

AMIE AND HENRY LEE.

—OR— The Spheres of the Sexes.

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CHAPTER IV.

Melvin Hastings was soon at home in the city of Portsmouth. The residence of his parents occupied a fashionable thoroughfare. The mansion was built in the castle style, grand, gloomy and architectural. There was about it a sort of solid, aristocratic air that raised it in theory as well as fact high above the more unpretentious habitations of the less wealthy neighbors of Melvin Hastings senior.

It mattered not that everybody knew that the great wealth of this family originated in sundry questionable performances in a low dogery in the days when the city of Portsmouth was young. It mattered not that everybody knew that in an inner den of that dogery a faro bank had been the great attraction in the days when virgin gold, fresh from the mines, abounded. It mattered not that the senior Hastings was often, even in his present prosperity, known to "buck" at faro indents that he was now far too respectable to patronize openly. The senior was rich, and money covereth a multitude of sins. Besides, his family was far above himself in morals. In their younger days his children, six in number, had resided with their mother for a number of years upon a cattle rancho in a wild and unfrequented region of the State, and it was here that Hastings junior had learned the art of making himself useful in performing such domestic duties as had made him a wonderful model in the estimation of the feminine portion of the family of the Lees.

The mother of Melvin Hastings junior was a well-preserved matron of fifty, with gentle manners and a regal air, while the daughter, five in number, were pretty, piquant, fashionable dolls, who, with the parents, idolized the son and heir and well-nigh spoiled him utterly. It was evening when Melvin arrived at home, and all were glad to welcome him. A cheerful fire was sending a glow through the richly furnished room and lighting up the twilight with its ruddy gleams.

Alice Hastings was reclining upon a crimson ottoman in a charming negligee of delicate blue merino, with facings of mauve-colored satin, open in front, revealing a skirt of dainty embroidery, from the hem of which peeped a beautifully wrought slipper. Her long, blonde hair fell in ripples over her cheeks and bosom, and her blue eyes flashed in the glow of the frelight with a gleam peculiarly their own.

"What are you doing, sis?" queried her brother, as he dropped into a luxurious easy chair beside her. "Nothing. I was just wondering what on earth I was born for. There is nothing for a fashionable young lady to do but receive calls, which I hate, return them, which I detest, read novels, which is nonsense, drum the piano, which is a bore, flirt, which grows tedious, and make tattling, which is abominable! I was just wishing that I were a man!"

"A pretty figure you'd cut as a man, my pretty sister! Those dainty fingers would wield a trowel or those model shoulders carry a hod so deftly! You'd look charming in a demimode shirt with overalls to match, carrying bricks and mortar in the sunshine. Suppose you try it for a while."

"One would think you had enumerated the full catalogue of masculine employments from the stress with which you speak of bod-carrying. You're a man and you've been busy at something that would just suit me if I could have an opportunity."

"What is that, pray?" "Why, you've been loafing through the grand autumn woods with a gun on your shoulder. You've been drinking of forest springs, listening to the songs of forest birds, and camping at night with rustic families in little primitive cabins in the deep, dark woods."

"How do you know all this, sis?" "Oh, I've followed you in imagination. And to-day, when I was down town in the carriage, we stopped in front of a Government office where papa had business with a dapper little clerk whose fingers were quite as dainty as mine. Papa says he has a salary of two thousand a year. Now I could fill such a position as well as any man and thus be independent and busy; but I'm a woman, and there's no avenue of usefulness open to me but teaching, kitchen-work or dress-making, and I despise them all."

"Alice, how can you talk so?" said the mother, reprovingly. "There is no need that you should lift your hand for a livelihood. It's nonsense for you to think of earning money. It's unlady-like, besides."

"Weren't you just as much of a lady as you are now, mamma, when you milked cows and made butter to earn our living?" "Don't allude to such things, Alice. It was once necessary that I should do such drudgery, but it has been the aim of my life to elevate my children above it."

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man came to the door and timidly asked me to buy a little bucket of berries for twenty-five cents. She wanted to purchase a little medicine for a sick child and had gathered the berries to get the money. Beggar that I was, I hadn't ten cents! Had she asked for food I could have made a raid upon my father's kitchen for her benefit; or had she asked for clothes, I have plenty that I shall never wear, but I find myself at twenty-two a nonentity in the world of will or work or choice."

