

AMIE AND HENRY LEE;

The Spheres of the Sexes.

BY MRS. A. J. DUNAWAY.

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CHAPTER IX.

Henry Lee, by dint of hard study and faithful attendance upon his duties around the Hastings' home, had succeeded, not only in securing for himself a valuable circle of friends in the family of his employer, but was rapidly becoming a great favorite with his teachers in the public school. It is wonderful sometimes to note how obstacles that rise in the path of some persons but stimulate them to deeds of excellence, and quicken their intuition and judgment into vigorous growth.

The Hastings family were seated at the breakfast table on the morning following Amie's dismissal from the grand saloon, and Henry, who had answered a summons from Melvin in regard to some proposed plan of occupation for the coming Saturday, had just bowed himself out of the room, when the senior said, eyeing his son sharply:

"Henry has a pretty sister, hasn't he, Melvin?"

The son blushed scarlet, and answered simply, "I believe so."

"I understand that she is very beautiful," continued the senior.

Nobody replied, and Alice secretly nudged her brother under the table, and smiled meaningly at her sister May.

"They say she's been employed lately at the 'Walk In' saloon."

"What?" said Alice, in surprise. "Does Henry know?"

"He couldn't help knowing, and couldn't help it if he did know. The girl's got to have something to do," said pater-familias.

"But the idea of that beautiful young girl going to that place is terrible!" exclaimed Melvin.

"I guess they'll not spoil her particularly," said the elder Hastings with a shrug. "Birds of a feather will flock together. But I hear that she has an 'uncle,' or a 'cousin,' or a fellow, or something of that sort in town, now, and probably she'll not live common."

Melvin junior arose and left the room. He was heart-sick. No other woman had ever stirred his selfish affections, and awakened the fashion-enchanted better emotions of his soul as had the guileless maiden, Amie Lee. He went to his room, and, throwing himself upon the bed, buried his face in his hands.

"Have I done all I could to save that radiant and guileless creature from destitution? Was it not my duty to visit her, and render what aid I could in her great trials?" he soliloquized, as her tear-stained face haunted him with its expressive, unutterable memories.

"If I could have gotten rid of Nettie O'Toodles that day when I met her on the street," he continued, "but then I hadn't the courage to face the world and befriend my darling."

"Melvin Hastings, your father's rich man, and you're a rich pauper. You are bowing to fate, and allowing yourself to be fettered by fashion and custom; and you're a coward, or you'd visit Amie Lee, and be her friend in spite of what the world would think of you," said conscience, in a still, small voice.

A timid rap on the door startled him. "Come in," was the response, and Henry Lee stood before him, shaking from head to foot.

"What's the matter now, boy?"

"Haven't you heard?"

"Heard what?"

"That Amie's been and waited on men in the 'Walk In,' and because she wouldn't make men drunk, the proprietor turned her out of doors?"

"Why did Amie think of engaging in such business? I am overcomer with mortification!" said Melvin, with the air of one who had been badly abused.

"What else in thunder could she do, I'd like to know you tell me," said the boy, indignantly. "Nobody would employ her in their homes, because she had an *incubance*, a baby brother, that pious people couldn't have around 'em. She could 'tend saloons' at night, and stay at home daytimes and keep Dick, and so she went to the saloon."

"But such employment, or even the suspicion that a young lady has even entered into such a place, is ruinous to her reputation."

"Yet girls are there—plenty of them!"

"I know it," said Melvin, thoughtfully; "but if I should happen to see Amie there, I should die with mortification."

"I don't think you have any more business there than she has," said Henry, hotly. "She went to the saloon to earn money to help me to keep our brothers and sisters from starving."

"But, Henry, you must remember that it wasn't necessary for her to choose that kind of business."

"But I tell you it *was* necessary. You have been kind to me, and I, knowing you loved my sister, had every reason to believe that you would use your influence to get her respectable employment. I don't like to complain, but it would have been a little thing for you to do to visit her, and you haven't done even that."

"Henry, my boy, sit down. You are much younger than I, and our social

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lives are widely separated; but I must tell you something, because I have no one else to whom I can tell it. I love your sister fondly, dearly, truly. If I had the means or the power, your family should be placed at once above want, and Amie should have opportunity to fill a brilliant position in society. But I am less independent to-day than you are."

"I can't make that out, by ginger!"

