

A CURATE'S COURTSHIP.

"I never knew anything so unfortunate!" cried Mrs. Smithy, her plump, rosy face now crimson with vexation, her eyes filling with tears that she dashed angrily away.

"That attack was passing off? Yes, and so it was, but he would eat—that is he did not obey the doctor's injunctions, and the result is a relapse."

"But not a dangerous one, I hope?" and Lance Allingham spoke with much cordiality, for though he was overworked for Thorpelea, and as ill-paid as curates often are, he had learned to like the jolly, generous, self-indulgent old gentleman who made him free of his excellent library, and treated him courteously and kindly on all points save that of increasing his salary.

"No; Mr. Smithy is out of danger now," answered the lady, with a sigh of weariness, "but all night long, and until an hour ago, he was in agony, and I was not able to leave his side for a minute. Was that his bell? I must hurry back. But just imagine in what a predicament his illness has placed me! I am expecting by the train now due my distant relation—Miss Daiston—you have heard me speak of her?—from San Francisco, and Lady Harrington, with whom she has travelled to England; and it worries me dreadfully to think that they should find the house in disorder, their rooms not ready, the rector in the doctor's hands, and me half dead with worry and fatigue!"

Yes, Lance Allingham had heard but too often of Mrs. Smithy's distant—yes very distant kinsfolk the Daistons. He knew by constant reiteration that at Mr. Daiston's death, which took place year ago, his immense Californian property was divided between his son and daughter, the young lady's share amounting to so large a sum that the curate secretly believed Mrs. Smithy must have exaggerated it.

He also knew that as soon as it was rumored that the young heiress had expressed a wish to come to England, and make the acquaintance of her deceased mother's relations, Mrs. Smithy had sent her a very pressing invitation. Neither could he shut his eyes to the fact that Miss Daiston's would-be hostess began to build castles in the air as soon as the invitation was accepted.

The Reverend Josiah and Mrs. Smithy had one son, who was alternately their delight and torment. Thoughtless and extravagant, handsome and merry, everyone liked Tom Smithy, though his best friends sighed over his wasteful habits.

"Nothing would steady him like marriage," Mrs. Smithy averred, and she dreamed dreams of seeing him lead to the altar the heiress of so many thousands, that her dear Tom's purse never need be empty again.

But, as usual, Tom was not at home when his presence would have been a real assistance to his mother, who clapped her hands together with an exclamation of dismay as she caught sight through the open door of a fly, piled with luggage, coming from the direction of the railway station.

"There they are! Lady Harrington and Miss Daiston, and a maid or two, no doubt, and nothing ready for them. Dear, dear, what shall I do?"

"Can I be of any use to you?" asked Mr. Allingham again.

"The question reminded Mrs. Smithy of what, in her distress, she had forgotten.

"How came it to slip my memory?" she ejaculated. "The rector is very anxious about the sermon he promised to preach next Sunday at the church parade of the benefit societies. He bade me tell you his notes for it are in his study table, and he shall feel immensely obliged if you will make a fair copy of them, and extend and annotate them to the best of your ability."

Lance Allingham did not care for his task. Besides, he could not help knowing that the people of Thorpelea would rather listen to his earnest, practical comments on some favorite text, than be sent to sleep with one of the rector's weighty, prosy discourses. But, then, how decline to oblige his clerical superior?

Moreover, Mr. Smithy's calligraphy was execrable, and took time to decipher.

Tom had been here. I have telegraphed for him, but—

"She paused for the fly was at the door, but its only occupant proved to be a young woman as plain in attire as she was in features. A tall, thin, gentlemanly young man who was listening sympathetically to her complaints, "but I do feel it hard—very hard—that the rector should be seized with one of his old attacks just now."

"Is Mr. Smithy worse than usual?" queried Mr. Smithy's curate. "I thought you said yesterday—"

"That attack was passing off? Yes, and so it was, but he would eat—that is he did not obey the doctor's injunctions, and the result is a relapse."

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places she had visited were so original, and often witty, that Mr. Smithy's sermon lay unheeded till the door was thrown open with a bang—and enter the rector's son.

"Ha! Allingham, they told me I should find you here. What's the matter with the rector? Only the gout, as usual, is it?"

"Mr. Smithy has been very ill this time."

"Yes, but he's better," retorted Tom, who was not in his customary good humor. "And so there could have been no necessity for writing for me. I was having such a jolly time of it at Sir Ashton's."

"Don't you think your mother needed the comfort of your presence?" he was gravely asked.

"Bah! she had you at her elbow, and you are worth a dozen of my scatter-brained self. I was only sent for to court the heiress, which I would have done with pleasure, for I am quite out at elbows—"

"Do you not see?" cried the curate, contriving at last to stop him, "do you not see that we are not alone?"

