

'Not as far as I know,' replied the head-waiter, raising his eyebrows. 'But you ask as if you suspected some crime. I hope the poor lady has not met with foul play?'

At this question Dora and Fannie also looked at the officer in anxious expectation.

He shrugged his shoulders wearily. 'Nothing can be determined about that yet,' he said. 'There must be a post-mortem examination first. It may prove to be a case of suicide. One of my servants had better go back with me to identify the body.'

'The porter can go. He knew the lady.' 'Very well. Then you know nothing from which it might be inferred that the lady took her own life?'

'Nothing whatever.' 'And no letter was found in her room?'

'I am sure the chambermaid would have given it to me.'

'Well, we will go and look,' said the officer, proceeding toward the door, and the head waiter followed him without delay.

The ladies and the kindly old gentleman remained alone in the dining-room.

'An every-day occurrence!' remarked the latter.

'Do you think so?' asked Dora, aroused from her reflections.

'Probably a case of disappointed love. Good heavens! What follies love causes people to commit!'

'You may be right,' was Dora's rejoinder, while the old gentleman once more took his snuff-box and twirled it between his fingers. 'She may have come here to look for a faithless lover and may not have found him.'

'Or, perhaps, she saw him in your company, madam.'

'From what do you infer that?'

'From the strange manner in which you say she stared at you.'

'I am a widow, sir.'

'That does not affect the probability of my supposition.'

'Well, perhaps I attach too much importance to that staring,' continued Dora, who did not wish to mention Sonnenberg's name. 'She may have done it unintentionally while she was thinking of suicide.'

Just then the officer and the head waiter returned. They had found nothing in Mrs Brighton's room which could throw any light on the matter in question.

Dora and Fannie re-entered their cab just as the officer, with the porter, left the hotel for the purpose of having the body identified. No one had thought of inquiring for the names of the ladies.

'What do you say now?' asked Fannie, sadly, as they drove away rapidly.

Dora looked thoughtfully out of the window. The quivering of her firmly-closed lips betokened her inward agitation.

'What should I say?' she replied. 'It is quite possible that the old gentleman is right, and that disappointed love drove the poor woman to her death. It may be that she was Sonnenberg's mistress, and that when she saw me with him last night she thought all was lost for her.'

'In such a case, however, hate asserts its rights and demands satisfaction. The woman would certainly have enlightened you as to Sonnenberg's character in order to revenge herself on him, before taking such a step.'

'That, too, is merely a supposition, Fannie. At such times of utter despair no one reflects long; life has suddenly become a burden, and the wish to cast it off overcomes every other feeling.'

'And if a crime has been committed?'

Dora looked up in horror.

'Must it necessarily have been he who committed it?' she asked.

'Do you consider that impossible?'

'I beg of you, Fannie, let us not discuss this subject any farther, at least not now. There is no reason for our doing so, before we know whether the poor woman committed suicide or was murdered.'

'And I cannot help feeling that I suspect the latter to be the case,' replied Fannie with convincing confidence. 'The police officer's questions seemed to point to that.'

'And if so, I repeat, need it have been Sonnenberg who did it? Cannot the lady have had other acquaintances here whom she met after the opera? Is it not possible that she was attacked by thieves on her way home, who killed her in order to rob her? If Sonnenberg had known her, would he not have called on her at the hotel?'

'They may have met after leaving the theatre.'

'And you really think Sonnenberg would have at once resorted to this horrible means of ridding himself of her?'

'We cannot tell with what she may have threatened him. In the mind of such a man resolutions are quickly formed and as quickly carried out.'

Dora remained lost in thought for a long while, and looked out into the street deep in silence.

'You may be right,' she said at last. 'At any rate we must await the result of

the post mortem examination, and if that proves that a crime has been committed, the authorities will take the matter in hand. We can do nothing.'

'Have you already forgotten our suspicion of Sonnenberg?' asked Fannie, reproachfully. 'Are all investigations to cease now?'

'By no means; but, above all, let us remember the colonel's very wise warning. You can seek for proofs in secret; I cannot do so. Ernestine's keen eyes are watching me constantly, and it may be that just now only a very trifling occasion is needed to induce Sonnenberg to leave town at once. How horrible if he were really a murderer, and I had to receive him, nevertheless, as a welcome friend. And yet it must be done. And I shall even have to be doubly agreeable and attentive to him in order to dispel any doubts on his part and to encourage his hopes.'

'That will certainly be a difficult task.'

'Not so much difficult as disagreeable; but I shall accomplish it. I do not suppose that we can keep our inquiries about Mrs Brighton secret; it is not improbable that I may be involved in the investigation which must take place, and so it seems best that I should speak openly of the matter, without connecting any surmises with it. Sonnenberg cannot find anything surprising in my going to see Mrs Brighton, and I shall take the opportunity to watch him closely and see what impression the news makes on him.'

'Yes, indeed,' replied Fannie, with animation; 'and the result of your observations may furnish us with a new clue. Of course, I cannot keep this event a secret from uncle either; he will ask me what we have found out.'

