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Youth Writes a Letter to Love

By EVELYN GILL.

PART III.

"How old are you?" the doctor asked sharply.

"Twenty-four," she replied promptly, though puzzled.

He drew in a whistling breath.

"Gee!" he ejaculated. "As young as that! Then it's one of three things: your shoes are too tight, or you have indigestion, or you have had a scrap with your beau."

"It's not any of them," she defended herself.

She could not, if she would, have told him the truth. Muggins was no seminar psychology student. She was only vaguely aware that she was sick of the business of nursing other women's husbands to health, working always for other women's happiness and getting nothing out of it herself but her thirty a week.

"Why did you go into nursing?" he demanded.

The psychology student which Muggins was not would have said that what she wanted, what her hungry heart craved, was to be in things, to find emotional life that she needed; and that, after all, what she had found was only a place on the outskirts of other folks' emotional life. Muggins, being what she was, blurted out something comprehensible and not true.

"It looked like good money," she said. "But I guess the rooming house is better."

He contemplated her thoughtfully.

"It will get you yet," he mused.

"What?"

"The war."

She shook her head skeptically.

Then they went together to the sick room, forgetting completely that he had asked a question that had not been answered.

Nor did they remember it when Dr. Biggins returned a second time that day. The cause of his visit was Godfrey. Mrs. Hammond had felt uneasy about him all evening. He looked feverish and really ill, although he kept assuring her that he was quite all right. There was nothing, of course, that he could tell her about the cause of his misery. She did not even know that a certain stationer in the town had a lovely daughter Mary, who sometimes deigned to exchange magazines for small coins when her father was out or busy; nor would she have understood had she known. What she thought of was bronchitis, and when she finally called the nurse to take the boy's temperature the little thermometer gave such an alarming report that the doctor was summoned at once. He talked vaguely of acute gastritis or a little cold, and finally admitted that he couldn't be sure until morning.

But outside of the sick room he wondered to Mrs. Hammond whether he might have had some sort of an upset.

"Upset stomach?" inquired Mrs. Hammond. "Something he's eaten?"

"Well, that, of course," said Dr. Biggins; "but I was wondering if he might have had—might have had—some sort of emotional shock."

Mrs. Hammond stopped being worried long enough to laugh.

"Well, his college report gave his father and me an emotional shock! But it didn't give him one! And his tire bill, too. Indeed, I wish that had upset him a little."

So he gave his orders to the nurse, and the convalescent little Hammonds were left that night to the care of nursemaid and governess, while Muggins was officially installed in Godfrey's room, to which a cot had been brought for her use.

But she sat up a little while to keep an eye on him, for he was tossing feverishly upon his bed. Shading the drop light so that it would not disturb the patient, she took up her leather writing pad and the letter she had started that afternoon to her sister. She looked up from her paper at the end of each line or so, to make sure that the patient did not need her.

The letter progressed rapidly, for she found herself able to think more clearly, in this immense midnight stillness of the house, than she had done yesterday with all the afternoon's distractions about her.

"I cannot see," she wrote, "that there is more money in it than in nursing."

She paused and stared dreamily into space. After all, what was there to gain by the change? Then she went on:

"That is, after you have paid the help and the coal and the electricity and the rent and the upkeep generally; that is, not unless you called it a sanatorium or a rest house and charged fancy prices. But I will come out and look it over, because if it pays better I want to go into it. I think it would be easier, on the whole."

Then she asked about the children, and told about some twelve and a half cent initial handkerchiefs she had bought at a sale, and signed herself, "Your affectionate sister."

And then, because her patient seemed quiet, she turned out the light and lay down on her cot. Lying there, she thought about her shoes that needed half-soling; and she wandered whether when she was fifty she'd still be nursing or still be keeping a rooming house; and then she reminded herself that she'd better not order any new uniforms until she decided— "Mary!" cried the voice from the bed.

For a moment she was too startled even to rise. After all her experience as a nurse she would have thought that nothing could startle her; and yet that simple name called to her across the room almost paralyzed her. How did he know that her name was Mary? Aside from the teachers in school, no one had ever called her that. To her family she was Mame; to the Hammond family she was Muggins; to the rest of the world Miss Hopkins.

