz saw.

That the principles of Delsarte are followed in club gymnasiums.

That any sort of coal burns with as much vigor as a rejected poem.

That young ladies play billiards in order to learn the art of osculation.

That modern pugilism resembles the combats of ancient Greece and Rome.

That it is better to be the author of a nation's songs than a lawyer in good practice.

That it is right for a man to fight for his dog when he wouldn't turn on his heel in his wife's defense.

Charley and his Cycle.

Charley had a safety cycle, Its wheels were in a row, And everywhere the front wheel went, The back was sure to go.

It followed o'er a thorny hedge, And down a steep, steep bank; A splendid "header" Charley took Into some nettles rank.

At length a bumpkin hailed him out, The safety liner near; But now the back wheel was in front, The front wheel in the rear.

"What makes the wheel 'wobble' so?" Poor Charley did enquire; "It's knocked the wind, sir, out of you And that pneumatic tire."

Extracts from Letters:

One says:—"I would not be without your Wine of Rennet in the house for double its price. I can make a delicious dessert for my husband, which he enjoys after dinner, and which I believe has at the same time cured his dyspepsia."

Another says:—"Nothing makes one's dinner pass off more pleasantly than to have nice little dishes which are easily digested. Eagar's Wine of Rennet has enabled my cook to put three extra dishes on the table with which I puzzle my friends."

Another says:—"I am a hearty eater, but as my work is mostly mental, and as I find it impossible to take muscular exercise, I naturally suffer distress after a heavy dinner; but since Mrs. — has been giving me a dish made from your Wine of Rennet over which she puts sometimes one, sometimes another sauce, I do not suffer at all, and I am almost inclined to give your Rennet the credit for it, and I must say for it that it is simply GORGEOUS as a dessert."

Another says:—"I have used your Wine of Rennet for my children and find it to be the only preparation which will keep them in health. I have also sent it to friends in Baltimore, and they say that it enables their children to digest their food, and save them from those summer stomach troubles so prevalent and fatal in that climate."

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UNTIL further notice the steamers of this company will leave St. John for Eastport, Portland and Boston every Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 7:25 a.m. Retaining will leave Boston same days at 8:30 a.m., and Portland at 5 p.m., for Eastport and St. John.

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After June 27, Trains leave St. John, Standard Time, for Halifax and Campbellton, 1:00; for Point du Chene, 10:30; for Halifax, 11:00; for Sussex, 10:45; for Quebec and Montreal, 12:10.

Will arrive at St. John from Sussex, 8:30; from Quebec and Montreal (excepted Monday), 3:55; from Point du Chene, 12:40; from Halifax, 1:30 from Halifax, 3:45.

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