

Ned Clopper's Little Game,

OF LOVE AND LUCK.

BY C. M. FARMER.

IN TWO PARTS—PART I.

Ned Clopper was only twenty-one, but he was in love. It was no doubt foolish in Ned, seeing he was only a country swain born and bred on a farm—his only playmates in childhood and youth being the pig and goats—his only education the hebdomadary tuition of an itinerant pedagogue who imparted to his young mind a limited instalment of questionable knowledge every Saturday morning in consideration of a good supper and bed on Saturday night and a good breakfast on Sunday morning. Beyond these delicatious and an occasional half holiday for angling in a neighboring mill pond when that gentle pastime was in season, Ned knew no change from youth to early manhood, save a gradual increase in appetite and a tendency in later years to cultivate and encourage a sandy mustache and gracie; and when surveying these erstwhile appendages in his four by six inch mirror one fair morning, on getting out of bed, he suddenly bethought him that he was in love. He had not seriously considered the subject before because there was only one young lady in the neighborhood (except his mother's Irish cook) and although he had seen her (not the cook) many a time in early morning gathering flowers in her father's garden as he passed by on his way to the hay field, and had admired the dainty brown curls and the little coquettish summer hat that crowned them, the delicate round wrist and the white cambric apron embracing it, the rosy cheeks and coral lips, fair outblowing the flowers and buds she held in her soft little hands, and most of all the bright eyes and sunny smiles with which she bade him good morning—he had no suspicion until now that all the time through those silent influences for the overthrow of his happiness. But now he had at once realized the fact that the dainty brown curls, and coquettish summer hat, and white cambric apron, the rosy cheeks and coral lips, the bright eyes and sunny smiles of Angelica Bruce had been so many barbed arrows from the quiver of the mischievous little fat legged urchin which had, one and all, pierced him through and through, and that he loved Angelica to distraction.

"Why, what a soft-headed chap I am!" he said to himself, as he gently and gingerly smoothed his little sandy mustache with his finger and thumb. "Here I am, a man grown—never been five miles from this blessed old cabbage patch in my life—know nothing of life beyond the barn yard and pig pen—never read any books worth reading but Gil Blas and Robinson Crusoe (and these I've had to keep hidden from the old folks ever since old Plegitt gave them to me, and to read them by candle light)—never kissed a girl—never drank a glass of whisky nor mug of beer—never had more than a dollar at one time since I was born—in short never did anything fit for me since I first came into the world. I'm not going to stand this, you know—I guess not—not if I know my self! My mind's made up. I'll do it or bust!"

This sounded like a bloody threat. It might mean suicide, or going into the army, or taking summary vengeance on those under whose control he had so long been kept down and, as it were, squelched. But he contemplated none of these rash but meritorious measures. His heart was passionate but pacific, and he neither meditated bloodshed nor bluster.

His resolve being taken he put on his best clothes and calfskin boots, although it was the middle of the week, and with his new straw hat in one hand and a little red cane in the other, answered the call of his mother and went down to breakfast.

"Why, what's the name of sense! What's the matter with the boy?" exclaimed Clopper senior, laying down his knife and fork and staring at his son and heir, while Mrs. C. raised her hands and eyes piously to the ceiling, as Ned laid aside his hat and came and dropped into his allotted chair at the breakfast table, full of bluster and confusion.

"Edward, my son," continued the old gentleman, "what are you up to—dressed up in your store clothes? This ain't Sunday, my boy, nor the Fourth of July neither, and don't you know Jim S'ale and Peter Raynor's a coming to-day to help git in the hay?"

"The hay be blowed!" remarked Ned. "I've got something to attend to besides the hay," and he emphasized the last word with supreme contempt.

"But Ned my dear—" his mother, began.

"Hold on," said the young gentleman impatiently. "I've got a little particular business on hand this morning up at the squire's. I'll finish it up in an hour or two and get back in time to go ahead with the hay."

"Business with the squire," gasped the father, "oh lord!"

"It's more business with his daughter Angelica," replied Ned, very red in the face, but it may lead to business with the old game cock too. I'm going to—ask Angelica to be my wife. There. That's what the matter."

Ned said this slowly and with an air of confidence, as if he were some fencible lord who had made up his mind to espouse some vassal's fair daughter, and only need to announce his gracious intention to have her gratefully placed in his arms by her plebeian sire.

