

forgive me that.' Her eyes filled with tears, she rose from her seat, and walked away from them.

'Go after her,' said the manager, putting his hand on Dalzell's shoulder. 'She will tell you all about it now.'

Dalzell shook his head. 'No. You don't know her.'

He was deeply offended. For days after this, he scarcely spoke to his wife. Before his indifference had at least been good humoured, and when he had talked with her, he had addressed her kindly. People had noticed that they were seldom together; but no one had supposed there was any estrangement. But now the fact that they were on ill terms with each other could no longer be concealed. 'I'll not humiliate myself by offering to make it up,' Dalzell told himself fiercely. 'She shall come to me. I'll make her tell me all about it yet.' He knew that she felt the studied neglect with which he treated her, the marked aversion with which he would turn away when he saw her approach him, the sneering manner in which, even when others were present, he did not scruple to address her. He saw her lips quiver, her cheeks flush at these slight and insults, and at times he had the grace to feel ashamed of himself. He justified his conduct by the excuse that he was humbling her only to bring her to him again. But what he expected never came to pass. She made no submission.

At last he was weary of being angry. 'Look here, Violet,' he said one day, 'let's have an end of this. You've treated me roughly; but I don't want to be hard with you. It's an uncomfortable sort of life we're leading. Don't you think we might be friends again?'

They were alone in their cabin. For answer his wife laid her head against his shoulder and burst into tears.

'Why Vi,' he said, feeling very magnanimous and generous because he was behaving so kindly to her, 'why will you cry over it now? If I said anything that hurt your feelings, I'm sure I beg your pardon. Will that do? Come now, tell me what you have done with Hilda. Of course, I can make inquiries. I can find out where she is without your help; but I'd rather you told me. It seems strange you should have so little confidence in me.'

'Will you promise me one thing?' she asked, looking up into his face.

'What is it?' Of course, I'll promise anything reasonable.'

'If I tell you where she is, and send for her back again, will you allow me to have the control of her education? I mean, will you give up all idea of her going to the States?'

'That's ridiculous! Give up the very thing she's best fitted for! On the stage she'd make her fortune. No, I'm too anxious for my girl to do well to promise any such thing.'

'Then I can't tell you anything,' Mrs Dalzell answered, decidedly. 'I am sorry; but I will not give way in this. You need make no inquiries. You will never find her without my help.'

'A saint would lose patience with you!' Dalzell said. 'Do you mean what you say? Will you never tell me? Are we always to be cut off from our child?'

'No, not always. She will come back after a few years.'

'A few years!'

'Yes. Surely we can spare her, if we know that it is for her good.'

'I don't know it. I don't believe any such thing. You'll hear from her, I suppose; or have you set your face against that also?'

'Oh, no! I shall hear from her sometimes.'

'Ah!' he said, meditatively, 'if letters came, he might see them. But, of course, it was all nonsense to suppose that he wouldn't be able to solve this problem. The first chance he had of starting his investigations he would search the whole world, but he would find his child.'

'So you won't?' he said, by way of conclusion.

'No,' Mrs Dalzell answered.

It was always the same answer. He would not yield to the condition she had made, and therefore she invariably met him with a blank refusal. 'No, no, and again no.' 'The fact is,' Dalzell sarcastically remarked to Mr Tomlin. 'I believe I've discovered what Carlyle was always spouting about—the "Everlasting No."'

At the end of the voyage he knew no more about Hilda than he had done at the beginning. Two months later he was still in the same condi-

tion of bewildering ignorance. He had done everything that could be thought of, short of going himself to search for his daughter. This was impossible, unless he broke his theatrical engagements. He was obliged to rest satisfied with Mrs Dalzell's assurances that Hilda was well cared for. He was not aware that his wife had any friends who would have done her such a service. Years ago he had heard of Mrs King, but at that time she had been in India, and he knew nothing of her return to England. As for the other person whose assistance Mr Dalzell had required, he had never noticed that they were accustomed to confer with each other, or that there was any intimacy between them. That Mrs Parkes was concerned in this affair he never dreamed.

If a letter came from those who had charge of Hilda he should insist on seeing it. But he was positive that no letter had come. His wife's restlessness and anxiety was proof of this. He knew as well as if she had told him that she was pining for news of her child.

