

Highest of all in Leavening Power.—U. S. Gov't Report, Aug. 17, 1889.

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"Is not this an exquisite spot?" exclaimed Guy Norris.
"Yes, indeed. Every prospect pleases and only man is vile," responded Jessie Holmes, as with a merry laugh, she evaded Guy's extended arm, and with a few bounds reached the top of a moss-covered rock beyond his reach.
An impatient exclamation passed his lips as Guy Norris looked up reproachfully into the sparkling face above his own.
"Miss Jessie, here I have been all this afternoon, doing my best to entertain you, and all I have got for my pains is floating and teasing!"
"Ah, no, not so. You have been trying your best to lead me into one of those pleasant flirtations Mr. Guy Norris, of the Manor, is so justly celebrated for."
A serious expression passed for an instant over the piquant face, and then she spoke again,—"But a truce to quarrelling. If you'll promise to stop compliments, I'll promise to be good as we walk home. Is it an agreement?"
By this time she stood by the young man's side. Silently he gathered up the books and basket, and assiduously walked on by her side; but he could not resist the charm of such a rambler with such a companion.
The path stretched before them cool and shady. The sun, flickering here and there through the trees, made a delicate fretwork of shade-leaves under their feet.
Little shy flowers all along the wayside nodded and quivered their sun-kissed heads as the soft breeze blew gently over them.
Jessie was good as she promised and she noticed with satisfaction that her little sarcasm had done her escort good, for she was not troubled with any more distasteful compliments.
At the farm gate they paused.
"I have enjoyed this afternoon very much, Miss Jessie; only why that little lecture from which I am just recovering from the effects of? Why should I try to flirt with you?"
"He looked slyly up, from under his dark lashes, to notice the effect of his words.
The slender figure before him drew itself up.
"Mr. Norris, you displease me when you talk in that way. Then, with a sudden change from hauteur to her own winsome manner—"Let us part friends. Good-bye."
Courteously lifting his hat, the young man passed on, and Jessie with a very thoughtful face walked slowly up the garden path, where Aunt Jane stood, shading her eyes with her hand, from the last rays of the setting sun watching for her.
"So, here you be, home. There's a note for you; come this afternoon, from Mrs. Norris. The coachman brings it. Humph! I guess she's a-worriting along of her son's going so much with my niece."
Jessie's eyes beamed with amusement as she read aloud the short note—
"My DEAR MISS HOLMES—
"I have heard my son speak of you so often, I have a strong desire to form your acquaintance. If agreeable to you, I will call upon you to-morrow afternoon."
"Yours truly,
"The Manor, LAURA DEANE NORRIS."
"Oh, Aunt Jane!" laughed Jessie; "what a patronizing note!"
The following afternoon Jessie and her aunt sat in the vine-wreathed porch, as the "Manor" carriage drove up the lane. When the carriage reached the door, Jessie rose to receive the fashionable figure which advanced up the steps.
The two formed a striking contrast. Mrs. Norris was clad in a trained silken robe, a *la princesse*, and her much be-puffed hair was rolled away from a face which would have been handsome were it not for a supercilious expression. She was the personification of fashion in its extreme; while Jessie, in a cool, white muslin, with her hair simply drawn back into a heavy braid, was a fair specimen of a fresh, sweet country maiden, to whom fashion is only familiar in books.
Jessie entertained her guest in a timid, quiet manner, and Mrs. Norris went home with a verdict that "such a specimen of an unsophisticated country girl I never saw. To be sure she's pretty; but Guy, what you see to admire beyond that puzzles me."
Guy, suddenly drawing up his long form from his lazy position, stood erect before the reclining figure in his silken drapery.
"Mother, I have made up my mind to something. I wanted to tell you until you had seen her, hoping you would fall in love with her as I have. Yes," he continued, quickly, as his mother was about to speak, "yes, I love her with all my heart and soul, and if she will say 'yes,' will make her my wife!"
"And how, my son, will you support a wife when I, in my will, leave your inheritance to your Cousin Hubert?"
The young man winced, and began to speak in an impetuous tone, then checked himself, and said, calmly,—"Do as you please, mother. It was for your sake, and through your solicitation, I am living this idle life, and left my profession; but I can take it up again and win a living for myself and a dear wife, Heaven willing."
The reclining figure sprang up with an activity one would hardly deem possible, and for a moment Guy stood overwhelmed with his mother's reproaches. Then respectfully taking her hand, although she tried to prevent him, he raised it to his lips and strode rapidly away.
One bright morning not long after the above conversation, Guy coaxed Jessie out for a walk. They strolled