"You'll be getting married one of these days, Alice."

"Who would I marry, I'd like to know? There isn't a young man in our set, from Adolphus Fitzgibbon to Bertam O'Toole, that has a thimbleful of brains. I believe that I'll cut my hair short, get brogan shoes and blue calico dresses and go to the country, where I'll see if I can't catch some broad-handed farmer who reads newspapers and talks horse!"

"You ought to have been with me during the past few days," said Melvin. "I stopped at one of your ideal country homes and helped a rustic maiden to milk the cows and feed the pigs, and she helped me to cook and eat the pheasants that I would bag during the day."

"And I suppose you made love to her, and she accepted, and you'll be bringing the great red-handed drudge to our city home as your wife some of these days," said haughty, imperious May, who was the very opposite of her elder sister in physique, complexion and disposition.

Melvin colored deeply as he replied, "I certainly should bring her to the city if she were willing to come. But she had the courage to do what not one of the twenty girls of our set would think of. She refused my advances point blank, when I tried to make love to her."

"You don't mean to say that you would marry her?" "I mean to say that she has too much good sense to marry me under the circumstances."

A merry laugh at Melvin's expense followed this enthusiastic outburst, and he retired to his room to muse upon the doubtful advantage he held over other people by being the son and heir of the wealthiest man in Portsmouth.

The twilight deepened into a dense gloom, and the cheerless autumn rain fell in blinding torrents on the slippery pavement. Melvin's apartments fronted toward the street, and gazing out into the darkness, his eye rested upon a familiar form that stood at that moment in the glare of the lamps that guarded the entrance to the mansion.

Henry Lee was looking wistfully up toward the window where Melvin Hastings sat, but the shutters being closed, he did not discover his friend, and so, with a sigh born of his dreadful loneliness, the boy turned timidly away and disappeared in the darkness.

"I suppose I ought to have gone out and invited him in," said Melvin to himself, "but it would have raised such a breeze in the house that I wouldn't have heard the last of it for a month. Besides, I'm tired and lazy, and the rain falls by buckets full. Guess I'll turn in and get a good night's rest."

"Have you nobody in the city who can vouch for your good behavior?" "I know Mr. Melvin Hastings, sir, whose father lives in the city."

"Do you wish him summoned as a witness?" "Oh, please don't! I don't want him to know that I am here."

"But you see, my lad, as you will give no satisfactory account of yourself, it is our duty to hunt up your friends."

"Don't betray me!" said the boy, desperately, as Melvin entered the room.

"A few words explained all that Henry's friend felt at liberty to tell. He knew the boy to be honest, but unfortunate, and if the Judge would release him, he would see that he was given employment."

"What new ragamuffin has Melvin fallen in with this time, I wonder?" queried his mother, looking over her spectacles and down into the street.

"I expect its some country bumpkin whom he desires to make a man of," said May.

"And I think the best thing for him to do is to make a gentleman of himself and abjure all such company," remarked the mother warmly, as the two objects of their conversation walked up the broad avenue in the shadows of the cone-shaped evergreens.

Henry Lee looked ruefully upon his home-made clothes and stout brogans. His brawny hands had never, he thought, appeared so clumsy before, nor his feet looked half so awkward, as, by contrast with the elegant door-yard, their imperfections were all brought out with startling vividness of outline.

"Where have you been stopping?" "Henry looked imploringly at Melvin, and made no answer."

"He hasn't had employment at all yet, mother," said Melvin, coming to the rescue. "He has come to the city to get an education and a livelihood; and, as he is entirely without means, he wants to be placed in a situation where he can earn his personal expenses for a few years while going to school."

clearing around the cabin with particular leaves of the birn-race and blackberry. Mrs. Lee was gradually growing weaker. All efforts to rally herself had failed, and she was now wailing wearily, day by day, for the death summons that quick consumption had come to herald, and for which this fell disease was rapidly preparing her.