"Mary!" called the voice again—this time with a strangely beseeching note in it.

Hastily she rose and crossed the darkened room to his bed.

She brought him a glass of water, and after he had taken it his hand reached out and clung convulsively to hers. So she seated herself on the chair beside the bed. The boy was quiet now, except that his hand kept its feverish grasp on her own, giving it a queer sensation, more accustomed as it was to mustard plasters and thermometers and hot-water bottles than the strong, slim hand of a boy.

"Mary."

In the darkness she bent toward him a little.

"Yes?" she questioned soothingly.

"You say 'Yes,' just like that," he reproached her bitterly. " 'Yes'—that's all you say."

"What did you want me to say?" she asked him in her conciliatory voice.

"You might at least say, 'Yes, dear.' "

For Muggins it was like a sudden plunge into ice-cold water, making her gasp.

He flung her hand from him.

"You don't care," he admonished her bitterly.

A sudden glory of tenderness filled her heart. She bent over him.

"I do care," she declared truthfully.

He sought her hand again, and clung to it satisfied.

(To be continued.)

The Little Path.

Once, strolling slowly down a sun swept way,
I spied, half hidden 'neath an alder tree,
A little woodsy path that beckoned me;
I thought I should come back another day
And through its lure of leaf and blossom stray,
And so I sauntered merrily along,
Humming a stave of some old lilting song
That ran, "Seize joy and beauty while you may."

But when fate gave me leisure to return
I searched the hedge rows hour by hour in vain
Where summer's growth veiled all with vines and fern;
And, though life's gifts have brought me treasured gain,
Each June I mourn when dreams drift down the mind,
The little path that I could never find.

1,229 British prisoners in German hands are still unaccounted for.

Put salt in the first water the spinach is washed in—then the other waters need not be so many.

Horseshoes were formerly regarded as luckbringers for ships; Nelson had one on board the Victory.

The Isle of Sheppey has lost over 80 acres during the last 40 years owing to the action of the sea.

Canning Time.

Summer came so quickly to us in Ontario this year that canning time was upon us almost before the furnace fires were out. But, of course, we must can. Our war lessons showed us the desirability of taking care of our surplus fruit and vegetables, and if we lived in a section fortunate enough to have a home agent or a visit from a specialist we have had demonstrated to us the superiority of home-canned stuff to that put up by commercial canneries.

Of course, you canned your rhubarb by the cold water method. That is, you peeled and cut the rhubarb, packed it into sterilized jars, filled the jars to overowing with cold water, using new rubbers, and sealed tightly. Do not forget that gooseberries may be canned in the same way, saving both time and sugar. And next fall if you want to experiment with cranberries they, too, may be done by cold water method.

When you open these fruits pour off the water and cook down to half the original quantity. Then add the fruit and cook until of the desired consistency, sweetening just before removing from the fire. A pinch of soda added while the fruit is cooking will neutralize some of the acid and lessen the amount of sugar needed.

Now as to cold pack. Since the armistice has been signed and we feel we can speak our mind freely, I have heard a number of housekeepers say they were not thoroughly convinced as to the superiority of this method for everything. These were women who have been canning for years with good luck. The girls of the canning clubs and the younger women are, of course, strongly in favor of the new method. The others, while admitting it is best for vegetables, yet maintain that many fruits are just as well done the old open-kettle way. And many maintain that the old way is much less work.

Berries, however, keep their shape better and look better if done the cold pack way. To make the syrup for berries allow two quarts of water for every three pounds of sugar and boil five minutes. This makes a medium thin syrup. Wash and hull berries, pack in jar, of course, jars and tops and rubbers must be boiled up in water, adjust rubbers and put on tops, turning down until the edge just touches the rubber. Then set in water which is boiling and boil ten minutes. Remove jars, tighten tops, invert to see if they do not leak, and store in a dark place. A good way is to save all your paper bags and slip each can in a bag. This helps to keep the color. Raspberries are apt to settle a great deal. To get around this let them stand fifteen minutes after the syrup has been added, when you will find they have settled enough so that you may add more berries.