His parents were too much astonished at this presumptuous speech to utter a word in reply. They could only look at the youngster with eyes and mouth wide open, taking advantage of their helpless state, and Ned hastily swallowed his cup of coffee, and leaving his plate untouched, bolted from the house.

As Ned slowly approached the little flower garden where he naturally expected to see the fair object of his devotion engaged in her usual playful pastime of gathering her morning bouquet, he felt a warm streak of bashful timidity tingling through his nerves and began to fear he was about to put his foot in it, as the saying is. He had never made love to a girl, and wondering how he ought to begin. Should he walk boldly up, take the little hand in his and say, "Angelica, my darling, I'm desperately in love with you, and shall die at sunset this evening if you don't at once consent to be my wife!" Or should he drop on one knee

and with outstretched hands, in the posture of a ball catcher, exclaim, "Oh, Angelica, my first and only love, look down in pity on your captive alive and bid him rise your accepted husband, or a pistol bullet shall penetrate his brain ere the shades of evening fall upon the landscape?" Here his mental rhapsody was suddenly put to flight by a sight that staggered him and caused a cold chill to run all the way down his spine. Emerging from the house, and attended to the gate by the squire and his daughter, came a gay young swell of the latest metropolitan breed and dressed regardless of hard times and high tariffs, who mounted the squire's favorite thorough bred cob, touched his hat to the squire, kissed his gloved fingers to Angelica and cantered away towards the railway station.

Ned suddenly thought he'd go home, take off his clothes and resume his labors in the hay field. Then he thought he wouldn't. His first impulse was to turn and run away without any definite thought of where he should run to; but the next moment his new-born passion got the better of this rash proceeding, and he boldly advanced to the wooden wicket, seemed to him a grim iron barrier that shut him out from his fair idol. Recognizing him at once the charming little Angelica came forward to greet him (she was more beautiful than ever), while the squire, with a slight nod, returned to the house.

"Miss Angy," stammered Ned, as he took the small white hand she extended, "I've come over early to settle a little business with you before the boys come to cart in the hay. I hope you are pretty well this morning. You look lovely, I'm nearly crazy with—never mind that—who was that chap who rode off? I hope he don't know you—at least I hope you don't know him—that is there's nothing serious between—as I was saying—I mean as I was passing by I thought I'd just call and ask how the squire is. But upon my word you are looking more beautiful than—"

"Why good gracious me, Mr. Clopper!" exclaimed the young lady, "how funny you do talk! What sort of business did you want to see me about? I don't know anything about business. You'd better go in and see papa. Oh look now—you've crushed my pretty flowers all to pieces." Ned had grasped the little bouquet she held lightly in her disengaged hand, and convulsively thrust it inside his white duck waistcoat.

"Excuse haste," said Ned, "I don't exactly remember what I was going to say—but the amount of it is that I've come over to make you an offer of marriage. There now, hang it, you understand me. I'm dead in love with you, and can't live four and twenty hours unless you say yes."

"My stars!" cried Angelica, jerking away her hand which Ned had grasped in the frenzy of his declaration. "You must be crazy. I'll run in and get paps to come and—"

"No—no," gasped Ned. "Hold on—nothing's the matter with me, but who was that that chap that just—"

"It was Mr. Van Dyke Nostrand, of New York, a very rich young man; one of the oldest families. We met him last summer at Saratoga. He's immensely rich and handsome, and papa says we are going to be married. I'm engaged to him, you know, and I don't mind—I rather like the idea in fact. Won't it be splendid to live in the city in winter and have balls and parties and go to the theatres and opera and all that sort of thing? And he's so rich and so handsome and owns, he says, a castle on Murray Hill, beside a cottage at Long Branch and a steam yacht and ever so many fine things. Ain't it nice?"

"Goodbye, Angy—Angelica—I mean Miss Bruce," said poor Ned (not taking her hand this time) "I must be getting back. I think we shall have a fine day for hayting. No, thank you—I wouldn't choose any," he added, resisting a tiny rosebud almost as dewy and lovely as her own lips, which she offered him, as if a rosebud—a bushel of rosebuds and full blown roses, not to speak of peonies and hollyhocks, could compensate for the cruel stab beneath his white waistcoat which she had inflicted through the false and malignant Van Dyke Nostrand of fashionable Murray Hill, whom may the fates confound.

(TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.)

People who Live on the Railroads.

