

MRS. HASLOP'S WILL.

"To put the matter plainly, Polly, it's come to this: Your mother must go. Upon that point I'm determined."

Jack Hadley saw the tears come into his wife's eyes as he spoke, but it had taken him too long to screw himself up to his present attitude to be likely shaken from it, now it was reached. Therefore, he pretended not to notice her, and went on:

"You see how things stand. It is just three years since I made you my wife, and took you down to Bignor for that little wedding trip we both enjoyed so much. When, on our return from that all-too-short honeymoon, your mother proposed to me to spend a little time with us, I, for my part, must admit—although somewhat averse to the principle of the thing—did not raise any objection to the proceeding, for, as we were necessarily new to the responsibilities of housekeeping, and were making a fresh start in life, I deemed the experience of an older hand an advantage to us both, and thought that you, Polly, in particular, would be glad to avail yourself of a mother's help in those domestic concerns which form such a large item in a young married woman's affairs."

He paused, momentarily, relieved at having thus far safely delivered himself of a speech that had taken much time to put together. His wife remained silent, and he continued:

"But when it came to weeks, and then months, and your mother gave no indications of returning to the maternal abode, I began to consider if we were not having too much of a good thing, and whether it would not be better for us both if we could be left to ourselves and make the attempt to walk alone. This I have delicately suggested to your parents on several occasions, but she has refused to take the hint, and now, as I say, it has come to this: that she must be told to go."

"You see, Polly," Jack went on, "your mother's not exactly an ordinary person. She's not content to adopt the attitude of a visitor, and take a back seat. On the contrary, she keeps herself continually in the front, and even effects to rule. In truth, she does rule, for nothing is allowed to be done in this house unless her approval has been first obtained. If a new carpet is to be bought, your mother chooses the material. When the walls want repapering, it is she who selects the pattern. A picture cannot be hung without her first being consulted as to the position; and even in the preparing of the daily dinner, your mother's tastes and wishes always have the first consideration."

"I've had just about enough of it," he concluded, with a bit of unstudied candour, and the thing must stop. As the old lady doesn't seem inclined to leave of her own free will, and refuses to take a gentle hint, she must be told to go in language that she cannot misunderstand."

"Then you must tell her," sobbed Polly. "For I cannot. It would break my heart." Jack had hoped that the disagreeable task might be undertaken by his wife, who, with her natural womanly tact, would, he thought, be able to manage the affair a little more skilfully than he could hope to do; but, having put his hand to the plough, he was not going to turn back.

"Very well, then, Polly," he said, airily. "I'll tell her myself to-morrow, whatever the consequences."

"Mother-in-law," said Jack, the next day, having found his opportunity. "I've got something particular to say, affecting yourself."

"Affecting me?" ejaculated the old lady, adjusting her spectacles in a neat little simulation of surprise. "Go on, my dear John; I'm all attention."

"I've—well, I've, your daughter Polly and I—have now been married three years."

"Three years!" broke in the old lady. "Dear me! How the time flies! It hardly seems three months! Well?"

Jack didn't altogether like that. "Well?" but seeing a chance of striking a hot iron, went for it at once.

"It is three years, though," he said, and you, mother-in-law, have lived with us all the time."

"Ah, yes, John, so I have," said the old lady, blandly.

"And I—well, that is—have come to the conclusion that—that we should now like to—live alone."

The old lady straightened herself up briskly.

"Oh, John Hadley," she said, stiffly, "I see what you mean. You want to turn me out of doors; is that it?"

"Not exactly that," put in Jack, deprecatingly. "We should never, of course, think of turning you out; but we certainly ventured to hope that you would probably see your way to living at your own home in the future, as you doubt your own ability to do."

"I quite understand, Mr. John Hadley," returned the mother-in-law, freely. "It's just the same thing. I'm not a fool, and can put two and two together. Very well, it shall be as you wish—I will go to-day!"

"There is no need for such great haste," said Jack, mildly. "A week, or two, or three, would give you time to arrange your plans, and would quite suit ours."

"Enough; I go at once," said the old lady, moving towards the door, as if prepared to act instantly. "One word before I leave," she said, pausing at the threshold, and speakingly majestically. "You said 'we.' Do understand that my daughter is a party to this little proceeding?"

