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H457

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THE WHITE SHIELD

BY MYRTLE REED.

PART I.

People said that Joe Hayward's pictures lacked something." No one was sure what it was. Even the critics, who know everything, were at a loss. Hayward himself worked hard, studying the masters, patiently correcting faults in color and perspective, and succeeding after a fashion. But he felt that art, in its highest and best sense, was utterly beyond him; there was a haunting, elusive something which was continually out of his reach.

Occasionally, when he sold a picture, he would give "a time" to a dozen artist chums from studios nearby, as they did whenever fortune favored them; after which he would paint again, on and on, with a really tremendous perseverance.

At length, he obtained permission to make an exhibition of his work in a single room at the Art Gallery. The pictures were only ten in number, and some of them were small, but they represented a hard year's work. When he superintended the hanging, on Saturday morning, he was more nearly happy than he had ever been in his life. The placard on the door, "The Hayward Exhibition Will Open Monday," filled him with pleasure. It was not a conceited feeling of importance, but rather a happy consciousness that he had done his best.

At last he was suited with the arrangement. The men went out with the ladders and wire, and he stood in the centre of the room, contemplating the result. The landscape in the corner might be a little out of drawing, he thought, but the general public would not notice that. And the woman in white, beside it, which he had christened "Purity," certainly showed to very good advantage. He remembered very well the day he had put the finishing touches upon it, after the night of revelry in which he had helped Jennings and a dozen other fellows from neighboring studios to celebrate the sale of Jenning's "Study of a Head," and how he had thought at the time that he, who spent such nights, had no business to paint a figure like this of "Purity."

As he turned to leave the room, he saw a gray-gowned young woman, who evidently did not know that the pictures were not yet upon public view. She passed him as she came in, with a rustle of silken skirts and a cooling odor of violets. Seeing the key of the room in his hand, she turned to him and said:

"Pardon me, but can you tell me whose pictures these are?"

"These are Hayward's," he replied.

"Hayward," she repeated after him, as if the name were wholly new to her.

"Hayward is a young artist with a purely local reputation," he explained. "This is his first public exhibition."

She surveyed the collection without any strong show of pleasure, until he remarked, "You don't seem to think much of his beginning."

She was prompt in her answer. "No, I do not. They seem to lack something."

He sighed inwardly. That old, old "something"! Hayward's pictures all "lacked something," as was commonly said of them; but what that something was, his intimates, his fellow artists, were not the kind to know.

"What is it, do you think?" he asked.

"I don't know," she replied slowly. "If one knew the man one might be able to tell."

For the first time she looked him full in the face. He saw nothing but her eyes, clear and honest, reading him through and through.

"Yes," he answered, "if you knew the man, I think you could tell."

"I'm not at all sure," she laughed. "It's only a fancy of mine."

Glancing at her watch, she looked surprised and turned away. He listened until the silken rustle had completely ceased. Then he too went out. On the stairs he found a handkerchief. It was edged with lace, delicately scented with violet, and minutely marked in the corner, "Constance Grey."

On Sunday night the studio building where Hayward and others painted glowed with light. The morrow's opening of "The Hayward Exhibition" was being celebrated with a "time" at the expense of the artist. Glasses clinked and the air was heavy with smoke. Two women from a vaudeville theatre nearby made merry upon an impromptu stage. Everybody was happy, except Hayward. The owner of the handkerchief was in his mind. He felt that those eyes of hers, gray, deep and tender though they were, might blaze with anger at a scene like this. The handkerchief had no place in such an atmosphere. He went over to his bookcase and put it between the leaves of his Tennyson, smiling as he caught the words on the opposite page:

A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldy worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

Her handkerchief would feel more at home there, though, as he closed the book, he wondered what she would say.

A quick eye had followed him, and soon afterward its owner, Jennings, took occasion to examine the volume. He waved the handkerchief aloft triumphantly. "Heigho, fellows! Hayward's got a new mark for his clothes. Look here—'Constance Grey'!"

Hayward was shaken with a mingled shame and anger that he could not explain, even to himself. The words and tone with which he bade his friend put the little thing back where he had found it were as hot as they were foolish. For a moment the two friends faced each other; then Jennings apologized, and then Hayward. In sparkling champagne they drank to good fellowship again. But the incident was not without a certain subtle effect upon the celebration, and at 1 o'clock Hayward sat alone by his easel, his head buried in his hands, a dainty handkerchief upon his lap, and before him the rapidly sketched outline of a face.

He knew now why Jennings had angered him. The shaft of light from a woman's eyes, which once strikes deep into the soul of every man, had at last come home to him.

The "opening" was auspicious. Wealth and art alike were well represented. One of the most important pictures was marked "Sold" before the evening was over, and everybody congratulated the artist upon his good fortune. In praise of his art very little was said that did not somehow carry in it, however silently, the old drawback, the implication of something lacking; still, exultation ran rife in his veins. There were throngs of beautiful women there, and he was the centre of it all.

Toward the end of the evening, a lady who had once sat for a portrait came up to him.

"Mr. Hayward," she said. "I want you to know my niece."

He followed her into the next room, where a young lady sat on a divan. Her gray eyes were lifted to his face, and then suddenly lowered in confusion.