"Hum! Ha! Oh! my lady's maid, isn't it? How do my dear? You never repeat what you overhear do you? Parlez Français, Allingham, I shall go back to Sir Ashton's," he added in the language of our Gallic neighbors, "till Miss Moneybags arrives. Can you lend me a few sous? Do, there's a good fellow!"

"Have you yet to learn, exclaimed the curate, who was an excellent linguist, "that the poor of your father's parish have every halfpenny I can spare from my salary?"

"Then it is a shame the parson doesn't raise it," said Tom warily. "Fancy screwing a man down to such a paltry wage that he cannot oblige a friend with a loan! I'm quite sorry for you—pon honor I am."

"Don't preach, if you love me!" cried reckless Tom, with a grimace. "Ta, ta! You'll see me again as soon as the maiden fair and wealthy turns up."

Away went Smithy junior and the curate returned to his task, but he could not resist glancing at his silent companion, who was now gathering her wraps together, preparatory to retiring to the attic, which Marianne had not very courteously apprised her was ready for her.

Her eyes met Mr. Allingham's, and there was a faint ripple of a smile playing about her lips as she spoke.

"Mr. Tom Smithy is very frank in his revelations. Perhaps I ought to have warned him that I can understand French."

"It would have been only fair to both of us," said the curate, so seriously that she reddened.

"True there is a certain awkwardness in proclaiming oneself to be the Miss Moneybags of a young man's observations."

Lance Allingham started up: "Is it possible that you are—"

"Hillian Daiston?" she said tranquilly. "Yes; and why not? Because I have not come with beat of drum, but in borrowed—no, I cannot say plumes, and she laughed as she surveyed herself—"but in clothes that do not belong to me."

"You look mystified," Miss Daiston went on to say, as she saw the curate's perplexity, "so let me explain. When my friend Lady Harrington found herself obliged to go back to London, it was decided that I should continue my journey. Soon after quitting the railway station over yonder, the man who drove me shouted a warning to a girl who was sitting with a baby in her arms, on the parapet of a bridge we had to cross. Imagine my horror when, as she scrambled down, she let go the infant, and it rolled over and fell into the stream below. My own clothes became so wet and muddy in helping to rescue the little creature—the curate learned on the following day that Hillian Daiston had sprung out of the fly and boldly plunged into the swift little stream that was bearing the child away—"I was so wet and muddy that I thankfully accepted the loan of some dry garments from a cottager till I could unpack my own."

himself for letting his thoughts dwell on a subject that did not concern him; and when a message from Mrs. Smithy reminded him of the unfinished sermon, he was careful to go straight to the study as soon as he arrived at the rectory.

Was it his fault that, just as he was writing the last line, Hillian Daiston came into the room to search for a book?

Certainly that search, in which he assisted her, need not have lasted nearly an hour, nor was there any occasion for such new acquaintances to become strangely confidential; Lance speaking of his earlier days, when his parents were in easy circumstances, and the series of troubles that ended in death for them and poverty for their son; while Hillian talked just as tenderly of the dear, good father she had lost a year ago, and the Californian home in which her brother's bride now reigned queen and mistress.

"They would have had me stay with them," she went on to say, "but I had grown restless, and longed to see the land where my father was born. By the way, Lady Harrington will be here to-morrow; she is a dear, kind creature; I hope you will like her, Mr. Allingham."

"I am glad to hear she is expected so soon. It will put an end to a concealment shall I call it?—which troubles me."

Hillian Daiston laughed her merry laugh.

"It has been great fun to have a peep at the other side of the shield. Forewarned, as you are aware, Mr. Allingham, is forearmed, and now I know in what sort of a light Mr. Tom Smithy regards the girl on whom his parents have pressed their invitations so urgently, I am not likely to fall a victim to his fascinations, or his debts."

But though Hillian Daiston spoke ironically, the next time the curate met her she was riding with Tom, and in such earnest conversation with him that Lance Allingham was in danger of being overlooked.

Although the heiress checked her horse and apologized very prettily, the curate went home to his lodgings heavy hearted. He avoided the rectory, but could not help hearing that Lady Harrington was there and the Smithys—the rector was about again—were vying with each other in attentions to their wealthy kinswoman.

But he could not decline an invitation to dine at the rectory, nor resist the spell of Hillian's smile when she beckoned him to a seat beside her in the drawing-room.

"I am going to London with my lady to-morrow," she said, "but I hope I shall revisit Thorpelea at some future time. Tom and I quite understand each other now," she added, "and he is going out to California to learn farming under my brother."

Lance Allingham's very lips grew white with pain.

"Then I am expected to congratulate you, Miss Daiston," he said, as soon as he could speak.

"On what?" she demanded. "On putting a young fellow who was ruining himself for want of something to do in the way of earning a competency? You did not imagine that I was going to marry him? No, Mr. Allingham; if I ever do wed, it shall be with a man I can respect. One who will help me to spend my dearest father's bequest in doing good to my fellow creatures."