John Lee, the head of the family, who, since his wife's illness and Henry's flight, had been more constantly drunk, cross, and incapable than ever before, was sitting by the fire, and for the first time in many days, was busy regaling the children with ribald rhymes.

How to get rid of this protector, law-maker and head, so that the dying woman could see the letter which she knew young Sykes had brought, was a question which was more easily asked than answered.

Amie, desiring to possess herself of the coveted letter, complained of a lame wrist, and invited the rustic visitor to go with her to the spring for water. When the two were out of sight of the family head and the younger children, who were always his allies when he was in a drunken good humor, the letter was transferred to Amie's pocket, while her heart ached with anxiety to know its contents.

It was late before the head of the family could be induced to cease repeating his drunken doggerel and go off to bed, where Amie knew that he would soon relapse into a sound slumber.

Jim and Fan had both been admonished to remain awake till their father should be asleep, and, as soon as it was considered safe to open the letter, its contents were read to the listening quartet in a guarded undertone.

"O, Amie!" said the mother, excitedly, "it seems so hard that children should find it necessary to run from their father as though he were a wild beast, watching to devour them in his lair! But remember, when I am dead, that it was the drink that did it, and be kind to him. Never forget that he is your father. I feel strangely peaceful and happy to-night. Write to Henry when I am gone, and tell him not to forget his brothers and sisters."

"Do you feel worse, mother?" said Amie, anxiously. "No, my darling; I am much better. It seems as though a glory filled the room. I catch faint strains of heavenly music, and a voice whispers 'all is well.' Go to bed now, children, all of you. I'm certain I can sleep. O, Henry, my boy, it was so thoughtful in you to remember your mother!"

The morning dawn revealed to Amie the still deeper-snooring form of her besotted father over against the wall, while on the edge of the bed lay her pale-faced mother, her hands folded peacefully across her bosom, the blue eyes calmly closed, and the features in an attitude of deep repose. When Amie bent to kiss her she started back in terror at the icy coldness of her touch.

The mortal frame had done with suffering and the martyr wife was dead. [To be continued.]

Community of Women Only. The establishment of a woman's community within the limits of the town of Woburn, about twelve miles from Boston, was begun on the 22nd of January, by the formal raising of the frame of the first building. In this community all the land is to be owned by women; and, so far as the management of the affairs in the village is concerned, the occupation of this town (Aurora it is named) is to be realized to the extent of the utter political disqualification of the sterner sex. The members of the community are obliged to govern by a constitution which is to be held but farther than this they are unrestrained; except, however, that they are expected to attend at least once a week upon the unsectarian service to be held in the occupation of this town (Aurora it is named), will be varied, and industrial schools are provided to fit persons for different kinds of work to be done, including a domestic school for instruction in home duties. Each homestead will be accompanied with a garden, and gardening and fruit-raising will be a favorite occupation. Co-operative schemes are also planned. One of these, a drover recently attempted to drive 1,900 sheep across it. When about halfway over, the bell-wether noticed an open window, and recognizing his destiny, made a leap for glory and the grave. When he reached the sunlight, he at once appreciated his critical situation, and with a leg stretched toward each cardinal part of the compass, he uttered a plaintive "m-a," and descended to his fate. The next sheep and the next followed, imitating the gesture and the remark of the leader. For hours it rained sheep. The ere-while placid stream was incarnate with the life-blood of moribund mutton, and not until the brief tail of the last sheep, as it disappeared through the window, waived adieu to the wicked world, did this movement cease.

Woman Suffrage in Michigan.

The movement in favor of the voting of women has acquired a gravity which cannot be disregarded. In the Senate of Massachusetts the proposition of submitting the amendment to the people was lost the other day by a majority of five only, and in Michigan the question has been laid before the State by the Legislature, and excited very great interest. We observe among the supporters of the suffrage movement the names of well-known citizens, judges upon the bench, and other official persons, and the press enters warmly into the debate. The proposition is very serious. What may be called the American arguments in its favor are obvious and conclusive, so much so that the meetings of its friends are almost unanimous from the familiar tone of the speeches. That women have an equal stake in society—that they are property owners and taxpayers—that "virtual" representation is no representation at all—that they are taxed without representation, are truths that an American cannot deny. Again, that many laws, made by men alone, are, for that reason, unjust to women, and that an improving sentiment constantly demands their modification on the ground of injustice—that on School Boards and in certain local questions their official presence and suffrage are of high public utility, is not a subject for dispute. But there is a serious and thoughtful doubt and opposition reasonably and temperately urged which deserves the candid consideration of the friends of the movement.

