

(CONTINUED FROM TENTH PAGE.)

home to-morrow, I can tell you. We should miss everybody else—the substance of the shadow—just for another disappointment.

“That has been on my mind,” admitted Christie. “Of course it was at the Brooks’ that we met Mr. Derrick almost at the first so he will, perhaps, be there to-morrow, and if we stayed at home we should miss him most provokingly. Yet, on the other hand, suppose while we were there he should choose that very time to present himself here. It would be too annoying for anything, wouldn’t it?”

“Oh, he won’t,” answered Kitty impatiently.

So after much higgling, and weighing a multitude of pros and cons, the two girls decided at last that they would attend the “at home” that was being given by the lady who had taken them to the dance, and risk Mr. Derrick’s calling at Woodbine Cottage in the meantime.

In spite of Christie’s obstinate determination to regard herself as the object of his admiration, she was secretly chagrined by his unaccountable conduct, and it did not add to her peace of mind that she had boasted so openly to her family of her conquest.

Violet Traill was in the garden at the back of Woodbine Cottage, enjoying the fine October sunshine, and watching the coming of asters and chrysanthemums, when her sisters set out for Mrs. Brock’s.

She saw them issue from the gate, but they did not catch sight of her in her retired corner behind the laurustinus bushes.

Indeed, to have done so they would have had to search for her, though she could see them quite easily.

She thought what fine-looking, comely girls they were as they departed side by side.

It seemed hard, as they said, that they should be “cooped up” and obtain pleasure at such rare intervals, and only after argument and entreaty.

She sighed heavily as she left her nook and turned towards the house.

The secret that had blighted her own youth was perhaps blighting theirs also; but though she knew that they often misjudged her, she could not betray it to them.

There was nothing for it but silence, and a secret earnest effort.

Had she not been chastened by this trouble, she could often have found it in her to resent the attitude of her sisters towards her—their foolish, thoughtless assumption that her day for joy or grief—the joys and griefs of youth—was over.

Their blindness to the charms that put their own in the shade—their careless speech, as though she had no feelings to be wounded, or spirit to be aroused.

Yes; if she had not been weighted by a living anxiety, her eyes might often have flashed at being pushed so utterly aside; but life seemed to her too sad and disappointing a thing to fret over trifles, and she sincerely did her best for her younger sisters, in spite of their obstinate belief that she was treating them unkindly in leading and endeavoring to make them lead a quiet life.

She entered the house, carrying a few blossoms she had gathered from the rather scanty borders, and went into the drawing room.

As she crossed the threshold, someone who was standing within the room turned round, and as he did so, and Miss Traill caught sight of his features, she almost staggered backwards in her surprise and what looked like dismay.

He was a tall, handsome man, of about the same age as herself, with broad shoulders and brown hair—no other, indeed, than Mr. Derrick.

The servant had admitted him a minute or two previously, and then gone in search of Miss Traill for whom he had asked.

He had not mentioned any distinctive name, such as “Miss Christie,” or “Miss Kitty,” who, as Jane knew, had gone out a quarter-of-eight before, and she was still searching for Violet, in the belief that it was she who was wanted.

As the girl started back, her face changing color, the visitor advanced and held out his hand.

He also was pale.

It is several years since we met, Miss Traill, he said.

“Yes,” she answered. Her voice sounded faint, but she made an attempt to recover her self-possession, and pointed to a chair. “Won’t you sit down?” she said. “I am sorry to say my sisters are out.”

She supposed he had come to call upon them, though he might not have let them guess his intention; or at any rate, if he had, they had not informed her of it.

She was sorry they had not, for, if she could, she would have avoided Roger Derrick more than any other man on earth.

“I am sorry for that,” he answered mechanically. “I had hoped to find them in.”

As a matter of fact, he was talking for talking’s sake.

Violet, however, did not perceive this in her agitation; but thought she read disappointment in his cold and quiet tones.

“Yes; it is unfortunate,” she returned. “They have gone to call upon a Mrs. Brock, who is giving a rather large affair to-day.”

Mr. Derrick did not take any notice of this information, which was tendered that he might know the whereabouts of the two girls, and follow them if he chose.

Instead, he seated himself.

“It is nearly six years since we were in Ledsbury together,” he remarked. “You did not inform me that you were thinking of leaving the town.”