"Well, I'll help you. To begin: I have neither trade nor profession. I can shoot, row, play ball, sing, dance, and, if necessary, do little jobs around the house, but I am to-day more incapable of doing for myself than your sister is. I have no capital upon which to go into business, no experience if I had capital, and no taste for business if I had both capital and experience. My father and mother have made a bargain with the united O'Toodles' head to couple my fortunes, matrimonially speaking, with the only daughter of the O'Toodles family. The match will join extensive tracts of grazing land, and combine vast mining interests in the hands of Hastings senior and O'Toodles pere. I haven't been consulted any to speak of, but I'm the victim of a matrimonial engagement, and that is why I have not dared to visit Amie Lee."

Henry raised his broad, awkward body to its fullest height, and his breath labored heavily.

"Are you a man, when you endure the like of this?" he cried, furiously.

"I think you're putting on rather lofty airs," was the faltering reply; "but as I asked you to have this talk with me, I'll not be too severe. But really, I do despise my situation and myself for accepting it, though I don't see any way to help it."

"Will you take a little advice from me?"

"I'll listen."

"And you won't complain against me, and get me thrown out of a place?"

"No."

"Well, I'll tell you what I'd do, if there was a prospect of my trying to pull in double harness with that Net O'Toodles. I'd simply say to her, 'I'm not suited with this arrangement, by ginger!' and when I want to marry, I'll make my own proposals."

"And get laughed at for your pains, my boy. Miss O'Toodles belongs to fashionable society, and hearts aren't trumps in her game."

"Why, you can't even respect her, nor she you?"

"We'll be even then, for I assure you that I don't respect myself."

"And I swear to you, Melvin Hastings, that I'd rather be the despised orphan of John Lee, the murderer and drunkard, and be chore-boy in my present place, than be your father's son. You have to-day better cause for running away from home than I had."

"Why?"

"I'm astonished at you for asking your soul, except those that were felt through sympathy with my lacerated back. Melvin Hastings mangles your spirit, and you tamely submit, and quietly agree to wear the fetters all your life."

Melvin gazed helplessly around the sumptuous apartment for a moment, and then dropped his eyes and gazed upon the floor abashed. Gathering courage from Henry's silence, he said, suddenly:

"You take it pretty hard because I don't visit your sister."

"If Amie knew what you have just told me, do you suppose she'd look at you?"

Melvin started as if stung by a wasp. The thought that Amie Lee, with her independent, upright nature, her deep intelligence, sweet wealth of affection, and heroic devotion to duty, should, even in her present humiliation, be disposed to despise him—and he did so richly deserve it—the thought that when his secret soul so urgently went out to her, she wouldn't even look at him, was so painfully humiliating, that he covered before the honest, indignant gaze of his mother's servant.

"Amie Lee may be compelled to break cobble stones in the street with her baby brother on her back, because there's no other place on the earth for her or him, but she'd never stoop to look at a man who professes to love her so dearly that he'll be miserable all his life without her, and yet goes off and engages himself to somebody that he has no regard or even respect for, just to join men's interests in grazing lands that belong of right to cattle that alone can use them."

"On my word, you're very plain with me, Henry; but what would you have me do?"

"Do right; that's all."

"But what would you do, were you in my place?"

"Do you really want me to tell you?"

"I do."

"Well, I'd go to Net O'Toodles, as I told you before, and say I wasn't suited, by ginger! and that I'd humbly beg pardon for havin' consented to the arrangement."

"But remember that would raise a regular society scandal. The bridal tressou has already been ordered, and public gossip has fixed the wedding-day."

"Does public gossip own you, that you are compelled to bow down to it?"

Melvin Hastings was learning a very useful lesson. To see ourselves as some

honest spirit sees us, whom we have been accustomed to patronize in our superior loftiness of position, is often the most salutary experience of our lives.

"But I haven't told you all I'd do," continued Henry. "I'd say to the 'governor' that I wouldn't be trammelled. I'd demand a share of my patrimony, so that I might go into business for myself, and be dependent upon nobody."

"And get laughed at for your pains, my boy."

"Then I'd run away."

"I'd run away; and in some remote place, among strangers, I'd begin my life work, even if I had to be stable boy!"

"How would you like to change situations with me, Henry?"

"O'Toodles and all?"

"Yes."

"There isn't money enough in the Hastings-O'Toodles bank to make me swap positions."

"You're right, boy, you're right!"

"I'd shake my shackles off this very day, then, if I were you."