The first and the most powerful of these, because the vaguest, and susceptible of highly imaginative treatment, is the argument of sex. It is difficult to argue to state plainly, because it implies what is no matter of public discussion; but it is substantially this, that the influence of sex in its widest and most comprehensive sense would be found practically the source of a corruption in politics quite beyond all which we have experienced, and that the effect both upon men and women, and upon the national character and prospects, would be most demoralizing and alarming. The Nation, in its clear and admirable presentation of this argument, illustrates it from the case of church government in which the fact of sex has bred such scandal and trouble, and also as an instance of what might be expected to arise from the relations of men and women in political life, the trouble in which a very distinguished and most honorable man, an advocate of Woman Suffrage, has lately been involved.

But in view of the fact that men and women are of necessity most intimately associated in every relation of life, and that, so far as sex is concerned, its influence would be neither more nor less than it is now, we cannot see why admission to the suffrage should produce the extraordinary results feared. If it is true that this degree of influence is also the co-operation even of the best men and women with serious danger, is it also true that where there is the least co-operation of the sexes in the common interests of life there is also a purer morality and a higher individual character? Does the association of women with men in the management of education, or the right of women to vote as stock-holders, or their association in churches—conceding the scandals and troubles—produce a lower moral tone in the community? Or is it not rather true that it is as society becomes more truly civilized, not to mention the fact that intelligent and virtuous men are of the highest moral tone, that the demand for the ballot is the most earnest? We do not admit that a female politician would be a more able opponent at her mercy in the sense and manner alleged; and we are very sure that any increase of the trouble supposed would be the necessity of the case to cure itself, that is to say, the damaging power of such calumny would be weakened—while, on the other hand, there would be an influx of more generous motives and nobler feelings, arising from the indifference of sex, and which any man who has been associated with women in works of practical charity fully comprehends, but of which we are very glad to see the ultimate result is wholly unimpaired.

Such considerations are in their nature speculative and abstract, but there is another more practical objection. It is that to multiply the number of voters which no number of ballots can secure good government. The argument which underlies this objection is that the Suffrage should be educated; that a certain and rather high intelligence, indicated by a proper degree of education, should be required of every voter. This may be a good reason for regretting that ignorant black men vote in Carolina, but it is a reason that intelligent and educated white men should not vote in Michigan? And is it a sound reason for excluding such citizens from the polls that, if admitted, the ignorant would vote? If the reason that women should not vote is not their sex, but the ignorance of some, then the fact of the exclusion of educated women, by which the advantage of their character and intelligence is lost, should be a reason not for opposing their admission, but for the most strenuous advocacy of an educated suffrage only, in order that they might be admitted.

We are very glad that the general debate upon the question of Woman Suffrage is to take place in the State of Michigan, because the judgment of so intelligent a community will be of great weight. And there is a reason that in a discussion, that the decision will represent much more nearly than is usual at the polls, the actual, unbiased opinion of the people of Michigan. We have no doubt that the ultimate result, and if the State decides adversely, the question will have a fair hearing, and the cause, retiring in good order from Bunker Hill, will proceed to Yorktown.—Geo. William Curtis in Harper's Weekly.

At the Battle Creek race meeting the first prize for the best rider among the young ladies of that place was equally divided between Miss Ida Clifton and Miss Mattie Upton, the committee being unable to determine which was entitled to it.

"Woman is a delusion, madam!" exclaimed a cruel bachelor to a witty, somewhat delusion or other, was the quick retort.

Why is a thunder-storm like an onion? Because it is a pest on peal.

The Pembina Bill Under Debate in the Senate.

