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HOW EASY IT IS.

How easy it is to spoil a day!
The thoughtless word of a cherished friend
The selfish act of a child at play,
The strength of a will that will not bend,
The slight of a comrade, the scorn of a foe,
The smile that is full of bitter things—
They all can tarnish its golden glow,
And take the grace from its airy wings.

How easy it is to spoil a day
By the force of a thought we did not check;
Little by little we mould the clay,
And little flaws may the vessel wreck.
The careless waste of a white-winged hour
That held the blessing we long had sought,
The sudden failure of wealth or power,
And, lo! the day with ill is wrought.

How easy it is to spoil a life
And many are spoiled ere well begun—
Its home-light darkened by sin and strife,
Or downward course of a cherished one;
By toil that robs the form of its grace,
And undermines till breath gives away;
By the peevish temper, the frowning face,
The hopes that go, and the cares that stay.

A day is too long to be spent in vain;
Some good should come as the hours go by;
Some tangled maze may be made more plain,
Some lowered glance may be raised on high,
And life is too short to spoil like this,
If only a prelude it may be sweet;
Let us bind together our threads of bliss,
And nourish the flowers around our feet.

THE DRESSMAKER.

The arrival of the new minister at Locust Hollow, as the pretty village was called, was regarded as quite an event in the congregation. A new minister is always an object of interest to the people for a month or two, then the interest flags, and finally he is accepted as a matter of course, and—generally to his delight—is no longer fussed over.

But this particular divine seemed likely to keep speculation going for a longer period than the customary nine days, and, being a somewhat humorou fellow, he thoroughly enjoyed it.

For the Rev Jerome Grant was unmarried—warranted by the gossips to have no ladylove—young, handsome and possessed of a private income which made salary a secondary consideration.

Now, in Locust Hollow there were a number of plump and very pretty damsels, but the plump ones outnumbered the slim, as always is the case in country villages, with their fresh air, healthy diet and regular hours.

Among the very plumpest of the village maidens was Gussie Ellison, and Miss Gussie's blue eyes and red-and-white complexion seemed to have found favor in the eye of Mr Grant, for he speedily placed himself on a familiar footing at the long, low farmhouse, where he met with very warm greetings from the farmer and his wife and dimpling smiles and shy blushes from the daughter.

Among the very slimmest and palest of those who listened to the young minister Sunday after Sunday was Louise, the daughter of a helpless widow, who lived a little out of the village, and who had therefore escaped the knowledge of Jerome for some time.

Perhaps Louise's cheeks would have had more color in them, and her eyes less of that wistful tenderness, did not the burden of her own and her invalid

mother's support fall on her slight young shoulders.

But day after day—on cold, dark days, when winds swept weirdly by the little cottage—on warm, wooing days when her pulses throbbed with longing to be out among the violets—she sat quietly, at the little window, her brown head bent over the sewing in her hands, the garments to be worn by more fortunate ones than herself, which she fashioned.

Jerome, had noticed the girl's sweet patient face, and wondering why he only saw it on Sunday—wondered how it was he had never seen in the many homes that had been opened to him to enter as a welcome guest.

But Gussie's blue eyes had been enough like violets to make him speedily forget the wistful brown ones, and it was not until he had been installed at Locust Hollow for three months, and had begun to think that Gussie Ellison would make a very sweet minister's wife, that accident brought him to the door of the cottage which Widow Vennevale and her daughter occupied.

It was warm; the young man was warm too, and tired from a long ramble; he was thirsty as well, and so, after hesitating a few moments, he knocked lightly on the open door, intending to ask for a glass of water.

His knock had not been heard, evidently, for no body replied to it, and while he waited a low murmuring voice reached him from within.

I did my best, mother, girlish tones answered, wearily, and I thought it very nice. I often wonder how people can say such harsh and cruel words to me, when I try so hard to please them. Mother—poor mother—it is very hard to be poor; to be a woman and poor—there is nothing harder in the whole wide world!

The sweet voice had taken more than weariness on its music. It became passionate and bitter, and ended in a burst of sobs.

The young man was profoundly touched, but he lifted his hand once more and knocked loudly.

This time he was heard and a light but languid step crossed towards the door.

In a moment Louise Vennevale, with undried tears on her long lashes, was looking at him with wondering eyes brown as hazelnuts.

He held out his shapely hand.

You are one of my people, are you not? he questioned, with a smile. I have not called before, but you will pardon that, and bid me enter now, will you not?

Certainly. And she led him into the tiny rooms where Mrs. Vennevale lay on a sofa. Mamma, said she quietly, this is Mr. Grant. He has come to see you.

And, greatly to the young man's disappointment, after placing a chair for him beside the sofa, she glided out, slight and graceful as a spirit.