But Melvin Hastings found it one thing to make a heroic resolve in the seclusion of his chamber, with a strong young spirit to urge him on, and quite another to face his father and the world and put that resolve in execution.

Henry went to his work and Melvin repaired to his father's office. That dignitary was seated in his easy chair, with his feet upon the window-sill, lazily puffing great clouds of smoke from a long-used meerschaum, and gazing dreamily out upon the distant landscape. "What now, son?" closing his eyes and puffing a trifle faster than had been his wont.

"Father, I've come for a little business this morning," speaking hurriedly. "Suppose your effects were to be divided equally to-day among your heirs; how much would my share be?"

"That's a leading question," removing the pipe and running his fingers through his iron-grey hair.

"Well, I have good reasons for asking."

"Well, I suppose, a hundred thousand."

"Father, will you give me ten thousand now and cut me off without further inheritance?"

"Are you crazy?"

"Never was more sane in my life."

"Then I answer flatly, no! I'll keep my property in my own hands as long as I live. You never earned any money, and you've no idea of its value. You'd squander ten thousand in less than a year, and then be a pauper on my hands."

"Well, father, I must say that there's nobody but you to blame if I have no business sense. You never will trust me with anything."

"I suppose you're not to be trusted with that fine mansion on the Avenue, and the best turnout in the city when you get married? You talk as if I wasn't kind to you!"

"You mean to be kind, father, but you treat me just as you treat the girls."

"Why shouldn't I?"

"How would you like it?"

"Melvin, see here!" and the senior displayed his broad and once brawny hands. "When I was of your age I had neither friends nor dollars. Your mother and I began our life together with one cow, two pigs, six chickens, a feather bed and six power patents. We've saved an' managed an' got rich. I don't say I haven't been sharp as well as savvy, but I know just how my property came, an' I'll hold onto it while my head's hot," and he leisurely resumed his pipe.

Melvin arose and paced the room nervously.

"Look at your hands," said the senior, with a sneer. "You're no better master with a jaybird, an' couldn't do hard work enough to keep you from starving."

"You're my sire, sir, and if I'm not as well developed physically as you think I might be, I don't know of anybody who should be more ashamed of the fact than yourself."

"None of your saucy, young man! If I'd talked that way to my father, he'd 'turned me out o' doors."

"I'm ready to be turned out, I assure you," said the son, desperately.

"What's the matter now?"

"Just this, sir. I will not marry Net O'Toodles. I will go into business in some way, for myself, and I'll accept aid from you if I can, but do without it if I must. I will not be a child forever. Henry Lee, who is nothing but a stable boy, would scorn my position of helpless dependence. I never see him at his patient, plodding toil but that I envy the spirit of manhood that is growing up within him."

"Perhaps you envy him his pretty sister," with peculiar emphasis accompanying the sneer with which the word "sister" was uttered.

Melvin blushed, and sought to hide his anger and confusion by gazing out of the window.

"She's a deuced pretty girl," continued the senior. "Green, but not awkward. It would a' been a lucky hit for the 'Walk In' if she'd a' stayed."

"Why didn't she stay, then?" Melvin's voice was constrained and husky.

"She's got a better thing," replied the father, puffing rapidly as he spoke.

"How?"

"She's found a fellow. I don't see

why in thunder you didn't chip in there."

"You don't mean to say that Amie Lee has become an—"

The word "outcast" died on his lips. He felt that the very thought was sacrilegious.

"Oh, no, not exactly that. I was in the saloon last night, an' she amused a matter of a half-dozen of us till pretty late, and then got us to buy wine. Demons undoubtedly possessed the girl, for she gave us a lecture that must have been inspired by furies. Then one man in our set—it was splendid acting—professed to be converted, and went off with her, calling himself her 'uncle.' The proprietor pretended to discharge her—they all understood it—an' tonight the 'Walk In' will be a big business."

"Father, how do you know this?"

"Wasn't I there? An' couldn't I see for myself?"

Melvin left the office and walked hurriedly down the street. Suddenly turning a corner, he stood face to face with Amie Lee. Her baby brother was toddling by her side, and he had nearly stumbled over him.

"I beg your pardon!" said he, courteously, and then, remembering, as their eyes met, the dreadful suspicion of his father, he coldly turned away and hastened on.

The blood had rushed to Amie's face as they met, and then as suddenly forced itself upon her heart as they parted.

"God bless and prosper him, and surround him with every comfort wherever he may go," prayed the unselfish girl.