"Mr. Hayward," she said, "I am so much ashamed!" And when he tried to reassure her, she answered, "Let's not talk about it; it's too humiliating."

So they spoke of other things. He learned that she had come from a distant city to visit relatives, and the aunt invited him to call upon them. Friday afternoon came at last, and Miss Grey and her aunt were at home. Other Fridays followed, and other days which served as well as Fridays. It was seldom that the girl looked him in the face; but when she did so, he felt himself confessed before her—a man with no right to touch even the hem of her garment, yet honoring her with every fibre of his being.

They were much together, and Constance took a frank enjoyment in his friendship. He made every effort to please her, and one day they went into the country. Constance was almost childishly happy, but the seeming perfection of her happiness distressed him when he learned that in a very few days she was to sail for Europe, pass the summer and autumn in travel, and spend the winter in Paris.

At length they sat down under a gnarled oak tree and watched the light upon the river and in the sky. After some moments of silence Howard spoke:

"I think you know the man now. Will you tell me what his pictures lack?"

(To be continued.)

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And smile when evening falls,
This is my task.

To follow truth as blind men long for light,
To do my best from dawn of day till night,
To keep my heart fit for His holy sight
And answer when He calls,
This is my task.

And then My Saviour by and by to meet,
When Faith hath made her task on earth complete,
And lay my homage at my Master's feet
Within the jasper walls,
This crowns my task.

—Henry VanDyke.

WHEN HEMMING NAPKINS.

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The Fount of Youth.

The fount of youth discovered by our modern Ponce de Leons' does not resemble at all closely the image in the mind of the early Spanish navigator. Instead of being a pure stream of water gushing from the bowels of the earth, they have found it to be white streams, filled with all the nutrients needed to give you to every tissue of the body. They come from the udder of the humble dairy cow.

The discovery of modern scientists does not bring the presto changes that the Spaniard hoped to find in the fountain he searched for, but they do know that the regular use of the floid from the udder of the healthy dairy cow is a real elixir of youthfulness. Not only does its constant use keep the body functioning with the vigor of youth, but it restores vitality to those whose energies have been wasted, and invariably with such restoration, hope and courage creep back into the lines of worried faces.

Have you ever had your path suddenly turn sunshiny because of a cheerful word? Have you ever wondered if this could be the same world, because someone had been unexpectedly kind to you? You can make to-day the same for somebody.

Our very best friends have a tincture of jealousy even in their friendship; and when they hear us praised by others, will ascribe it to sinister and interested motives if they can. —C. C. Colton.

They are never alone that are accompanied with noble htoughts.

Minard's Liniment Heals Cuts.

The great heart will no more complain of the obstructions that make success hard than of the iron walls of the gun which hinder the shot from scattering.—Emerson.

True Romances Barred

We regret very much to inform our Canadian friends that our magazine, TRUE ROMANCES, has been barred by the custom or post-office officials.

Magazines are barred from Canada because of complaints registered against them. We find, however, that adverse critics of our publications rarely read them. From the title and general appearance they sometimes class them with publications which depend entirely upon their sale through lascivious appeal. As a reader of this publication you know that the magazines we publish are not of that character.

We would be greatly pleased, therefore, if you would indicate your friendly feeling toward TRUE ROMANCES and your confidence in it by petitioning the Commissioner of Customs, Ottawa, Canada, that such reinstatement be made.

At the foot of this announcement is a brief form of petition provided for your convenience. Will you not sign it to-day and mail it to E. J. Blackley, 130 Richmond St. West, Toronto, who will present it together with the large number of similar petitions to the Commissioner of Customs as soon as they are all in.

MACFADDEN PUBLICATIONS, Inc.

The Honorable Commissioner of Customs,
Ottawa, Canada

I believe that TRUE ROMANCES is a magazine of good moral tone and high ideals and that it is honestly entitled to reinstatement upon the list of magazines eligible for circulation throughout the Dominion of Canada. Accordingly I respectfully petition you to make such reinstatement.

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The Company had **assets**, invested in the best classes of securities, of ..... (An increase for the year of $35,168,000)	$209,257,000
The **total liability** of the Company (including reserves and other liabilities to policyholders of $185,586,000) amounted to	$187,885,000
The Company has **set aside** for unforeseen contingencies the sum of	$3,500,000
Leaving a **surplus** over all liabilities and contingency funds of (An increase for the year of $3,603,000)	$17,872,000
The **cash income** for the year, from premiums, interest, rents, etc., was ..... (An increase for the year of $10,714,000)	$46,965,000
Total **payments to policy holders or their representatives** for death claims, maturing policies and other benefits, in 1923 amounted to	$22,145,000
New **paid assurances issued** during the year totalled ... (An increase for the year of $16,593,000)	$107,391,000
The Company had **assurances in force** (net) amounting to . (An increase for the year of $72,360,000)	$703,765,000

The 318,443 ordinary policies of the Company protect homes and businesses at home and abroad, while in addition 22,731 commercial and industrial employees are protected under Sun Life group assurance policies

Dividends to policyholders again materially increased

Every figure in this statement sets a
NEW HIGH RECORD
in Canadian Life Insurance history

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