“Did I not?” murmured Violet.

She was still confused and pale, but she remembered well that she had not told Roger Derrick of her intended departure from Ledsbury, and her reason also for not doing so.

How off those days had grown to be to her!

Yet now, all in a moment, seeing him sit-

ting there, seeing him almost unchanged, she could have believed that but a week had passed since they had been accustomed to meet.

HE LOOKED TWO WAYS AT ONCE.

Second Baseman of the Lightfoot Lillies a Wonder Until Put in Flanders.

“No, I haven’t played baseball this summer,” the fat ex-mascot of the Lightfoot Lillies told some friends the other day.

“My interest in the national game is as great as ever; my arm has lost none of its old-time cunning; my feet are as nimble as of yore, but my eyesight is rapidly going back on me. Not but what I’ve known ball players with eye trouble—good players with bad troubles—but they’ve labored under difficulties which I should never care to attempt. For example, Well, let me see. There was big Will Seymour, our old second baseman. Taking everything into consideration I should say that he was about the best player with bum blinkers that I ever knew. He wasn’t near-sighted or far-sighted nor was he cross-eyed. But his peepers were both so god-darned ugly-looking that each instinctively turned away from the other as far as possible. Squint-eyed, wall-eyed, or something like that. Just the opposite from cross-eyed, y’know.

“Why, it was so bad that whenever Will Seymour crossed a crowded street he was able to watch for the trolley in both directions without so much as turning his head. And once, while marching in a political parade with his head straight to the front he dumfounded the captain with the information that the men on each end of the line were out of step. I really do believe that if that man had ever tried to take a philosophical view of the present, he’d have got views of both the dim past and the distant future instead.

“The first time Sluggo Barrows, the captain of the Lightfoot Lillies, ever saw Seymour was in New York the year of the Brotherhood League. If you remember the Brotherhood grounds were on the block above those of the National League. Seymour was standing on the roof of a bannum in the street between them watching both games at the same time. I don’t know how the slugger ever got next to his ability as a ball tosser, but he did all right, for ten days later Seymour was out in Jones county holding down second base for us in the practice games preparatory to the big championship match with the Ringtail Roarers.

“And say, maybe His Eyelets wasn’t the real thing, though! He would stand there on second facing the plate, with one looker fastened on third and the other staring he runner at the first base square in the face. It would have taken better than a second story man to have stolen a base on that guy. But it was his sick work that attracted most attention in the game with the Ringtail Roarers. Three singles, one homer, and three bases on balls out of seven times at bat. He seemed to know just when the ball was coming over, and tricky curves and shoots that would have fooled even the Slugger himself had no terrors for big Will Seymour. Still that wasn’t so remarkable when all the circumstances of the case are taken into consideration. You see when he was at the bat while one eye was gazing intently at the pitcher, the other looker was carefully scanning the catcher. In that way he was able to read the latter’s signals and in consequence knew just what kind of a ball to expect from the former.

“What were his troubles then? I’m coming to that. Throughout the first eight innings of the big game his fielding was above reproach, and the Ringtail Roarers were looking like new business for the under-taker. Then the unforeseen happened. Cy Priest, the first man up for the Roarers drew his base on balls. Will had him covered with his left optic and that, of course, focused his other looker over on to third. On the next ball pitched Cy made a dash for second. Our catcher shot the ball down to nip him off, and—thud! Four teeth and a broken nose; that’s all. Don’t see it? Why since Will had one eye levelled on first and the other on third, the ball, thrown from home, came right in between his two lines of vision, just where he couldn’t see it.

“Now Seymour was too good a player to release for a little misfortune like that. When he recovered from his injuries sufficiently to show up for practice again he tried having the catcher throw to either first or third, where the basemen would pass the ball along to second. But this method was too slow. Every man, woman and child who had the best interests of the Lightfoot Lillies at heart then set to thinking to discover some way in which it would be possible to keep Seymour at second. It was old Doc Quackenbush, the town physician and oculist, who finally solved the problem. He rigged up a pair of horse blinkers lined with looking-glasses. These mirrors were arranged at such angles as to enable Seymour to see all

objects directly in front of him.