"It can't be possible that father tells the truth about her," said Melvin, to himself. "But I'll visit the 'Walk In' to-night and watch the denouement of the play myself."

Amie made her purchases and went back to her humble home with a feeling of peace and happiness awakening a silent song of hope in her soul, and elevating her far above her present trials.

Melvin, between whose life and hers there was such a great social gulf fixed, returned to the Hastings mansion, and seeking his sister Alice, told her of his sorrows.

"How'll you get out of your engagement, Mel? There's no honorable escape as I see. Net doesn't care a cent whether you love her or not, just so you'll marry her, you know."

"And that is the very reason why I'll break the engagement."

"But you know all about it all the time."

"A bad promise is better broken than kept, sister."

"Well," said Alice, "I'll stand by you, but you may look to 'catch it' from mamma and May, to say nothing of Net herself."

The evening found Melvin an anxious inmate of the gorgeous apartments of the "Walk In and Welcome."

A dozen girls, attired in the scintillating costume of ballet dancers, were whirling in the mazes of the giddy waltz, their partners being gentlemen, members of fashionable society and aristocratic churches; many of them married men, with wives and babes at home, in sweet unconsciousness that other occupations than necessary business or club duties be-guiled their lords away in the evenings.

The senior Hastings sat at a round table, chatting with a woman who was urging him to partake of wine.

"Why do you so seldom visit us?" asked one of the waiter girls, as she offered Melvin a seat opposite his father.

"Because the governor usually monopolizes the business—or pleasure, rather," he replied, as the "governor" thus alluded to filled a goblet for his son.

The evening wore on far into the night, but Amie did not come.

"I think, father, that you drew rather strongly upon your imagination this morning," said Melvin. "I came here to be convinced that Henry's sister had become an outcast, and I find that she isn't here at all."

"She was here last night, and went off with a fellow, just as I told you. Of course she's profligate, or she wouldn't be found in such a place as this."

"And what are we when we are found here?"

"That's a pretty question, boy! What are we, indeed, but gentlemen? I understand all about you, sir! You're in love with that girl an' you've got some very heroic notions. Do the agreeable with her all you can. I've no objection. All young men in your position have their favorites."

The father and son had withdrawn from the table where they had been all the evening occupied with an exciting game of hazard, and were talking together within a recess of one of the arched and curtained windows.

"I must say, father, you're giving me some very astounding lessons in regard to morals."

"Well, son, it's time you had a few lessons. You're to be married soon, an' you'll need favorites then, for a wife's very apt to be a tedious bore."

"I have always supposed that that depended somewhat upon the character, culture, affection and attractions of the wife."

"Nonsense, Mel! Wives are well enough in their place. They legalize one's heirs and sustain fashionable establishments, but I hope you don't in-

agine that I could so far forget the necessities of a man's social nature as to desire to keep you away from your favorites after you're once safely married."

Seductive as the lesson thus adroitly given might have been under other circumstances, its charm was lost upon Melvin in his present state of mind.

"Let's get out of this," he whispered, hoarsely. "The very steps take hold on hell!"

"I hope we'll often have the pleasure of your company hereafter," said a voluptuous woman, as she coquettishly kissed his hand at parting. "I hear," she continued, "that you're to be married soon, and gentlemen need some congenial place to spend their evenings."

"That woman's insinuations are a libel upon marriage," said Melvin to his father, when they reached the street.

"Marriage is necessary, and that's all that can be said about it in its favor," said the exemplary parent.

"Well, depend on it, father, I'll never marry Net O'Toodles!"

"What!" thundered the father, passionately. "I have just been showing you how you can render married life agreeable."

"And I decline the conditions."

"Then you'll take the consequences, you young scamp! I'll disinherit you!"

"Very well, sir."

"You'll leave my roof to-morrow."

"All right."

"But what will you do?"

"That is my affair, sir. One thing I will not do. I will not live upon the bounty of my father, when he denies me individual sovereignty and treats me as though I were nothing but a woman!"

(To be continued.)

Unskilled Feminine Labor.

When a woman is thrown on her own resources, she generally tries one of five pursuits—she takes boarders, teaches, sews, washes, or writes. The last is apt to be the resort of all the unprotected female who can spell, and of some who can't. It proves but a broken reed. Those who would fain support themselves by it, soon fall back upon one of the four other occupations, all of which are overlooked. The number of widows engaged in each is large enough to almost warrant the belief that most of the husbands in the world have died.