It was at this time that her health began to fail. She grew thinner; there were hollows in her cheeks, which until now had scarcely lost the rounded outline of youth; her face was haggard and faded, a face that had forgotten how to smile. But she had never acted more brilliantly; and the American tour was a series of successes. Dalzell's anger might have been assuaged by this good fortune, if, for the first time, his wife had not insisted on retaining for her own use almost the whole of her earnings, which amounted to something considerable. She was saving her money, she told him, so that when Hilda returned she might perhaps be able to give up acting, and to live quietly with her daughter. 'I am so tired of it all,' she said, and Dalzell, as he looked into her altered face, so wan and thin and colourless, felt himself checked by a sudden feeling of pity.

They were at Chicago when she was taken ill. It was only a cold at first—a chill she had caught while acting. No one supposed that the illness was dangerous. It meant no more than a few days' confinement in her own room, a short rest from acting and then she would go back to her work. Not until near the end did Dalzell discover how fallacious were these hopes.

She had a relapse, and rapidly grew worse. All through the long and feverish nights she talked of her child. Over and over again she asked the same questions. Where was Hilda? When would she come? Why did they not send for her? It seemed as if in these delirious wanderings her mind had lost the secret which belonged to herself alone, and that she had forgotten why her child was no longer with her.

'There is one thing that should be done at once,' the doctor said to Dalzell. 'The nurse tells me that Mrs Dalzell is continually asking for her daughter who is absent. She is fretting for her. It will not do to thwart her in this. By all means, send for the child.'

'Send for her!' Dalzell cried despairingly. 'Oh, if I could, I'd give my right hand to be able to bring her back to her mother! But I don't know where she is. My wife never would tell me. She sent the child away from her, and it has broken her heart.'

Then in a few words he told the story of Hilda's disappearance, the doctor listening in silent astonishment.

They thought it possible that Mrs Dalzell might still say something which would give them a clue as to where Hilda might be found. But nothing was to be gained from her incoherent ramblings, nothing but the piteous cry for Hilda—Hilda, who was so far away that even if she had been summoned she would have come too late. At last the fever had burnt itself out. Mrs Dalzell slept from exhaustion. For almost a whole day she had been sleeping, or else had lain in a half unconscious state, too feeble to raise her eyelids and look around her.

It was night, and still she appeared to sleep. Her husband watched with her. He had sent the nurse away. 'You had better get some rest,' he said. 'I would rather be alone here. If you are needed I will call you at once.'

He was left alone, sitting beside the bed and watching the face of his wife.

How still it was; how white and calm! Against the dark hair tossed on the pillow the delicate features seemed to be carved of ivory. Once or twice a sudden fear seized him, and he leaned over to listen for her breathing. But he heard it again, though sometimes it faltered, sometimes seemed almost to fail.

The midnight hour passed. From somewhere near at hand he heard a clock strike one—two—and then three. He remembered the common saying that more people die in these early hours of morning than at any other time. Would she see the light of another day? The doctor had owned that he scarcely expected it. Would she ever awake from that sleep? He prayed that she might. With all his soul he longed that she might know him again, that she might speak to him before she died.

All at once her breathing began to be troubled. She moved her hands restlessly; she awoke. It was so sudden, the lifting of those dark-fringed eyelids, that he almost started. But the eyes were dull and lustreless. They seemed to be vainly striving to look through a mist, to be searching for other eyes that should have met their gaze. They were bent on Dalzell's face; but he could not tell from that look, earnest as it was, whether he was recognised.

'What is it, dearest?' he asked, in a choked voice. 'I am here. What is it that you want?'

She tried to say something; but her utterance was so indistinct that he could not understand her. One word only he distinguished, and that was 'Hilda.'

'Oh,' he said, so overmastered by his passionate grief that he could scarcely articulate, 'tell me where Hilda is! Don't you understand? I will say it again.' He bent over her and spoke slowly and distinctly. 'Where is Hilda? Tell me, so that I may send for her. Oh, for God's sake listen!'

She heard him, and from the expression of her face he felt sure that she understood. With a painful effort she tried to speak; but again it was only an unintelligible jumble of sounds.

No longer able to control himself, he sobbed aloud. The nurse, who, unheeded by him, had come into the room, touched him softly. 'Oh, sir,' she whispered, 'don't trouble her now. It is too late.'