Mr. Boreman, of West Virginia, called up the Senate bill to establish the Territory of Pembina, and provide a temporary government therefor. Mr. Sargent moved to amend the bill so that the right to vote or hold office in the Territory should not be restricted on account of race, color, or sex. He said he believed the amendment was not only justified, but required by the organic law of the United States. Numerous petitions had been presented in Congress for this right to females, and the only notice taken of them was to report them adversely. In the other House the Republican party was, to a certain extent, pledged to extend suffrage to females in the Territories. To confer upon woman the right of suffrage would be to open wide the avenue for woman, and the advancement of society. Give them an opportunity through the ballot, and they will break up the nefarious practices now existing and purify society. The spirit of the Constitution should be carried out, and women be allowed to vote.

Mr. Stewart (Rep.), of Nevada, said the question of female suffrage was being considered seriously by a large portion of the people of the United States. Here was an opportunity to experiment with Woman Suffrage in this new Territory, and he regarded as well here, he hoped, it would spread all over the country. The experiment of negro suffrage was tried in the District of Columbia, and it became catching, and spread all over the South. If Woman Suffrage in the new Territory would work badly, the act could be repealed at the next session of Congress.

Mr. Morton (Rep.), of Indiana, said he was in favor of the amendment upon what he regarded as the fundamental principles of our Government. The Declaration of Independence said all men are created free and equal. The women did not mean males; it meant the whole human family. The women of this country had never given their consent to this Government within the theory of the Declaration of Independence. The old common-law argument was that the husband took the care of the interests of his wife; the father those of his daughter; or the son those of his mother, but under the common-law the husband was a tyrant and despot. This old doctrine had been held by the nation, and woman could hold property now. He believed that woman had the same natural right to a voice in the Government that man had. To give woman the right of suffrage would be to give woman in this country. Fifty years ago it was thought to be beyond all reason for women to attend political meetings, and now they went to such places, and the result was to improve the character of those assemblies. Their presence insured peace, because in this country men had to be very low to be guilty of rhyolism in the presence of females.

Mr. Flanagan (Rep.), of Texas, said he was a new convert to the cause of Woman Suffrage, and was made a convert by the glorious efforts of the woman's crusade against intemperance. Women, and women only, through Almighty God, could save this country from the worst of all evils—intemperance. Women could control the consumption of wine, and they were more morally interested in all questions of morality than men, and from this time henceforth he intended to be a woman's man. [Laughter.]

Mr. Merrimon (Dem.), of North Carolina, said he did not yield in his admiration of woman to any man, and by no act or word of his would he detract from her dignity, but he claimed the right to be judged together with her, as to what means were best calculated to promote her interest. He did not believe woman herself thought her happiness or dignity would be advanced by having all the political rights conferred upon her, and the strongest evidence of this fact was that neither in this country or England had woman demanded the right to vote, and she had demanded them but a drop in the ocean. He dissented, with all respect, to the revolutionary construction which the Senator from Indiana (Mr. Morton) had put upon the Declaration of Independence, and denied that woman meant females as well as males. The women had consented to this Government, because they had never raised their voice in opposition to it, and they had always had the right to memorialize Congress, as well as State Governments, if they thought their rights restricted.

Mr. Stewart said that in ten years from now there would not be a man in the Senate opposed to female suffrage. Mr. Merrimon asked, Why not try the experiment in the District of Columbia? Mr. Ferry, of Michigan, favored the amendment and said he would vote for it.

Mr. Anthony said he had no doubt female suffrage would come in due time. He did not believe that such a woman's right or a man's right. It was not a natural right, but a political right, regulated by the body politic.

Mr. Morton argued that as women had the same natural rights as men they had the right to the means to maintain them, and among these means was the right of suffrage.

After further discussion, Mr. Edmunds moved to lay the bill on the table. Lost—years 24, nays 24, as follows:

Table with names of Senators: Bayard, Hager, Morrill, Mead, Buckingham, Hamilton, Johnson, How, Conover, Ingalls, Scott, Conner, Johnson, Sherman, Davis, Jones, Washburn, Edmunds, McCreary, Wright, Frelinghuysen, Morrill.