The favorite method of canning strawberries in our household is the following: Use only fresh, firm, ripe and sound berries. Prepare berries. Add eight ounces of sugar and two tablespoons of water for every quart of berries. Boil slowly for fifteen minutes in an enameled or acid-proof kettle, covered with a well-fitted cover while boiling. Allow berries to cool and remain over night in covered kettle. Pack cold berries in glass jars. Put rubber and cap in position, not tight. Sterilize for ten minutes in hot water bath outfit; if using a water-seal outfit or a five-pound steam-pressure outfit, sterilize six minutes; or if using an aluminum pressure-cooker outfit sterilize for four minutes. Remove jars. Tighten covers. Invert and cool to test the joint. Wrap jars with paper to prevent bleaching, and store.

Of course, you are going to make some of your berries into sun preserves. There are several ways of doing this. Here is one. Pick the berries early in the morning, choosing weather which promises to be hot and dry for two or three days. Wash and hull berries and weigh. Allow equal quantities of sugar and berries. Place the berries on a shallow platter. Make a thick syrup of the sugar moistened with just enough water or berry juice to dissolve the sugar. Pour syrup over berries, cover berries with a glass and set in the sun until the berries are soft and the syrup has jellied. The time depends upon weather conditions. Then store in fruit jars and simmer for ten minutes in hot water bath.

A second method calls for boiling the berries before placing in the sun. Equal quantities of fruit and sugar are used. Make a syrup by allowing two cups of water for every three pounds of sugar and boiling until it threads. Add the berries and cook fifteen minutes. Then spread on platters and put in the sun until syrup jellies. This may then be stored as jelly, covering the top with paraffin.

Raspberries, cherries and peaches may be preserved by the sun method. The cherries should be pitted before weighing, and the peaches pared and cut in eighths or quarters, according to size. Cherries are especially good. Use the juice of the cherries to moisten the sugar for the syrup.

One woman always stores some strawberries uncooked and preserved simply with sugar. This takes a great deal of sugar, a pound and a quarter for every pound of fruit, but the result is more than satisfying when winter draws around. The fruit should be mixed with the dry sugar and every berry crushed. A wooden potato masher is a good "weapon" to use for crushing the fruit. Berries of all kinds, and currants may be kept in this way. The jars should be filled to overflowing and nw rubbers used. Of course, jars, tops and rubbers must be sterilized.

If you have quantities of strawberries bottle some juice to combine later with apple juice for jelly. Strawberry juice itself is lacking in pectin and will not make jelly. But mixed with two parts of apple juice it makes a pretty and delicious jelly. For raspberry jelly use equal parts of raspberry and apple juice.

Contributed Recipes.

Strawberry Meringue Pie.—Have ready a baked crust, then wash and sweeten thoroughly one quart of fresh ripe berries. Fill in crust and cover with the beaten whites of two eggs, to which has been added one-half cup of sugar and one-half teaspoon of vanilla. Place in oven and brown quickly. This is excellent.—H. E. M.

Fruit Sandwich—A pleasing sandwich is made by mashing berries, adding sugar and placing between thin slices of hot buttered toast. After the sandwiches are made, place between hot plates until the bread is a little softened and some of the juice absorbed.—Mrs. L. M. T.

Fruit Eggnog—For each person beat one raw egg quite stiff, add one-half cup of fruit juice and beat again, then add one-half cup of whipped cream. Beat together thoroughly, chill and serve.—Mrs. J. J. O'C.

Strawberry Shortcake—To serve six, use two cups of pastry flour in which is sifted three teaspoons of baking powder. Mix in two-thirds of cup of lard, or one large half-cup of sweet cream. Moisten with sweet milk, add a pinch of salt. Roll out the dough until it is creamy and smooth. Bake in two pie tins of equal size. Remove from the oven when it is a golden brown. For the fruit filling, take a pint of fresh hulled strawberries; crush them and add one cup of sugar. Mix them with a cup of whipped sweet cream. Spread each piece of the cake with butter and place the fruit between the layers. Serve while it is warm. In the absence of strawberries any fruit may be used, even canned fruit.—Miss Z. I. D.