"Your daughter, Mrs. Haslop," said Jack, stung into a commanding tone by the dignified demeanour of the old lady, "is my wife, and, as such, her first duty lies to her husband. Consequently, anything done by me or at my wish is equally her act."

"Thank you!" said the old lady, bowing herself out of the room.

Jack Hadley was surprised, but not altogether delighted, at the easy victory he had achieved. He had anticipated opposition, and was almost disappointed at finding none. However, all's well that ends well, and he successfully accomplished his purpose, for Polly's mother true to her word, made a speedy exit from the house.

At first Jack and his wife missed the old lady greatly, for she had always been much in evidence. In fact, so lonely and solemn did the house now seem without her that Jack sometimes almost wished she hadn't gone; and as for Polly, she had many a good cry all to herself over the affair. As her husband, however, now made a point

of spending less time at his club and more at home in her society, she could not help becoming reconciled to her loss. So, as the lonely feeling gradually wore off, and the young couple got used to the new order of things, Jack Hadley at length congratulated himself on having done the right thing at last.

Some three months later, when Jack was returning from business one day, he was met by his wife, whose swollen eyes told of something amiss.

"I have sad news to tell," she said, bursting into tears. "Mother has been taken suddenly ill, and is dead. My poor mother!"

Jack at once set about assuaging his wife's grief. When she had sufficiently recovered, she imparted another bit of news, by far more important from his point of view.

"They tell me she died rich; worth three thousand pounds, in fact."

"Three thousand pounds!" echoed Jack, in amazement. Well, I'm blessed! Who'd have thought it? Why, I didn't know she had three thousand pounds!"

"Nor I," added Polly.

"Three thousand pounds!" repeated Jack thoughtfully. "And you're the only child, aren't you, Polly? You know," he went on, after a pause, "I don't much like that drawing-room carpet of ours; do you? It's a laded pattern, and not a nice one; we want a new one badly, and a better. These curtains, too, are not at all up to the mark, to my way of thinking. And there's the dining-room suite; I'm sure it begins to look quite shabby. Don't you think so?"

And on, Polly, as I was passing Streeter's, the other day, I saw a lovely little diamond brooch, which I should certainly have bought you had I been able to afford it. It's only fifteen guineas, and would suit you admirably. Now, don't you fret about your mother, dear. It's what we must all expect—when we're old, you know. And take care that all the funeral arrangements are done decently and in order. I would never have it rest on my head that the dear old creature wasn't comfortably carried to the grave. Three thousand pounds! And Polly's the only child!"

The last sentence was not intended for his wife's ears, but she heard it, and it made her smile despite her grief.

When the funeral was over, Jack Hadley found himself one of a very small company gathered together in a little room, the most conspicuous object in which was a tussy lawyer, seated at a table with two open documents spread out before him.

"This," said the man of law, coming at once to business, and holding up one of the papers, "is the last will and testament of the deceased Sarah Juliana Haslop, widow. It bears date, April 3rd, 1881."

"A week before she left us," murmured Jack, under his breath.

"—and runs as follows," continued the lawyer. "I hereby give and bequeath to my son-in-law, John Hadley, and my daughter Marianne, his wife, the sum of £3,000 sterling now standing to my credit at the Bank of England, with power to use and employ the same for their mutual benefit."

"The dear old soul!" exclaimed Jack, only restrained by an innate sense of propriety from shying his hat to the ceiling.

"And this," said the representative of red tape, taking up document No. 2, "is a codicil, executed exactly fourteen days later—"

"A week after she left us," gasped Jack. "It is not of great length, and runs as follows: 'I hereby cancel and revoke all my former wills whenever and wherever made, and substitute therefor this final expression of my intentions. To my daughter, Marianne Hadley, I give and bequeath the sum of £10 sterling, to enable her to buy suitable mourning to wear at my disease; to my son-in-law, John Hadley, her husband, in consideration of his kindness to me in turning me out of his house at a time when I had thoughts of leaving on my own account, I make a present of £1, in current coin of the realm; and the whole of the residue of my property, howsoever acquired, I bequeath to the governors of Guy's Hospital, in London, to form a fund to be applied to the special care and treatment of afflicted mothers-in-law.'"

"The spiteful old cat!" growled Jack, between his teeth. "May she—!" He checked himself, and taking up his hat sorrowfully walked homewards, a "sadder and a wiser man."

