

BEAUTY AND THE MAN.

An Experiment That Caused Him to Change His Decision.

By KEITH GORDON.

In the long talks that those two excellent friends Baird Dunham and Barbara Somers had from time to time about life, the world and the men and women therein he had more than once confided to her that never could he fall in love with a woman who was not a beauty.

"I can't exactly explain how I feel about it," he said one day as they sat together in an art gallery, where his worshipping eyes returned ever and again to a pictured face of rare beauty that looked down upon them from the warm red walls. "It isn't that I think they are the most fascinating. Wit and beauty are not too fond of each other's company. Besides, the most attractive woman I've ever known was ugly—so ugly that at first she made you gasp. After that—well, she was your criterion of charm. When you left her things became stale and lifeless. All the color and sympathy went from the scene. You simply hungered for her."

He paused and turned toward his companion with a waiting, expectant look, as if he wanted to be sure that she understood, and she answered the unspoken question of his glance with a slow smile that did not betray by so much as a flicker the warm, reproachful woman wrath in her heart.

She had heard practically the same thing from him before, but today for the first time her patience gave way utterly. Apparently all sense of her womanhood had been sunk in their comradeship. Instead of rejoicing in this state of affairs, a feeling of injury, outrage, suddenly flared up in her heart.

Did he think that because her features were irregular and her complexion dull she was a girl who did not need to be reckoned with? Did he suppose she was the less a woman because she was plain? Had he no idea of the sting in the remarks he was forever making about feminine beauty?

These were the questions she asked herself hotly, but her voice—that low, vibrant voice that thrilled one with its rich difference from other voices—betrayed in its full evenness no trace of the resentment that surged within her.

"You are right," she agreed, with impersonal candor. "All women should be beautiful"—there was a slight pause, a hesitation just marked enough to give force to the conclusion of her sentence—"just as all men should be big and strong."

Dunham glanced at her quickly. For one startled moment he half thought—But, no; Barbara was too good a fellow to give a man a flection on the raw like that. It was a mere coincidence. Dunham was but five feet six, and though he was well knit and substantial, with a clean bred look that was in itself a recommendation, he was a trifle sensitive on the score of the six additional inches of height that he felt should have been his.

"A man's appearance isn't of much consequence," he observed, somewhat stiffly. "His field is action. It is what he is rather than how he looks."

There was more heat in his tone than he liked, but he wasn't able to suppress it. Somehow he didn't enjoy being made to feel that he was not at all like the ideal man even though they were nothing but friends.

"Perhaps you are right," was the mild reply, and the conversation drifted to other and safer subjects. But there was a speculative look in Barbara's eyes for the rest of the afternoon which would have told a careful observer that she was turning some plan over in her mind.

Her usual hour of rest before dinner she spent lying at full length on the divan in her room, with her hands clasped under her head and her eyes fixed on the open fire, thinking.

So Baird could never love any one but a beauty? She carefully refrained from asking herself why this should pique her particularly, since her plainness had never interfered with their friendships, and he spent far more time with her than with any of the pretty girls of their set. Still—

"Well, I don't care," she said aloud as, glancing at the clock, she arose and began to roll up the masses of her dark hair, striking the great shell pins in here and there with reckless indifference. "I'm tired of hearing him talk that way. He deserves to be punished. Beauty may be the greatest thing, but it isn't greater than all other things put together."

"A few weeks of Amy will be good for him," she soliloquized as she went on with her dressing. Then, when she was ready for dinner, she sat down at her desk and wrote a letter to a former schoolmate, the beauty of her class, urging her to make her a long promised visit.

In the course of a week or two the invitation had been accepted, and Miss Averill arrived. That she was a beauty was a fact as self evident as that the sky is blue (when it is so). It was a fact that admitted of no difference of opinion.

Her skin was like a La France rose, her eyes deeply blue, and her hair suggested mingled gold and copper. The curves of her gracious figure swirled and flowed in lines so graceful, so alluring, that even the most sluggish beholder was kindled into admiration.

