

Fact and Fancy for Women.

BY ELLA HIGGINSON.

A SONG.

"O, come!" said Care, and stretched a long, firm hand
 Across lost love and kisses blown away;
 "Come, live with me; be with me every day;
 And I will touch thy trembling feet to stand."
 A while I walked with her; bent to her will,
 With heavy eyes and heart bowed down in woe;
 I did not care what path she bade me go—
 I only knew that she walked with me still.
 But one sweet morn' a robin called to me:
 "Hie, summer! You who walk, so pale, with Care!
 Fling off her cruel hold; the world is fair!
 Come out! Come out—across God's happy lae!"
 O, blessed, cheerful voice—heard just in time!
 I turned and laughed—laughed—in the face of Care.
 Dear heart! we oft hear robins swear—
 There's method in the madness of my rhyme.

There is in the Easter number of *Harper's Bazar* an illustration—a little, shadowy picture—that must shake some woman to the very soul; that surely some women can not look at for burning tears! It is only a young man and a young woman with their hands on each other's shoulders, their eyes looking deep into each other's souls. But beneath the picture are the words, "Can't you trust me, Rose?" There is the whole of some woman's life story in that picture—all the love, the doubt, the trusting again and again, the dumb sorrow, the awful shrinking from that heart-breaking question, "Can't you trust me?" Saddest of all hearts is that pure, true one that loves deeply and unselfishly, yet feels that the object of its affection can not rise to its own level. Too strong and unselfish to cast the unworthy one adrift for the sake of her own peace of mind, she keeps what gentle hold she may upon him by her tender influence, her pure love, her quiet self-denial. For him this means a gay life apart from hers, and the proud happiness of knowing that the woman whom he really, in his selfish way, loves belongs to him and is true to him; for her it means sleepless nights and lonely tears and endless prayers; it means a gradual wearing away of life in hurts and carelessness and forgotten attentions; it means sad lips and aching hearts and wistful eyes—even that are ever looking for, and ever shrinking from, some new hurt, some greater sorrow, or a repetition of that awful question, "Can't you trust me?" to which she must answer always, with pale lips and fainting heart, "Yes, dear; yes."

Chatter, a new paper published in New York, wants a genuine old-fashioned love story, which is about the sweetest, most sensible and refreshing want that any publication has expressed for a long, long time. A real, tender, little love story is as rare in these days as a man or woman who never committed the smallest wrong deed. Most editors tell you that they don't want a sensational story, and they don't want a murder story, and they don't want a love story; aside from these restrictions, you may write anything you please; and if you write it well, and if it suits their needs—and by-the-by editor's needs are the most elusive and disappointing things on earth—they will be pleased to accept, and pay you for it. It is not well, certainly, for young people's minds to be absorbed in love affairs, but at the same time, a little, pure love story is not injurious to any one. An almost perfect story for young girls is

Harriet Prescott Spofford's "An Easter Bridal," in *Harper's Bazar*. It is the story of a young man plunging down the road to ruin who is saved by the love, faith, strength and patience of the young girl who loves him. On the other hand, even Mr. Howells's, in "The Shadow of a Dream," has given us a story that creates a morbid, creepy-creepy sensation even in his "grown up" readers. Sometime ago Julian Hawthorne gave us a love story in *Lippincott's* that was truly delightful in its refreshing simplicity; but the healthy love story is undoubtedly rare. It is just as well to remember, however, that the young girl who wears a simple white frock with a sash tied about her slim waist, and a cluster of soft curls bound together by a pretty ribbon, and who has dreaming eyes and an unawkward look—in a word, the girl who could read and take delight in a quiet, pure unexciting love story is also rare. The girls, from the first 'teen to the last one, who go tripping along with their hands in their jacket pockets, disdainful smiles, shrewd, coquettish eyes, and a general air that says unmistakably, "O, you can't draw any wool over my eyes; I know quite as much as you do about everything, and I shouldn't be surprised if I knew a little more about some things?"—these are not the girls who read "Paul and Virginia" or who create a demand for that class of literature. So, we might as well scold the mothers a little while as the writers; for just so soon as there is a market for the pure, simple love story, the pure, simple love story will come out and make its little bow to the young girls in their white frocks and soft curls.

I have always been saddened by the impression that those beautiful lines of Ella Wheeler-Wilcox's:

"Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
 Weep, and you weep alone."

were the truest that ever were written; but lately I am beginning to doubt their truth, although "the scent of the roses hangs 'round them still." Laugh, and—if you laugh heartily, merrily, and genuinely—the world certainly will laugh with you; you have only to laugh and be happy to prove the truth in that line. But "Weep and you weep alone!" Is that true? When you were in sorrow, did no hand hold yours, no tear fall with your tears, no sympathy and love fold about you, no loving arm—delicate it may be, yet feeling to you, O, how strong because of its very love-support you, no gentle voice comfort you through the long, lonesome hours of the night, and pray for you? Why it seems to me the whole world flows with love and sympathy for those who need it and really deserve it. Of course, if you have lived a cold, narrow, selfish life, content because all went well with you; caring nothing for the crosses and burdens of others; shrugging your shoulders and saying grimly and indifferently: "O, some people are always having troubles and failures, and all that sort of thing—always calling on you for sympathy, you know!" If you have lived this kind of life, you have no cause for complaint if people return cold glances for cold glances. Life, you know, is a mirror, and although "I give a smile for a smile" is not a generous motto for it, it is a very true one. No matter how easy and care-free your life may have been, there will come an awful day when sorrow will stand at your door with sad eyes and tell that she has come to stay. Do not, for one moment, allow yourself to doubt that she will come; and when you eat with her, drink