Years have passed since then, and Jack Hadley, amongst other things, has developed an inveterate and irremediable taciturnity, but if anyone wishes to "draw" him effectually for the nonce, it is only necessary to mention the subject of mothers-in-law in general and his own in particular.

Curious Claim For Compensation.

A novel claim is being made upon one of the great French railway companies. A gentleman who came to Paris to have the body of his brother cremated took the ashes away in a handbag, and, previous to setting out on his return journey, deposited the bag at the "consigne," or cloak-room, of the railway station. When he came back to claim it, he found that it had been given to some other person in mistake and it could not be discovered. The gentleman has, therefore, brought an action to recover damages for the loss he has sustained, and the judges will be called upon to decide what is the money value of a brother's ashes.

Regard for Appearances.

An old man once visited his daughter, who had antinacassars on the backs of all her chairs. While he was sitting by the window, he spied the minister coming to visit Jean. As the latter went to the door her father, not being accustomed to such finery, snatched all the antinacassars off the chair and hurriedly threw them under the bed.

After the minister had gone John said to Jean—

"Ay, Jean, I was glad I was able to get all yer washing out of the way before the parson came in."

Talmage on Bicycling.

Dr. Talmage in his sermon at the Academy of Music, New York, on Sunday, declared that to get the soul right requires not only spiritual but physical exercise. He recommends the gymnasium, the dumbbells, the bicycle, "as the doctor declares, 'one sits upright, for as the machine is now used it is by degrees bringing us back to all fours.'"

A LIVING MADE WITH THE NOSE.

Hundreds of Barrels are Daily Smelt by the Professional Smeller.

There are many trades and professions in which well-developed organs of sense are more or less essential. A perfect sight must be possessed by the engineer-driver and signaller; a delicate sense of touch characterizes the expert type writer and pianist; and a sensitive palate is indispensable to the tea-taster. But it is less frequent to hear of lucrative employment being obtained by persons possessing an unusual keen sense of smell. Nevertheless, the professional "smeller" does exist, and performs very useful functions. Any person visiting the barrel-cleaning department of one of our large breweries may find him busy at work, applying his nose to the bung-hole of barrel after barrel.

It is necessary that every barrel before being filled should be perfectly free from the moulds which always make their appearance in those returned from the consumer; as even minute quantities of these growths would cause the beer or stout to turn sour. The barrels are cleaned by placing a quantity of hot water in them, together with a spiked iron chain; after which they are caused to rotate in a peculiar manner by special machinery, the motion shaking the iron chain into every corner. After this effectual scouring they are rinsed out and steamed for some time, to destroy any moulds present; and are then passed out to the "smellers." These men, who have the benefit of experience in addition to their delicate sense of smell, can immediately detect the presence of the least quantity of any injurious growths that would spoil the liquor. If the barrels are judged by the "smeller" to be perfectly clean, he passes them on to be filled; if the reverse, they are returned to be re-steamed.

Hundreds of barrels thus pass through the hands and under the nose of the "smeller" in a day; a small breathing interval between each one being necessary to prevent the olfactory organs from losing their penetrative power.

Of all positions connected with a brewery that of the "smeller" is one of the most difficult to fill satisfactorily. As a good man saves a large sum for the brewer by insuring that no liquor shall go wrong in the barrels, his wages are justly higher than those of the other workmen. His nose is indeed his fortune.

TWO STORIES: ONE OLD, ONE NEW.

I'll tell you a story; and because it is old I'll put it short.

There was a man under sentence of death for crime. Certain doctors wanted to find out whether a man could be killed solely by the force of his imagination. So, by consent of the authorities, they tried an experiment on him. They told him they were going to bleed him to death. They bandaged his eyes and pricked his arm with a lancet, without opening a vein. Then they let water run into a vessel through a small tube, so the man could hear it. They "made believe" (as the children say) that it was blood, and commented on it, and talked about it on their pose for him to hear them. They kept the operation going on until the poor fellow fainted away and presently died. It was a diabolical outrage; quite as bad as hanging. Yet it settled the question.

One of those very doctors studied the nature of his own body so hard that he went off his head over it. He got fancying he was made of glass, and didn't dare to stir lest he should break all to pieces. Served him right.