Lady Harrington carried off the heiress to give her a peep at English society, and a few weeks after their departure, Lance Allingham also made a hurried journey to London, for, to his intense surprise he found himself appointed to an excellent living on the outskirts of a busy manufacturing town.

The patron of the living was Lord Harrington, and it was to Hillian Daiston he owed the preference.

She did not attempt to deny it when he gained admission to her presence, and blushing and trembling not a little, she rose from her writing-table to greet him.

He intended to thank her gratefully, but not to forget that she was the mistress of thousands, and he still only a hard working clergyman, but somehow he forgot all scruples when Hillian's hands fluttered in his clasp and her eyes met his.

The next moment she was in his arms. She had found her fate, and he had won a heart worth having over that cup of tea in the rector's study. The heiress was a woman of discernment, and Lance Allingham a fortunate man.

MUMOROUS DRIFT.

How chill November's surly blasts Are howling cross the wild, And he whose coal is not laid in Will find the world is cold.

"Poker is our national game, and that is why the chips are red, white and blue."

"What is your salary, Dr. Stinging?" "My salary," said the clergyman slowly, "is \$3,000. But my pay is about \$1,200."

Not Her Fault.—"What an enigma you are, Nell!" "Why?" "I never know how to take you."

"You've never tried."

Edison is reported as saying that the world will soon be "one vast year." Perhaps this is the scientific method of calling the world an ass.

Lady of the house—"Why, you are the same man to whom I gave a loaf of my home made bread the other day." Tramp—"Yes, mum; and I merely came around to show you that I was still alive."

Boarder (to landlady who has just discharged a profane cook)—"Was that the best steak I heard swearing in the kitchen?" Landlady—"Sir? Boarder—"O, I'm not at all surprised. It's tough enough."

Deacon Jones (sermon)—"My young friend do you attend a place of worship?" Young man—"Yes, sir, regularly, every Sunday night."

Deacon Jones—"Pray tell me where you go to worship." Young man—"I'm on my way to see her now."

At a public dinner, Mrs. Pongee—"Isn't that Mr. Delliver near the chairman?" Pongee—"Yes, my dear." "How utterly miserable he looks! Has he been ill?" Oh, no; he's all right. The poor fellow is booked for a funny speech to-night."

Mrs. Blinks—"See here, Mr. B., I thought you said you had been duck shooting." Mr. Blinks—"Yes, m' dear, been duck (hic) shooting." "But these ducks you brought home are tame ducks." "Y-e-s, m' dear, I tamed 'em after I (hic) shot 'em."

Edison has invented a photographic clock that will talk. If he will teach a timepiece to yawn and say "Good night, George"—or whatever his front name may be—about half past 10 p. m., every family in which there is a courtly daughter will purchase one.

Rogers—"I tell you sir, when the Chickasaw bank pressed poor old Jones for a settlement it signed his death warrant." William—"You don't say so! Why did it affect him so seriously?" "He had taken a heavy cold, and the draught from the bank brought on pneumonia."

Croup Can Be Prevented.

We want every mother to know that croup can be prevented. There is no question about this; as it has been done in thousands of cases, and you may depend upon it that when a child takes the croup it is wholly owing to the negligence of its parents. True croup never appears without due and timely warning; a few hours or a day or two before the attack, the child becomes hoarse. This hoarseness is the first indication of croup, and is a sure sign that croup is to follow, unless promptly and properly treated. The free use of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy as directed with each bottle, under the heading "To prevent croup," will dispel all symptoms of the disease. This first sign of croup, hoarseness, may be overlooked by young mothers or those not familiar with the disease. Under such circumstances, or when not properly treated, the hoarseness becomes more marked, and the child shows symptoms of having taken cold, such as a peculiar, rough cough is developed. Even at this stage Chamberlain's Cough Remedy will prevent the croup, but after the cough has developed the croup is liable to appear at any moment. The proper way is to keep a bottle of this remedy at hand, it costs but 50 cents, and only a few doses will be required over a third of a bottle, is required to dispel all symptoms of the disease. Can you afford to risk so much for so little? There is not the least danger in giving this remedy in large and frequent doses, which are always required, as it contains no injurious substance. As proof of this fact we refer to John L. Olson, of Des Moines, whose 18-month-old boy drank the entire contents of a 50 cent bottle of Chamberlain's cough remedy without the least injury. Certainly it made the baby vomit very freely; but after taking a nap he would have been glad to have drank another bottle of the remedy, as he liked it. A similar instance occurred near Valley Springs, Dakot. Mrs. Mattie Johnson's two-year-old daughter, Annie, drank a full bottle of the remedy without injury. This remedy has been the sole reliance of thousands of mothers for croup, and especially as a preventive for many years, and has never been known to fail. It is also invaluable for colds and whooping-cough. For sale by Foshay & Mason.

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