“Well, His Eyelets was tickled all over when the scheme was first mentioned to him, even when he was told that he would probably have to wear the new paraphernalia night and day in order to get used to seeing like other people. He said no sacrifice could be too great to make for the national game.

“After he’d been in his new harness for a couple of days, however, he began to look at matters in a different light, figuratively as well as literally. He began to demur; then to fret and fume. Finally, eleven days after the introduction of the experiment, he balked completely. He rushed into Doc Quackenbush’s office tore the blinkers from his face and slung them against the wall, shattering the mirrors in to a thousand bits.

“Take your damned harness!” he yelled angrily. “As for me, baseball be bust! Do you think I’m going to be bothered turning my head every time I want to look in a window?”

“Seymour took the first train out of town. The last I heard of him he was spotting shoplifters for a big Chicago department store.”

Quack or Reflections.

A care of put up and shut up—the folding bed.

The man who gives into his wife must also shell out.

Our credit is always good when we want to borrow trouble.

The autumn leaves are falling. Not so however, with the price of coal.

Some people are so greedy they want to take both sides of the argument.

Whatever you may say of yacht racing, it isn’t being run into the ground.

The chestnut vender and the jokesmith are getting ready for the fall season.

“Conscience,” says the Manayunk Philosopher, “is merely indigestion of the morals.

Some girls merely regard marriage as an opportunity for wearing their husbands’ neckties.

When a man is operated on for appendicitis he naturally feels quite cut up about it.

The Manayunk Philosopher rises to remark that spoiled children are usually very fresh.

Many a fellow who talks learnedly about yacht races has never been on anything more pretentious than a ferry boat.

Hoax—There goes a great money maker. Joak—He doesn’t look it. A Close fist old millionaire, I suppose. Hoax—Not at all. He works in the mint.

Wagg—I hear you and Gizzler was shooting together. In surprised that you should go gadding with a drunken man. Wagg—I didn’t know he was loaded.

Sis—Is it true, dear, that when you proposed to me you didn’t know whether it was worth a penny?

He—Absolutely. But I was willing to take chances.

Concerning King Solomon.

Several statesmen, a newspaper correspondent or two, and a deacon in one of Washington City’s churches were discussing various subjects of more or less bearing on agams of poker which had been played earlier in the evening. It was merely a game for fun, out of difference to the deacon, or part of the evening would have been wasted in conversation, and the deacon surprised the assembly.

“Were any of you gentlemen aware,” he said, “that King Solomon was a poker-player?”

“He couldn’t have been the wisest man if he was,” ventured a correspondent who is known for his bad luck.

“There is evidence that he was, just the same, insisted the deacon.

“Evidence or testimony, queried a statesman, who is also a lawyer.

“What’s the difference?” asked a correspondent.

“Testimony is a mere statement, and may be false or true; evidence is that by means of which a fact is established. See?”

“Un—er, hesitated the deacon, “I guess all of you will admit Solomon’s testimony as evidence.

State it, said the lawyer.

Well, exclaimed the deacon, if you will consult the fourth verse of the tenth chapter of Proverbs, written by King Solomon, as announced in the first verse, you will find this statement: “He becometh poor that dealth with a slack hand; but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. Now, what have you got to offer in rebuttal?”

And every man there admitted that Solomon evidently knew what he was talking about—William J. Lympson.

Mistress to servant—Be careful not to spill any soup on the ladies’ laps. Biddy, new in service—Yes, mum; where shall I spill it?

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Narrow Quarters.

Mr. Spudkins had discovered the flat, while out house hunting, and he took his wife to see it, confident that she would reward his discovery with words of commendation, because he had saved her so much trouble in the search for a home.

He was mistaken, as usual.

Mrs. Spudkins went through the diminutive rooms with critical eyes.

Then he expected her to discourse on the lack of closet room.

Here again he was mistaken.

“Rooms are too small,” she said.

“Easier to heat, my dear,” Spudkins ventured, “and they won’t take so much carpet.”

Mrs. Spudkins went on, ignoring these considerations.

Why, there isn’t room here to swing a cat.

Hereupon Mr. Spudkins drew himself up with dignity and said severely:—

“Then, my dear, we shall be compelled to reckon some other, and let us hope, a more refined form of exercise than cat swinging.”

But even this did not move her, and they proceeded on the weary search for more flats to criticize.

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