Thus we see that it isn't good to know too much. Yet absolute ignorance of how these marvellous bodies of ours are put together is worse still. You needn't be booked up in all the details of making watches, but you ought to understand how to take care of a watch.

Here is a sentence from a medical book written by a famous doctor: "We should keep steadily in mind," he says, "the truth that digestion is the one great process of life; that it begins in the mouth and stomach, and continues elsewhere until the food has reached its destination."

Truly, we should avoid a lot of costly mistakes if we understood this as thoroughly as he does. In that case Mrs. Edna Drake's friends would not have said to her, "You have a churchyard cough," meaning that, in their opinion, she was dying of consumption.

It seems that this lady had suffered more or less from biliousness for about sixteen years. As this was what we may call a physical habit with her, she paid no especial attention to it. Hosts of people go halting along that way until the inevitable crisis comes; then they wonder what the matter is. In December, 1891, it was, that Mrs. Drake broke down, as we may say. She felt weak, low, and dejected. Her appetite left her, and after the simplest meal she suffered intensely from pain in the chest and sides.

"No food that I took," she says. "No food that I took, and I grew weaker every day."

Of course, "We should expect that. Coals won't warm a room unless they burn; food won't give strength unless it is digested."

Mrs. Drake continues: "I had a constant gnawing, grinding pain in the pit of the stomach, also pains in the back, and trouble with the kidneys. Later, I was taken with a deep, hollow cough, most distressing to hear, and which my friends said was a churchyard cough. I feared this was the case, as two of my sisters died of consumption at my age. No medical treatment gave me any relief, and I suffered and grew feebler month after month."

"At last my husband persuaded me to try Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup, his mother—Mrs. Drake, of Barton Mills, Milderhall—having been benefited by it. I procured the medicine from Messrs. Walton, Hassel and Port's stores in Mare street, and began taking it. After a few doses I felt better, and after three weeks the cough and other troubles disappeared, and I gained strength daily. I am now as well as ever. Yours truly (signed), Edna Drake, 38, North street, Hackney, London, E., September 17th, 1892."

What a pity it is that any one should suffer so much and so long from a complaint which in the end proves to be so easily curable. This comes through a mistake as to its character. There was

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no organic affection of this lady's lungs whatever. Her cough, had it as it was, was merely one of the numerous symptoms of her real disease—indigestion and dyspepsia.

Hundreds of cases like it are brought to our attention, people fancying they have all sorts of complaints but the real and only one. Let this fact teach us wisdom. Whatever the ailment seems to be, it is probably indigestion (the source of most of our ills) and the remedy, we need hardly say, is Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup.

Another Paderewski Story.

When Paderewski arrived at Clifton a week or so ago, he found a letter waiting for him asking whether his time would allow him to "play one piece during the afternoon" to an invalid lady whose health precluded her from going to any crowded concert-room, and offered half a guinea reward. Paderewski appointed a meeting at his hotel. At the moment the lady appeared, Paderewski, after greeting her, took his place at the piano and played for her six or seven a prelude and a nocturne of Chopin, and "Songs Without Words."

When the little impromptu concert was finished the lady rose, thanked the virtuoso, and as she extended her hand to bid him adieu, slipped the promised half-guinea, in the most gracious mode of tip-giving, in to his palm.

"Ah! what is this?" blandly asked the pianist.

"The half-guinea, I promised you."

"I really believe," he answered with a smile, "that I shall be able to get to the next town without it."

Saying which Paderewski returned the proffered coin, bowed the lady out, and sat down to his interrupted meal.

Hints for Sickly-looking Women.

The other day a celebrated physician thus summed up the cause of many women looking sickly: Eating between meals, too much tea, too many sweets, unventilated bedrooms, tight waistbands, suspenders, gloves, and shoes, and, of course, tight corsets; also, insufficient exercise. And he added: "I believe that women who dwell in lodgings suffer from the effects of ill-kept rooms. Living in an accumulation of dust and a general dustiness is unquestionably injurious to health."

Ropes instead of Bands.

One of the most eminent mechanical engineers in England, Joseph Nasmyth, favors the driving of machinery with cotton ropes in place of leather bands. As a result of many years' experience and close observation, he states that for heavy main drives it is both more economical and effective to use a series of ropes working in separate grooves.

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