slowly along to the old moss-covered rock which had been the scene of his rebuff some time before.
Then, in a serious, almost solemn way, Guy told the listening girl of his great love. He told her, too, how his mother felt and what she had said, and that he had no prospects except what his brain and hands could carve for themselves, then stood quietly awaiting her answer.
A little hand slipped in one of his, and with an intense thrill, Guy felt the supple figure press close to his heart. Their lips met in a long, long kiss, and then Jessie changed into a saucy mood again, and sprang away.
But Guy soon coaxed her back, and together they talked over his prospects.
"Poor boy! What will he do to be poor? No horse—no yacht—no anything!"
A strange light shone in her eyes as she said this, looking up into his dark face, and that expression changed to an ineffably soft radiance that illuminated her whole face, as he tenderly drew her to him, and, looking upward, exclaimed,—"All the world well lost, so I have hope of some day having my darling!"
"The Manor" was desolate, for the son and heir had persisted in his determination, and again started to work up in his profession.
Aunt Jane at the farmhouse was lonely, too, for Jessie had finished her summer visit, and gone home. Sorely did the faithful heart miss the bright face; but she knew the summer months would bring it to her again.
Four years passed by. Jessie was now twenty-two, and a happy wife. Guy had worked early and late, and thanks to his early training, had established his reputation at the bar, and then had come on to the old farmhouse to claim his bride.
Mrs. Norris had seen her son before the wedding, but had refused to attend, or to have anything to do with his bride. The day after the marriage Jessie told her husband something which, while it startled him, made him wrap her to his heart more passionately than before.
"I think I see why you deceived me so, my darling."
"Yes, Guy; I loved you, I think, from the very first, but I struggled against it, for I did not admire you. I had always meant to give my heart only to a man. When you told me of your love and brave determination, had I been the poor girl you thought me, I should not have allowed the sacrifice to be made for me; but knowing what I did, I knew it would be for your good."
This was what she told him.
Her father had died, leaving his immense fortune solely to her, as the only child. Aunt Jane, as she called her, had been her nurse when a baby, and her mother's faithful servant. Before her father's death, which happened very soon after her mother's, he had given Jane the desire of her heart—a farm in the country, such as she always longed for. Jessie's home, when in London, during the winter, was with a friend whom she dearly loved, and she vibrated between the two places. Thus it was she and Guy had met during his first summer at home. After several years they were visiting at the farm. A week had passed delightfully to the young husband and wife. Day after day they wandered undisturbed through the quiet country lanes, growing closer and closer together, almost, it seemed, in a world entirely of their own.
But this quiet was rudely broken, for a messenger came in haste from the "Manor" to Guy, to tell him that his mother had been stricken dangerously with paralysis, and called for her son.
"Will you come with me, Jessie? I know my mother has not acted rightly by you—but she is my mother."
Without hesitation the wife answered: "Your trouble is mine, dear Guy. Of course I will go."
Guy led his wife to his mother's bedside, but at the sight of her face, which had striven to look bright to welcome him, and the restless head turned away. Jessie took one of the restless hands, and said, in her sweet, clear voice,—"Mother, dear, here we are, to stay with you and nurse you till you are better."
The closed lips emitted no sound; but the invalid raised her eyes to the soft, pitying orbs bent over her for an instant, then shut them, but did not again turn away.
Guy saw his wife's power had begun to work, and not less left the room.
It was a hard struggle for Jessie, who was so often tried by the peevish ways of her mother-in-law that she would have to steal out to her husband to be comforted.
But she endured to the end and had the happiness of seeing her mother-in-law slowly but surely recovering.
And Jessie had her reward at last.
One day, when Guy had come into her mother's room, where she was sitting, bolstered up by pillows, in the easiest of easy chairs, she called him to her and said,—"And I want my daughter, too."
At the unwelcome name Jessie started from her seat and came to her husband's side.
The invalid's eyes were suffused with tears, and she seemed struggling to say something, and finally it broke forth,—"Oh, my son! my daughter! After my cruel treatment, can you ever love me?"
Jessie stooped and kissed the trembling lips, which were once so haughty.
"Guy has always loved you, mother, and I—yes, I do, too."
Mrs. Norris clasped her hands together, and solemnly said,—"

"May Heaven forgive a weak woman, and bless her two loved children!"
It did seem as if her terrible illness had completely changed the woman of the world. Perhaps these long hours of pain and unrest had taught her to look above earthly things, for certain it is, that when Guy told his mother of Jessie's real position, of her ancient lineage and wealth, she only said,—"It matters not, Guy! She is a good woman, and that is a blessing beyond all price."

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