An ordinary sewing-woman in this city, working on cheap goods at her own home, earns 65 cents by twelve hours' labor. She is sometimes obliged to furnish her own thread out of this pittance. Her wages are so low on account of the cut-throat competition of seamstresses. Their rivalry keeps their wages at the starvation point, or below it. The same state of things exists in England. There is a Bureau of Employment in Broad street, London, under the care of Miss Emily Faithfull, which tries to provide work for women. Miss Faithfull, in a letter to the London Times, comments sharply on the "truly feminine notion" that skilled labor can be done by unskilled hands. Hundreds of women, she says, apply every week at the Bureau. When they are asked what they can do, they cheerfully answer: "Oh, anything." This always turns out to mean anything which requires neither knowledge nor skill—to wit: taking boarders, doing plain sewing, washing, &c. The moral Miss Faithfull draws is that a girl should be taught some practical pursuit, as her brother is. Then she would not be utterly helpless when sudden poverty came upon her. Very many applications reach the Bureau from women who want work at their homes. They cannot leave the children or the sick who are dependent upon them. This is a second great difficulty. "Very few things can be well done at home. Authors and artists are the only men who work in their own homes. The women outside of these two classes cannot expect to be more fortunate. If they had mastered a trade or a profession, they might earn enough to support their dependents and to provide them with care while they were away. Unskilled labor can never hope for such pay.—Chicago Tribune.

The Changes of a Century.

The nineteenth century has witnessed great and great discoveries.

In 1808 Fulton took out the first patent for the invention of a steamboat.

The first steamboats which made regular trips across the Atlantic Ocean were the Great Western and Sirius, in 1839.

The first public application to practice the use of gas for illumination was made in 1802.

In 1817 the streets of London were for the first time lighted with gas.

In 1813 there was built at Waltham, Mass., a mill believed to have been the first in the world, which combined all the requirements for making finished cloth from raw goods.

In 1790 there were only twenty-five post-offices in the whole country, and up to 1837 the rates of postage were 25 cents for a letter sent over four hundred miles.

In 1807 wooden clocks commenced to be made by machinery. This ushered in the era of cheap clocks.

About the year 1813, the first railroad was established, though a block-head is almost sure to get on where, without it, even men of high ability fail.

The Kentucky giant is dead. He was seven feet high, two and a half feet across the shoulders, and his feet measured fifteen inches.

The dentists are pulling through the hard times remarkably well.

Woman Suffrage.

Savages believe that women have no souls. There is no place for them in their happy hunting grounds beyond the grave. Some men who are in part civilized hold a like opinion and treat them accordingly—as pack-horses. Nay, in the barbarian's heaven, there is a place for his favorite steed, likewise for his dog, but none for his wife.

Once granting woman an immortal spirit, man begins to show her deference and respect, and she rapidly grows into her new position. As she is naturally more delicate in sensibility, she becomes man's superior in culture, taste and refinement. But she always feels neglected and wronged keenly than he does.

As injustice to him is an outrage to her, the possession of a soul implies ambition to rise and a longing for freedom.

Man concedes to woman equality in many things and superiority in some— that is, in the domestic state. If his equal, why not grant her the same rights? What authority has he for denying to her any right? Nay, is not such withholding robbery? In such denial he either intends to deprive her of justice, or he thinks her opinions but the reflex of his own. If the former be true, he is a knave—if the latter, he is a fool. Not only are her views often unlike his, but she may justly have separate interests.

While young and unmarried, woman receives both protection and homage. This is true in general, but even then her rights are not inviolable. Older and still single, she is no longer protected, but held to have few rights that men are bound to respect. Married, the law makes her the slave of her husband, though he be a very fiend. Widowed, her property is common to that of every man with whom she has to do, and many a knave does his best to despoil her.

To offset his robbery, man passes laws for woman's protection, and pretends to enforce them. Why not give her a voice in this? By what right does he think and act for her? How can he be expected to care for her interests, when it is to his disadvantage? Who is a better judge of what is good for her, than herself? She is the interested party, and is supposed to be most alive to danger. It were as just to let one class of men legislate for capitalists, for instance, in behalf of laborers. The tie between these is naturally as strong as that between the sexes.

The relation between man and wife may be an exception, but in not a few instances they become estranged and have little interest in common.

Woman needs the elective franchise, then, for the reasons that demand it for man, and for all other causes arising from her inferior physical strength and superior delicacy and refinement.—Ec.

Women on the School Board Again Before the Courts.