The question then being on Mr. Sargent's amendment, Mr. Bayard said it seemed hardly possible that the Senate of the United States proposed such a change in the very fundamental principles of government. That such a change as this should be blocked out as an experiment, in utter disregard of that decree by which men and women were created, could hardly be believed. The sexes were different, physically and mentally, yet here was this poor, puny attempt, in disregard of every experience, enlightenment as it had been by Divine interposition. Such legislation as this was irreverent, and in defiance of the law of God himself. It would give two heads to the family, and there would no longer be that unity, that subordination, required by the Christian marriage.

the law of God himself. It would give two heads to the family, and there would no longer be that unity, that subordination, required by the Christian marriage. Mr. Morrill, of Maine, opposed the amendment, and denied that the right of suffrage was a natural right. The amendment of Mr. Sargent was rejected—years 19, nays 27, as follows:

Table with names of Senators: Anthony, Harvey, Sprague, Chamberlain, Morton, Tipton, Conover, Patterson, Washburn, Ferry (Mich.), Pratt, Winthrop, Flanagan, Sargent, Wood.

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Ignorance vs. Woman's Rights. A very fair illustration of the fact that the advocacy of Woman Suffrage depends in a large degree on the ratio of intelligence in the people, was especially in the record of the blacks of South Carolina, who have come so largely into the possession of political power. In that State the extent of the suffrage of the black over the white race, is 30,000—two-thirds of the Legislature are colored. In an able article in Scribner's Monthly, headed "The South Carolina Problem," it is stated that a large portion of negroes of South Carolina, those especially on the seaboard and sea islands, are extremely ignorant and degraded. A correspondent of the Woman's Journal, writing from South Carolina, makes the statement that the blacks universally oppose the enfranchisement of women. There are some few eminently rare exceptions.

We mention this not in the way of censure of these people, in view of the fact that progress in reform depends upon intelligence, how can this be otherwise? The blacks of the North, largely in advance of our Southern negroes in point of intelligence, are especially in the great principle of Woman Suffrage; regarding its exercise as a sacred right. The white population of South Carolina, also, persecuted with a code of morality which slavery stamps unerringly and incredibly in the soul of the slave-holder, almost universally hold the same views on the emancipation of women, with the degraded blacks.

In both cases logic would clearly indicate that this unfortunate stain is, by natural consequence, too plainly dyed in the wool for one generation to change. Oppression leaves its mark on both oppressor and oppressed.

The southern black having experienced the degrading evils of slavery, but now emancipated and holding the ballot, cannot be expected to rise from his degradation sufficiently to desire for other classes cursed with disfranchisement the blessings of political emancipation to which he has so long attained. He must struggle longer and attain a larger mental and moral development, before he can comprehend this question. The natural philosophy of events here, although it is not, and never was intended to be such. It has converted more men to the doctrine of Woman Suffrage than any other movement could have done, I think; and many of them against their own wills, too.

A gentleman asked me, several weeks ago, if I did not see "the handwriting on the wall." He said it was "Woman Suffrage, as certain as fate." I begged him not to tell anybody, and believe he has not. It is best that every one should see for himself.

Well, if the temperance movement had not been so successful, it is equally true that Woman's Suffrage means temperance, and the end, if not the means, is the same. I do not send this hasty letter for publication, but living, as I do, in the heart of the temperance work, I would not help giving you a little "view" of it.

Very truly yours, S. M. F. Springfield, Ohio.

THE TRUE GENTLEMAN.—Show us the man who can quit the society of the young and take pleasure in listening to the kindly voice of the old; show us a man who is always ready to pity and help the deformed; show us a man that covers the faults of others with a mantle of charity; show us a man that bows as politely and gives the street as freely to the poor sewing girl as to the millionaire; show us a man who abhors a libertine, who abhors the ruder of his mother's sex and the exposure of womanly reputation; show us a man who never forgets for an instant the delicacy and respect due a woman, as a woman, in any condition or class—and you show us a true gentleman.

A Danbury man who received a telegram from Buffalo requesting him to come thither immediately, to attend his mother-in-law's funeral, sternly declined, saying that he never attended celebrations during Lent. "Brother," said a young Quaker lately married, "I have married a daughter of the Lord." "The devil ye have!" ejaculated an Irishman. "I'll be a long time before ye'll see yer father-in-law."