"She's a beauty, all right," Barbara decided as she kissed her in greeting and conducted her to her room, and though she kept up her part of their animated talk about old times and old friends, her eyes feasted themselves upon Amy's loveliness. The latter's most ordinary movement was endowed with a grace that made Barbara half believe that beauty was the only thing after all. When other girls lifted their hands and removed their hairpins it was an action scarce worthy of notice, but when Amy's arms went up with a languid grace and her rather large but beautifully molded hands, with their long, tapering fingers, drew forth a glittering pin and removed her hat Barbara felt vaguely that she was witnessing a rite—that she was seeing a poem.

But after a few days of her companionship the glamour was always bedimmed. The eyes were feasted, to be sure, but the mind and heart were starved. One wearied of her rose-like fluttering color and the amiable but unmeaning smile and even of the very perfect rows of teeth that the smile exposed.

"I am going to have a friend with me for a month," Barbara had told Baird Dunham in preparation; "a girl that I particularly want you to meet. She's a raving beauty and as sweet as she can be."

If she had spoken all of her thoughts perhaps she might have added, "So sweet that at the end of a month you will want to kill her or do something desperate and outrageous." But, with a commendable self restraint, she banished this unruly idea to the dark chamber of unspoken thoughts.

In the weeks that followed she effaced herself, pushing Amy into Dunham's society in every possible way, but doing it so gradually and skillfully that he scarcely realized how little he was seeing of his friend and comrade. If she saw less of him, however, she saw more of Jack Lester, whose companionship was a grateful balm, because he was not forever talking about beauty, however much he may have admired it.

At first Baird haunted the house like a specter, while his plans for Miss Averill's entertainment fairly tumbled over each other in their eagerness. These plans, of course, always included Barbara, but with a mastery skill she withdrew from them more and more until almost before Baird realized what had happened he noticed that he and Miss Averill were usually alone. With Miss Averill's exquisite profile beside him, however, he was not in a mood to complain.

Then about the middle of the fourth week his searing spirit suddenly touched earth. He was guilty of a brutal, heretical thought. Right in the middle of a long afternoon that they were to spend together he was seized by a great weariness. For the life of him he could think of nothing to say. He was bored.

He stared at the beautiful Miss Averill with a sort of stupefied wonder. It seemed incredible that the society of so exquisite a creature could be so uncommonly like muggy weather. It seemed an age since he had had a good, bracing talk with Barbara. Now that he thought of it, Barbara must be seeing a good deal of that Lester chap. Vaguely, as if he had happened upon them in a dream, he recalled having met them together several times lately.

"I don't believe you are thinking of me at all," pouted Miss Averill. "I've spoken to you twice, and you haven't even heard me. It isn't nice of you."

"Eh! What?" exclaimed Dunham, trying to call his roving thoughts together and insisting upon hearing the remark he had inadvertently missed.

"I asked if you don't think the Waldorf is lovely. I think it's just sweet."

"Yes," assented he recklessly, "that expresses it sweetly. It's just sweet." And he cast about in his mind for some excuse by which the hours that stretched before them might be shortened. He felt precisely as he had once in his childhood when he had surreptitiously bought and eaten six chocolate ruses.

Miss Averill confided to Barbara that night that she didn't like Mr. Dunham so well as she thought she did.

"He's so dull! Don't you think so?" she demanded.

"There have been times when he seemed so," Barbara confessed airily. Then she wondered if Baird's ears were aflame. Three days later the radiant Miss Averill's visit came to an end. Soon afterward Dunham dropped in to see Barbara, quite in his old manner.

"Ah, this is good!" he said gloatingly as he sank into the depths of his favorite chair. "There's so much talk to make up." He went on in genial enjoyment, "that I scarcely know where to begin."

Barbara turned her head to one side and surveyed him with half closed eyes.

"We might begin with feminine beauty," she suggested helpfully. "There's so much to be said about it."