'Why should you keep it secret? Just talk to him unreservedly about it. He will agree with me that we ought to exercise the utmost caution in this matter, as well as in others. Here we are at your house. Please tell the driver where to take me. I'll see you soon again, dear. Don't lose courage; all may come right yet.'

'Let us hope so,' said Fannie, returning the pressure of Dora's hand. 'When may I expect you?'

'As soon as I have learned anything new. I dare not come too often. You know I have always taken Ernestine with me until now. She will think it strange if I go out without her. If you have anything to tell me, just drop me a line and I will come to you. Remember me to the colonel and keep up a stout heart.'

(To be continued.)

THE LADY AND THE GROCER.

A parvenue asked her grocer the other day if he had any afternoon tea and sewing bee honey. He said he had none just then, but he had some prepared pouffe coffee, an excellent 'night cap.' She declined, saying her puffs never drank coffee, and wearing 'night caps' was conducive to badness.

WONDERFUL Blood-Purifying Effect

Ayer's Sarsaparilla.

Mr. Charles Stephenson, a well-known Railway Employee at Kalapoi, New Zealand, writes:

'About ten years ago, while engaged in shunting, my foot caught between the rails, and my leg was fractured below the knee. It healed in time, but I have been troubled ever since with swollen veins, and have been obliged, at times, to wear a bandage. About



a year ago it became much worse, and I feared I should be obliged to give up my work. A friend advised me to try Ayer's Sarsaparilla. I did so, and after taking four bottles the swelling disappeared, and I have not been troubled with it since.'

Ayer's Sarsaparilla Has cured others, will cure you.

EATING IN PUBLIC PLACES.

'I never could understand,' said a young lady who had been about the world a good deal, as she walked down the street after taking luncheon in a fashionable restaurant, 'why some people who are supposed to be really well bred, have such abominable manners when they take their meals in public places. I have frequently noticed the outrageous things that some of these persons do, and couldn't help wondering what a thin veneer of politeness they must wear when they are on their good behaviour. I went out to luncheon with a lady the other day, and while we were waiting to be served, entertained myself—as I often do—by noting the manners of the different persons in the room. It was exclusively a ladies' lunch room, and was frequented by persons supposed to be at least of fair intelligence and breeding.'

'Two ladies sat with both elbows on the table and their chin resting in their hands. Another, a rather pretty well-dressed young woman, broke the entire crust from a slice of bread, put one end of it in her mouth and deliberately chewed on it, in the same fashion that a man chews on the end of his cigar, except that she gradually consumed the crust and drew it into her mouth without, however, touching it at all with her fingers. It is said that the manners of men in eating-rooms where only men are served are not at all what they are expected to be either in their own homes or those of their friends, and it seems that the manners of young women are but little better.'

'It might be well to impress on the minds of young persons that it is just as easy to make good table manners second nature, as to indulge in all sorts of disagreeable and ill-bred habits. Indeed, the youngster who never has any company manners, but is polite and well-bred under all circumstances, is a very comfortable and agreeable sight. It is very easy to tell from the manners of men and women, when they are away from home and suppose themselves among strangers, just what their early training has been and what their home manners ordinarily are. Of all the weaknesses of human nature, there is nothing more worthy of censure than the habit of what we call "company manners."'

FALLING IN LOVE TOO YOUNG.

MANY a fond mother experiences great anxiety for her daughters and sons as they get into their later teens.

She is afraid her son will fall in love with a pretty face before he is twenty years old, and mar his fortune. She is still more solicitous as to what may become of her daughter's susceptibility, because she is perchance of a romantic and dreaming nature.

This anxious mother is the representative of a class which numbers thousands.

There are not many things which cause more maternal solicitude than the fear that a son or daughter will be led, while young, into a foolish or disastrous marriage.

Among the most prolific provocatives of such youthful folly are idleness, lack of mental occupation, and the restlessness and dissatisfaction which are usually induced by such stagnant conditions.

Therefore, we say to any mother who does not want her son to fall in love with a pretty face before the beard grows on his own, give him something to do; let his mind be occupied.

Employment is one of the best safeguards as well as one of the best remedies for that intermittent youthful fever mistakenly called love.

Furthermore, try to inspire your son with noble ambitions, which will lift him above his petty desires, and make him eager to achieve a manly and useful career.

As for your daughter, as soon as she leaves school give her something to do also—something useful and elevating.

She will miss the daily routine of school life, with its exercise and occupation and discipline of mind.

Undoubtedly she will fancy that the change is delightful; but she will soon become dissatisfied.

Her life will be full of restlessness her heart full of longing; and before you are aware, she will fall desperately in love with some moustached boy—possibly a harmless, probably a worthless, perhaps a villainous fellow, who, like herself, had nothing to do.

She can not only find some mischief still for idle hands to do, but he also provides many ways for idle young people to commit sad and sometimes irretrievable blunders.

One of his most effective lures is that kind of affection, erroneously called love, which is generated by the restlessness and dissatisfaction caused by idleness and vacuity of mind.

Therefore those persons who wish to save their sons and daughters from the evils that come of falling in love too young should give them plenty to do, so they may 'not rust in idleness, but shine in use.'

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