'Can you do nothing?' he said, turning upon the poor woman almost furiously. 'Can't you give her something? Oh, if she could speak to me!'

The nurse poured something into a glass and gave it to Mrs Dalzell. It was a strong restorative, and for a moment her breathing was less laboured. Once more the eyelids fluttered, were raised, and then drooped again.

'Violet,' Dalzell said, bending over her. 'Violet! Oh, my love, speak to me!'

It seemed as if his words had broken the bonds of death. With the last effort of her strength she struggled nearer him. Her eyes were wide open now; her head sank upon his arm; it was surely a smile that parted her lips. She spoke, and this time her words, though very low, were clear and distinct as he had ever heard them. 'I am so tired,' she murmured—'so very tired.'

No more. He was stunned, stupefied with excess of grief. Heedless of the long silence, heedless of the frozen calm of that breast which so lately had panted against his own, he still watched the white face that rested on his arm, still listened for the feeble, faltering voice. She had not gone. Oh, no; she slept. It was a wild hope, a foolish thought that was soon to be drowned in the clamour of despair. 'Those lips would never speak to him again. Never, never, never!'

The lamp still burns in that silent room; but without is the pearly light of dawn, the springing of a fresh breeze on the wide grey lake, the growing tumult of a great city awaking from its sleep. Have the gates of morning opened that a soul might pass? For lo! in the jewelled east stand the foundations of that city that knows not death nor sorrow. And below, over vast prairies, over autumn cornfields, over lone farmhouses, over village and town is the march of the glad young day. Without pause or change, 'without rest or haste,' Time moves on, burying our griefs and joys beneath the oblivious years.

(To be Continued.)

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CYCLING.

The Exhibition sports meeting held in Auckland on Wednesday of last week was not, I fancy, altogether the success which the promoters had hoped it would be. The attendance in the afternoon was very poor, and though a fairly large crowd assembled in the evening, the proceeds will not leave a very large credit balance after all expenses are cleared. The attendance at night may be considered very satisfactory, and I think on the whole the spectators were satisfied with the lighting and the racing. Luckily, most of the cyclists wore very bright colours, and so could be easily distinguished; it was more difficult, however, to recognise those whose costumes were of darker hue.

Some real good finishes were provided in the cycle races, and Mr W. B. Lyre must be complimented on the success which in most instances attended his handicapping. G. Hyauiaison showed a surprisingly good turn of speed. The way in which he left Dexter and Jones in the final of the one mile first-class evoked enthusiasm, and he was deservedly cheered for his brilliant riding. In addition to winning this event, Hyauiaison carried off the Exhibition Handicap (2 miles), and finished second in the half mile. A. N. Jones, from Honolulu, was placed in two events, but failed to score a win, and Terney, the Auckland Cycling Club's champion, rode without success.

The misrace for second-class riders resulted in a good finish between H. Miller and G. C. Parker, both on the 50 yards mark. Eight were allowed to start in the final of this heat, on a track where not more than half-a-dozen can ride with safety when 'bunched.' The result was that Chalney's wheel touched someone else's, and he was upset, bringing W. Marshall down with him. Luckily neither were hurt badly, though the machines suffered. E. Reynolds' exhibition ride was spoiled by the pacing, which was far too slow. He could have knocked seconds off the time (1min 10sec) had he been extended.

If you want to try a new saddle that is noiseless and elastic try Brampton Brothers' 'Multispiral.' It has twenty-one very light coil springs on a light steel frame. The tops of the springs are riveted to a piece of leather above which is a thick felt covering, over which the leather seat is fixed. Sensitive riders should appreciate the absence of a hard back plate and peak and the 'give' and flexibility of the Multispiral.

Another neat contrivance is the combined buckhorn knife and tyre lever of the Coventry Cross Company which is cheap and strong, and enables you to whip the edge of the cover round the rim without any danger to thumb nails.

The contest over universal lighting after dark still continues in the English provincial county councils. At a recent meeting of the Holland County Council a Mr White remarked that if cyclists were afraid of vehicles they should stay at home and if any by-law were needed he should move that no cyclist should ride between sunset and sunrise. The motion for universal lighting up was rejected on this sort of argument. The amazing feature of the struggle for light is that those in authority should not realise the necessity for all vehicles