A pause followed, in which several new ideas entered Dunham's mind. Then he demanded, not without a conscious sense of guilt:

"Just what do you mean?" He leaned forward and studied her face, and, though she flushed under his keen scrutiny, her eyes looked back at him—proud, unwavering and a bit defiant.

"I certainly admire beauty," he began softly. "But I take back what I have said about falling in love with one. You see, little girl, I'm so used to you that the beauties bore me."

"Really," she scoffed, "for a worshiper of the fair?"

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LESSON FROM BIG STORES.

Appearances Count For Much on Balance Sheet of Success or Failure. Magnets in Nicely Arranged Show Windows and Stock.

A little paragraph in one of the business prints attracted the attention of the writer. It expressed much so tersely and so happily, it so neatly embodied a vital thought in a few words, it was such a compact symposium of a business sermon, that it seemed well to prolong its life and send it on another round of usefulness:

"A nicely arranged stock, an orderly store and a clean sidewalk are inducements to trade and are signs of a growing business. If small business places wish to grow they should notice how much attention large stores give to these things."

Why not cut that out, paste it on your desk, read it every day and act upon its suggestions?

Men are careless creatures, women say, inasmuch as they are inclined to lose sight of the value of appearances, and many allow their persons and establishments to run down to actual untidiness.

The gentler sex know full well the value of appearances, and they work that knowledge to the limit. Woman, made beautiful and charming by infinite care in dressing, keeps helpless man ever coming her way, willing and anxious to offer self and fortune a thrill to her clever wit.

Get wise to the fact that appearances cut a large figure in the calculations of every man and resolve to spare no pains to have your store present a good appearance. This does not mean that it need be striking or garish or anything of that kind. Cleanliness, freedom from dust, freshness of paint, will incline the thoughts of every passerby kindly to your place.

Then the shining glass, the attractive show window, the artistic arrangement of your stock, are magnets to attract folks inside and to influence sales when once there.

Don't let these ideas knock in vain upon the portals of your brain and then forget about them as you turn to something else. Open the door of your ego, let in the thought, talk with it on the subject, realize its importance, reflect that successful men pay much heed to these things and then do what seems good in your eyes.—Implement Age.

A City Must Advertise.

Elbert Hubbard wrote recently that not long ago he visited the famed Mammoth cave in Kentucky. He found clumps of willows and grasses grown up before its entrance. The large hotel that once entertained hundreds of guests was falling down and in ruin. Only a single family of farming people lived near the great cave's mouth. Once inside the cave, Hubbard was even more astonished, for he found thousands of names written and carved on its walls. There were the names of Emerson, Longfellow and President U. S. Grant.

Hubbard asked himself a question. How is it, he said, that so many people once journeyed to visit this wonderful place and that so few come now? He inquired around. He soon got an answer to his question. It was this: The man who once advertised the Mammoth cave so extensively a few years ago died. And with the death of the advertising manager the great cave, with all its wonders, dropped out of sight.

It is the same old story. People won't know what your goods and your town are unless you advertise.

An enterprising man for twenty-five years advertised the Mammoth cave and got thousands of people there. Every fellow used to take his girl there on their honeymoon. But now the cave's mouth is obscured by a jungle! No one knows about its wonders. Why? The advertising man died.

Sweepings to Be Kept Off Streets.

The board of public works of Altoona, Pa., has decided to enforce the act of assembly which prohibits the depositing of the sweepings from stores and other buildings on the public highways. Notices were ordered printed and posted, calling attention of all persons to the law in this connection, and it was also decided to communicate with Mayor Hoyer requesting him to have the police patrolmen call the attention of grocers, news dealers, fruit dealers, etc., to the fact that the garbage cans which have been distributed throughout the city are not intended to be used as receptacles for the refuse from these stores. This move of Altoona's is a good one for any town to adopt.

Let the Public Know.

If you are satisfied that you have a better selected stock than your competitor, if you know the goods you sell are more satisfactory and of better quality, if you are capable of serving your trade in a better and more satisfactory manner than the other fellow, don't hesitate to tell about it.—Paint, Oil and Drug Review.

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