He remained almost an hour conversing with the invalid. He heard the pitiful story—too sadly frequent for men to mind it much in their busy, selfish lives; the struggle to purchase a little home for wife and child by the stalwart young farmer, who had only his strong hands and heart to rely on; then the long, lingering illness of the woman, during which the first mortgage had fallen on the farm; then the sudden death by sunstroke of the man, and the helpless widow's efforts to educate her only child, before allowing her to take up the weary burden that now she had borne for four years with the gentlest patience.

It breaks my heart to see her work at her sewing from morning till night, and often half the night, Mrs Vennevale said, in conclusion, her eyes dim with tears. And sometimes she has to take such insolence, too. This is hard to bear. To-day Miss Gussie Ellison came for a dress she had left for Louise to make, and she found so much fault, and said such cruelly unkind things that my heart ached for my daughter. Did you notice Louise had been weeping when you came in.

I noticed that she looked very pale and weary, he said, wondering if he had mistaken the character of Miss Gussie so completely, when he thought she would make such a sweet minister's wife, so truly a helpmate to one who had chosen that most arduous of all positions—to be the spiritual adviser of a village full of people.

It was with a pang at his heart that he began to think that the blue eyes and fair face of the girl who had smiled so shyly for his coming might be a mask for a selfish heart.

There is to be a picnic in the birch grove on Monday Mrs. Vennevale went on, and it is for that Miss Gussie want-

ed that particular dress. My poor child cannot go, or rather she will not, for she never leaves me, urge her as I may. She was just saying how hard it was to be a woman and poor, when you came, Mr. Grant.

Yes, he had heard her say the words, but did not say so. Instead, he stood up and took the weak hand of the woman.

I do not think I will join the merry-makers on Monday, either, he said, pleasantly. My dear madam, you and I have been strangers too long. Let me come here on Monday and become better acquainted with you.

So when Gussie Ellison, arrayed in the pretty dainty muslin, which was really very well made and well fitting and set off her blue eyes and fair complexion to advantage—was watching for one face vainly in the grove of birch that masculine face was turned toward a window in the little cottage of the Vennevals, at which a girl sat sewing with bent brown head and eyes alight.

Gussie met him next after the morning service on the following Sunday.

She chided him playfully for his absence from the picnic, but he only smiled, and passed on and joined Louise Vennevale, with whom he walked through the village leaving her at the cottage gate.

It was only three months later when a pretty gothic dwelling shot up rapidly beside the church.

And when it was completed Jerome Grant took his bride and her mother to it one golden day in late autumn, and Louise Vennevale, the slighted dressmaker was that bride.

Strange to say, Gussie was one of the first to call on her, as she whispered to her intimates, out of pure curiosity.

Of course, as the minister's wife Louise had to be civil to her, laying aside the past.

THE WIZARD OF THE TREASURY.—In all the departments there are employes who hold their positions, not on the strength of their political influence, but upon the strength of their peculiar abilities. Among these is Patrick Byrnes of the division of loans in the treasury department. For a dozen years not an interest check has left the department that has not passed through his hands. The interest on the bond is paid quarterly, and to insure absolute certainty that none of the checks go astray, it is absolutely necessary that they should be sealed by one individual. As the holders of bonds are represented in number by many thousands, it would take three ordinary clerks to do the work, but Byrnes does the mailing single handed. The checks are brought down from the loan division and piled on his desk in stacks like cord wood. Each one must get in its right envelope, which has been previously addressed; then Byrnes begins.

With no mechanical assistance except a wet sponge he starts in to do the sealing. Those who have seen Blitz or Hermann handle a pack of playing cards before a wonder-stricken audience might have some idea of the way that Byrnes rifles the checks into the envelopes. Fifty a minute. How he does it no one knows. It is a sleight of hand, but so rapidly performed that the eye cannot follow the movement. Thump, thump, thump, all day long, and at the close of the departmental day he had filled three store boxes with sealed envelopes. Does he ever make a mistake? Well, no. The checks vary from \$50 to \$5,000, and a single mistake on his part might cost him a year's salary. It is safe to say that he never makes one. Of the thousands of people who quarterly receive these interest checks, few know of the wizard through whose hands they have passed.

CITY MAIL DELIVERY IN 1886.—In 1886 such a thing as a postman or a carrier walking ten or fifteen hours a day delivering mail matter will never be heard of, for the simple reason there will be none in existence then, remarked a scientific man the other day to a reporter.

How will the mail be delivered?

Everything will be reduced to a fine system, and a letter will be delivered in three seconds after its arrival at the postoffice. Each house in a big city will be connected with the general postoffice or branch station, as the case may be, with a pneumatic tube large enough to carry a good-sized package. At present such a system of delivery cannot be put into practice because it would be too expensive. A century hence civilization will rise to such a high and prosperous point that a system of quick delivery by means of pneumatic tubes will certainly be in vogue. It could be done now, only it would bankrupt a city. The tube from Twenty-third street to the Western

Union building shows how nicely it works. A letter or telegraphic message takes just two seconds to go the two and a half miles. The quickest means of transit are sure to be adopted in the long run. It is the evolution of progress and nothing can stop it short of the universe. Not only will private houses have these tubes, but all of our large cities will be pneumatically connected. Chicago will be perhaps ten seconds by letter from New York and San Francisco a minute or so. It will change a great many things and do away with the steam cars as a mail carrier. The system is yet in its infancy.

