

America's Great Danger

AN ENGLISH COMMENTARY.

Said an eminent English scientist recently: The danger that confronts the great American people today is not the possible adoption of a wrong financial policy for the nation, or the spread of socialism, or the increase of corruption among public men. All these are a bad enough, to be sure, but they are as nothing compared to the terrible national disease—I had almost said nation-ism—of overwork. The mad rush for wealth is set at a killing pace, and thousands fall by the way every year.

You are likely to be one of the victims! How do we know? Because it is the exception to find a man or woman of adult age in perfect health. Nervous Disorders are spreading with fearful rapidity. Among the symptoms are—Backache, Headaches, Cold Hands and Feet, Dizziness, Hot Flashes, Fluttering Sensation, Fainting, Headache, Hysteria, Irritability of the Heart, Melancholy, Failing Memory, Irritation, Rheumatism, Shit Mouth, Feebleness, Nervous Dyspepsia, Sexual Debility, Etc., etc.

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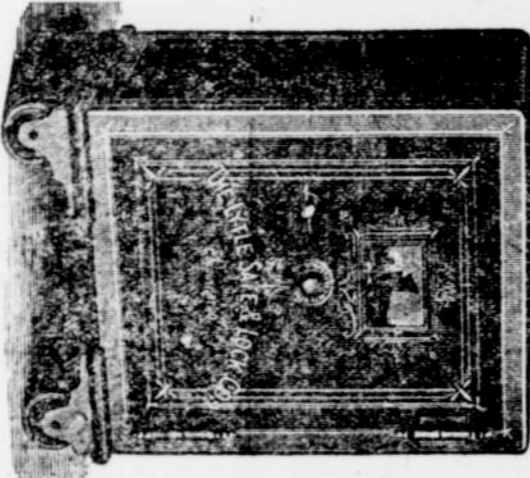
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THE CHERUB.

FROM LADIES' WORLD.

CHAPTER II.

The beautiful winter's sun is shining brightly through the windows of our cozy little home on the banks of the Tred Avon River, and very cheerfully sing the birds in the room. Never was life so sweet to me at this moment, and as I sit in deep reflection the time passes rapidly away.

At length Lillian breaks the silence. Taking the letter from my hand, she essays to read the blotted word, finally uttering a little cry of vexation. "What can it be?" she says again and again, and her persistence causes me to look up.

"Oh," I say, carelessly, "probably some native of the jungle—a mulatto boy, perhaps; or maybe it's a dog."

Silence again for a full minute. Then:

"Rose," says Lillian, solemnly, weighing each word, "are you blind? Do you not recall what a practical joker father is?"

I readily yield this point. No jollier man ever lived than Henry Fairfax, is the comment of those who know him; and I have had reason to remember many of his tricks—notably one wherein he caught the parrot to imitate Aunt Chloe's [our colored cook, a relic of slavery days] peculiar singing and other oddities, much to her amazement and indignation, the colloquy between the two often causing me to rush precipitately to the kitchen.

"Then," comes the alarming reply, triumphantly uttered, "if you are ready and strong enough fully to stand the shock I will tell you. Are you prepared?"

I almost feel the color leaving my cheeks. "Go on, Lillian."

"It's as plain as day. The Cherub, as father calls him, is an ugly, mischievous, peace destroying, tantalizing monkey," says Lillian, dwelling on the syllables of the adjectives to give them proper weight, and that blot on the paper is made purposely to set his 'charming daughters' to guessing. So there!"

I sink back in my chair, perfectly aghast and unnerved.

"What! a monkey in this house, known of all homes for its order and civility; a monkey here to pull Rover's tail and to frighten Aunt Chloe out of her wits; to tear the feathers out of the parrot's tail and to kill my pet canaries, to say nothing of ruining—yes, ruining—my roots and bulbs in the hothouse; a monkey in this house to—to—"

My tongue fails me. The awful truth of my sister's words comes with crushing force. Long and earnestly we discuss the alarming situation, many are the suggestions offered and plans made for preventing the enemy's entrance into our sacred home. All to no avail, however, for, obedient girls that we are, we know we must submit to the stern yet kind will of our father, the naturalist.

"I know'd it," says Aunt Chloe, whom we go for sympathy and advice. "I know'd it, chile. I never had a dream o' fiah yet dat I couldn't wake up wid a tech o' de skeeters or de rheumatiz, an' de debil's own, jes' de same as yah 'rangatang thing is. I thought de whole place was jes' a-burnin' like sky-rockets. Woke up nex' mornin', but didn't have no brown skeeters nor nuffin. 'Mighty funny,' sez I, 'dat sign nebber fails.' So lo an' behol' heah you is, Miss Rose an' Miss Lillian, wid dis yah 'rangatang story! I tell you, chil'un, I ain't long fo' dis wori', 'deed I ain't, if Marsa Fairfax dun bring dat thing heah."

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However, we preserve silence on the subject after this, and make a "vigorous attack," as Lillian calls it, on the corners and other receptacles for dust, and in performing our household duties pass the time until the night before the fateful day.

"Lilian," says I, assuming that calm dignity so essential in a sister twelve years older than her junior when demonstrating some important point, "draw your chair closer to the fire, my dear. So! Now, have you considered further any feasible plan by which we can exclude this—this—"

"Horror," suggests Lillian, taking up my meaning.

"Exactly. This horror from the house without incurring father's ill-will? No? Then," says I secretly exulting, "my dear young girl, much as I would like to congratulate you on the activity of your intellect, I myself must lay claim to the palm, for I have hit upon an expedient the like of which could never be conceived by any other mind than that of your beloved and much abused sister."

Lilian laughs. "What is the plan? Nothing that will cause father to be angry with us, I hope," she says, apprehensively.

"No, no! Not I, indeed! He is too dear to me to cause him pain, my love. Now, pay attention. I summoned Jackson from the barn to day for the purpose of having him look up an old cage that was used, I understand, for some purpose in slavery days, and which I knew to be there. Jackson found it. Well, that important article having been found, the next thing is to acquaint you with your part in this scheme. Instead of Jackson going to the station for father tomorrow afternoon, I have engaged someone else for that purpose. You and I will, then, when we hear the jingle of bells down the road, go to the parlor door and station ourselves there awaiting his coming. Jackson, you must understand, will be with us in the parlor, cage in hand, ready to act when called upon. Of course, the good nature of our father is an important factor in this movement, for if he should become angry we are lost. My intention is to open the door quickly; when the signal is given pounce upon him—both of us, mark you—and while we place our loving arms about his neck [incidentally incapacitating him from action] Jackson with his cage will capture the—ugh!—beast that he will surely have under his arm. Which done, in the excitement that follows, the door of the cage will be opened in some mysterious manner and the brute will scamper across the snow before you can say boo!"

"Capital!" cries Lillian, much relieved.

"Once the horrible creature is out of sight there need be no fear, for father will never be able to withstand our appeals. I am sure."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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