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THE LESSON OF LIFE

CHAPTER I.

A STRANGE FELLOWSHIP BEGINS

They met near the foot of the second-story stairs in the boarding-house kept by her grandmother, who was her only living relative.

He had just told the expressman about bringing in his trunk, had climbed from the hall below, and was leaning over the banister, looking idly downward at the man. She, ignorant of his presence, was seated on a large japanned, sheet-iron tray, using it as a toboggan to slide down from the floor above.

When, with one shin aching sharply and a feeling that his nose was swelling, he rose slowly from complete prostration at the bottom of the flight, and, with some doubt of his own legs' reliability, stooped to pick her up—she was under the tray, now, and almost completely hidden by it—he noticed that the big metal disk shook strangely, although there came no sounds of weeping from beneath it.

It flashed through his mind that she was suffering a silent convulsion, preface to quick death. This surmise choked his anger, substituting for it acute anxiety.

He did not know who she might be, but he reasoned that her voyage down those stairs upon that tray indicated that she was a member of the family, and not, as he had just become, a mere boarder. He reflected tremulously that it was very dreadful for a child's life to be thus accidentally snuffed out in her own home.

There were solicitude and great anxiety in his heart and hand as he began to turn the huddled heap of soft, large dark curls, long black-stocking legs, plaid woolen skirt, and other matters, over, so that he could see the fact which, he knew, must form a part of it. His brain predicted marble paleness for that face, with, perhaps, some sanguinary patch of gushing blood upon it. The shoulders surely shook as if the agony of the end were near.

But as he labored tenderly, the heap flopped suddenly over of itself and a voice piped from the soft confusion. He observed that they were not dying gasps, but chuckles, which made its course irregular.

"Excuse me!" said the voice. "I didn't know that there were any—animals on the track!"

With startled haste he now withdrew his pitying touch. She was a girl of fourteen, or thereabouts. Quickly she assumed a sitting posture, and now in his soul wrath blazed, while solicitude fled, scuttling. His shins ached with that breathless torturing pain which on such occasions comes to shins.

But there was something soothing in the great eyes looking up at him. Not many years had passed since he had ridden in a wash-boiler down the stairs of a now far distant home, and almost through a clergyman. He realized the injustice of his anger, and said no censorious word. That he had been classified as live-stock

was insult added to grievous injury of his lower limbs; but those eyes—"It—it doesn't matter," he said in a voice thinned by the shin-ache.

The girl scrambled to her feet. He noted that the prophecy of those long, spindling legs was quite fulfilled. She was a tall, slim child.

"It must have hurt like Hepsy!" she sympathized. "It always does when you get it in the shins."

The sharp pain, which, apparently, was to continue for some time, actually made him wish that he might sit down, take his knees in his clasped hands; but he did none of these things. Instead, he watched the girl's big eyes, and again assured her that it did not matter in the least.

As the days passed, he became well acquainted with the grandmother. She was an inconsequential old woman, whose outlook was all backward. The sordid, miserable present of the third-class boarding-house and its sordid, miserable future, did not interest her much.

Hers was the impassivity of age. There had been better days, and in the thought of them she lived. Perdue felt that this was pitiful, for it seemed to promise that, for the girl, when she should have achieved years, there would be nothing pleasant to look back upon; and if age is robbed of pleasant memories, age is robbed of all, or nearly all.

He felt that the stoic grandmother was stealing from the young girl's distant age. And, looking at the girl, he felt no difficulty, despite her present youth and charm, in conceiving her grown old. Hers was a big-eyed, interested-in-all-and-everything, prettiness, strangely attractive to him. He noticed that the other boarders did not seem to be impressed by it.

Beatrice was the young girl's name but she was known as Bat. That, he felt, was of itself a great misfortune, and he tried to change it as the weeks passed, but failed, because the other boarders thought it funny, and neither the grandmother or the girl cared, one way or the other.

Presently he fell into the way of it himself. Then, suddenly, he found a charming unconventionality in it, and it ceased to make him think of flying mice.

He was a youth who could have talked and listened to the talk of others, who could have flirted pleasantly with nice girls, who could have joined in any bright amusement ment during the evenings after he had left the offices of the architects, where he worked all day; but the conversations of the boarding-house did not interest him, and its gaieties seemed futile.

The girls chewed gum and talked slang, and flirtations with them would have lacked all piquancy for him. There were fourteen other boarders, but it would be waste of time to inventory them, although, collectively, they had great influence on the events of I chronicle.

(To Be Continued.)

FLY, BREEDER OF DISEASE,
IS TO BE EXTERMINATED

Toronto, Oct. 22—War has been declared by the Medical Health Department of Toronto against the lowly though dangerous and very busy, housefly.

"We must begin a campaign to exterminate the housefly, one of the greatest menaces to public health and one of the greatest disseminators of disease," said Dr. Chas. J. Hastings, Medical Health Officer, last night to The Globe.

"It is very important that the public should be educated regarding the dangers arising from the breeding of flies, and also with respect to preventive measures," he continued. "Such diseases as typhoid, scarlet fever, diphtheria and tuberculosis are readily spread by flies. They carry the germs of these diseases from excretion in the sick room and from the excretions in the case of tuberculosis to food, where they readily develop. Milk is one of the greatest culture mediums for such germs, but all foods which are not to be submitted to heat before being eaten convey the menace."

FLIES IN STORES

Dr. Hastings points out that a United States medical organization sets forth the rule, "Don't buy food where flies are tolerated."

"I have walked along the streets myself," he continued, "and seen flies crawling over cakes, pies and confections in the windows. The persons purchasing these provisions are accepting a great risk," he said. Dr. Hastings thinks that ordinances should be adopted directing that all garbage vessels should be covered, and everything constituting a breeding place for flies destroyed. Many States of the Union he says, have ordinances against the exposure of animal manure and garbage. Authorities there have power where vio-

lations occur to remove the nuisance and tax all costs attending therefor against the property as a lien.

MEASURE NEEDED HERE

"I certainly think some such measure should be adopted in Toronto," continued Dr. Hastings.

The city, said Dr. Hastings, is in a very satisfactory state just now. No new contagious diseases have been reported for some days. It is expected that a consultation will be had with the board early this week, which will result in more active measure for the prevention of disease. The water and milk problems are, it is understood, to be taken up as well as the question of exterminating the flies.

God will go where the humblest child is not welcome.

The first prayer was made by the man who had the first need.

A holy life is the best answer; it can be made to infidelity.

People are not vain except when they have no knowledge.

There is nothing for which the heart yearns more than sympathy.

The man who turns his back on God turns his back on his own good.

The devil always keeps the hinges of the gate of death well greased.

The more people need friends the more they will appreciate kindness.

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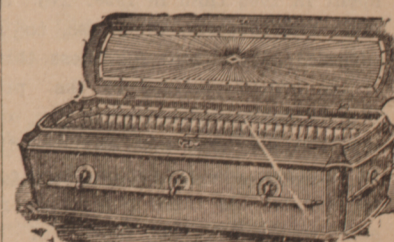
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