CHICAGO SAT UPON.

A Chicago drummer balanced his chin on the edge of the seat in front of him and tickled a sandy-haired passenger's ear with the remark:

You've been in Chicago, of course? Where?

Chicago.

An uncertain look came into the sandy haired man's eyes.

Let me see, he mused retrospectively; 'pears to me I must have passed through there. I've travelled a good deal. I know I've heard the name before. What line of road is it on?

Line of road? Why, it's the biggest railroad centre on earth.

Is Chicago a place where the trains stop for dinner?

Naw, said the disgusted drummer; Chicago is a place where the passengers stop for dinner.

Of course, that's what I meant, explained the red-haired man gently. Fact is, he went on with confidential frankness, I've travelled so much and been in so many different places in my life that I don't pretend to remember more'n a quarter of 'em. What's the name of the hotel in Chicago.

There ain't any, said the drummer gloomily.

Then he walked forward to the filter, filled his mouth full of water and gargled his throat.

Who is that evil-eyed, pink-haired, lumpy-legged prairie-eyed microbe at the other end of the car? he asked of the conductor, who was passing through the train.

Do you mean the gentleman looking out of the window?

Ya-as.

He's a merchant traveller from St. Louis.

CRUSHING A WOMAN.—If yur has got a liddle time I'd like to ax yur a few qeshuns, said a colored resident of Ohio street to a patrolman Sunday morning. Being told to go ahead he continued:

Airly last summer I put up some fly-scens to keep de flies out.

So did I.

Did yur? I got dis stuff called 'skeeterbar an' tacked it ober the windows on de outside.

Just what I did, Did yur? What was the general effect of the house?

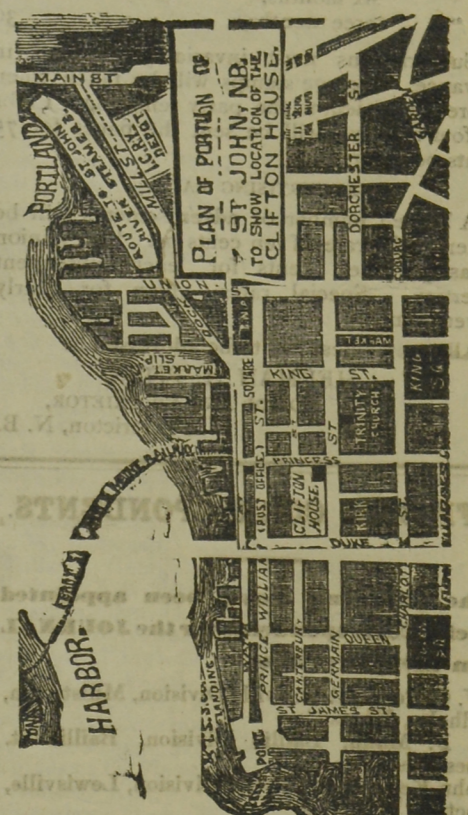
Very rich. I used to stand across the street and gaze at it by the hour.

Well, sah, I want yon to settle anuder pint. An de regular wirecloth screens dat fit into the windows any mo'tony dan a delicate shade ob blue 'skeeterbar stuff tacked on de outside?

No, sir, and I'll arrest any person who claims to the contrary!

Good! De fust time I kin lay han's on a watermelon I'll tote it ober to your house. It's a pint de ole woman an' me has bin disputin' all summer. She stuck for wirecloth of a pale green shade, an' I desisted fur delicate blue skeeterbar, an' we broke de stove, two chairs, half de crockery an' de baby's arm w'dout settlin' de qeshum. It am now settled. De law says I am right. Say, came along aroun' de co'ner. She's hangin' ober de front gate wid a pale green shade of wirecloth in her eyes, an' I want yon to tell her de same as you tole me, an' crush her aspirashuns like a piledriver comin down on a baby.

WHAT DR. TANNER SAYS.—The celebrated Dr. Tanner, who made quite a stir several years ago by a prolonged fast of forty days, is now a member of the community of Faithists at Shalam, N. M. In a recent letter he lays down the broad proposition that nine-tenths of all the crime and disease in this world is due to the human stomach. Keep the stomach undefiled with meat, especially free from the flesh of the swine and there is hope that man may live up to his highest aspirations. This is the doctrine which the Faithists are trying to enforce practically in their colony, but the result thus far has not been encouraging.



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