Most Quoted Author

Ideal standards of literary excellence are not easy things to devise, but it is curious to observe what fair results can be obtained by the most empirical and vulgar methods. Take, for instance, the test of sales. Entirely misleading as applied to a limited period, it gives a very fair gauge if extended over a sufficient lapse of time. The plays of Shakespeare, the novels of Sir Walter Scott, have probably been sold in far larger numbers than any other volumes of poetry or prose fiction. And Shakespeare's predominance is, as it should be, by far more marked than Scott's. In the same way one would incline to assent that the most quoted poet is also the best. * * * A writer like Spenser would be put too low, while Pope would be put too high; still their respective value to the literature and to the nation would not be altogether inadequately expressed. * * *

Of all literatures Latin has been incomparably the most cited, partly because Latin is still familiar to every educated man, but largely also because of the practical bent of Latin genius. Horace is more quoted not only than Vergil, but than any poet in the world, yet no one assigns to him a rank corresponding to this fact. The weakness of Horace lies just in the universal applicability of his sentiments; his counsels are so far-reaching in their wisdom that they approach to platitudes. * * * And it is curious to observe how in our own literature "Hamlet," the most subtle and elusive of dramas, is, nevertheless, a perfect storehouse of aphorism and familiar reflections. * * *

All men cannot fairly be judged by their best known phrases. From Keats a thousand people have echoed the phrase about a "joy forever" as against one that ever cited appositely those lines, infinitely more characteristic, that tell of

"Magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn."

It was Shakespeare's way magnificently to encroach upon the common domain and say, "This is mine, though millions have used it." Keats wandered in lonely places; he does not come to us, we have to go to him. It is only from the lettered that he or those of whom he is the chief receive the tribute that quotation conveys. A phrase remembered for its mere beauty, a thought kept in mind for its strangeness, not for its familiarity, is produced at the opposite occasion only by men who have a real sense of literature. * * * Lamb is himself one of the prose writers who is most quotable * * * of the great men, Scott is the least quotable, Dickens the most, while George Eliot is perhaps more quotable than either. * * * But it is a fair way of estimating greatness to say that he is greatest who has had most influence on humanity, and the authors who have had most influence are on the whole those whose words have been most frequent on the lips of men.

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A studio in a hospital! It sounds incongruous, but after one has spent an hour in Captain Derwent Wood's studio at the 3rd London General Hospital, all sense of incongruity disappears, says London Answers.

Here it is that Captain Derwent Wood, A.R.A., R.A.M.C. (T), takes up the task where it has been left by the surgeon, and if he does not heal as the surgeon has done before him, at least he ameliorates the lot of those who have suffered facial disfigurements through wounds, and makes life again possible.

In the picture gallery you may see photos of these sufferers, before and after—the former often terrible; the latter, at the worst, odd—no more. Then there are the rows of plaster casts showing the nature of the injuries even more vividly.

The task is to hide these injuries artifically and the modus operandi is somewhat as follows: The patient on coming to the artist-surgeon, is already healed of his wounds. First, a plaster cast is taken, upon which the artist works with plasticine, moulding the damaged features anew. From this cast a mask is made of copper-plate; this is fitted and then silvered.

After this comes the enamelling of the mask, and this is where the art comes in. Several coats are applied to the metal surface, and fnally it is carefully and skillfully colored to resemble the complexion of the wearer. At a little distance the features appear perfectly natural, and the deception is complete at ten yards or so.

Most of these masks are held in position by means of spectacles, which incidentally further aid in the deception, and add to the comfort of the wearer.

In this way new noses, eyes, foreheads, cheeks and jaws are fashioned, and the patient is able to go once more among his fellows without the fear in his heart that he will be either an object of horror or of compassion. It is a great work.

Callahan's Call.

There had been a slight accident in a coal mine, with the result that Casey was partly buried by a small quantity of earth.

Callaghan, the leader of the rescuing party, called down to Casey: "Kape aloive, Casey. We're rescuin' ye."

Whereupon there came from the earth a muffled voice: "Is that big McIntyre up there wid ye?"

"Shure he is."

"Thin ask him plaze to step off the rooins. I've enough on top o' me widout him."

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