There is a distinct railroad population that is constantly growing. It is composed of commercial travellers, lecturers, show agents, actors and actresses. They eat more meals in hotel cars and railroad meat stations than they do at home or in hotels. They spend more nights in sleeping-car bunks than in beds. To a parson who travels only occasionally it is interesting to note how thoroughly equipped these professional journeymen are. Upon entering his sleeping-car early in the evening, for instance, they remove their shoes and put on slippers, hang their hat up and don silk travelling caps, take off their coats and put on short sack coats or smoking jackets.

In the morning, when the occasional traveller, obliged to wear the only clothing he has brought, goes to the toilet compartment in his coat and vest, and thus struggles in an effort to cleanse his skin without soaping his sleeves or his coat collar, these professionals again excite his envy. They hang up their smoking jackets and display snowy white robes, ornamented with colored binding and braid, and capable of being thrown open at the neck and rolled up the above the elbows. From a pocket in the above suspended jacket one produces an ivory-backed brush and costly comb, a tooth-brush and perhaps a nickel-plated soap-box. Another opens out a prettily embroidered receptacle, composed of many folds, each a pocket and each one labelled. In one a pocket are a comb, a brush, a tooth-brush, shaving-brush, soap box, pair of razor cases, nail-brush, whisk broom, hand glass and cologne bottle.

Their familiarity with their surroundings is as noticeable a part of their equipment. A glance out of the car window is almost certain to reveal to them their whereabouts when they arise or when they are waked up, or are about to go to bed. They carry their time-table, and give good advice as to which station has the best caterer. They are so-called and democratic.

To all mankind death is but a question of time; with womankind the length of life is often merely a question of veracity.

THE RAILROAD TATTLER.

A Mechanical Detective Invented by a Methodist Minister.

A Scranton despatch in the New York Times says: A mechanical contrivance, invented by a Methodist minister, and now in use on the railroads centering in this city, for the purpose of checking the manner in which freight trains are run by the employes, has recently attracted a good deal of attention, and been vigorously denounced by railroad men. The claim is made by the employers that some such thing was necessary to prevent the deceptions practiced upon the companies by the crews running freight and coal trains faster than schedule time to make up for the unnecessary delays at the various stations. The officials allege that no matter how faithfully a conductor and engineer may promise not to run faster than fifteen miles an hour, there are times when they will disregard all obligations and run as fast as thirty miles an hour to make up time squandered with their cronies at some of the stations along the line. The invention already alluded to makes it impossible for railroad men to practice any such deception. It is a simple piece of mechanism constructed much on the principle of the "tape" that checks off the condition of the stock market. It is wound up like a clock, locked within a box, and placed in the caboose, where it is geared to the axle of the car. On a large sheet of stiff paper, marked into small squares, a pencil or tracer keeps moving with the train and records the revolutions of the axle, the delay made at any given point, the number of jolts and jars sustained on the trip, and where they occurred, together with other facts going to make an accurate record of the journey. The record is laid before the superintendent, who sees at a glance how any particular train was run, and acts accordingly. It is claimed on the part of the companies that the irregularity of running coal and freight trains and the "sloping" of the men at the stations, as well as their method of making up for lost time, have in the past been prolific of many serious accidents, resulting in much loss to railroad property in wreckage, as well as in wear and tear. With the "tattling machine" at work in the caboose, recording every throb of the locomotive with the precision of a shorthand reporter, this will be impossible. But "the tattler" is not liked by railroad men. They consider it not only a nuisance, but a blunt warning on the part of the companies that their men are trustworthy and cannot be relied upon.

PEARLS OF TRUTH.

Whatever our plans allotted to us by providence, that for us is the post of duty. God estimates us not by the position we are in, but by the way in which we fill it.

"In their afflictions He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them." It is between Christ and His Church as between two lute strings—no sooner one is struck than the other trembles.

Work and play are the universal ordinance of God for the living races, in which they symbolize the fortune and interpret the brand of man. No creature lives that must not work and may not play.

The speech of the tongue is best known to men; God best understands the heart. I had rather speak three words in a speech that God knows, than pray three hours in a language that he understands not.

Confidence and fear are almost one thing rather than two when we speak of God. He that fears most trusts most. To none is death so little of a change as to those whose life has been one long confidence in God.

Christian faith is a grand cathedral without divinely pictured windows. Standing without, you see no glory, nor can possibly imagine any; standing within, every ray of light reveals a harmony of unspeakable splendor.

Our best friend is our Father's house on high. Our hearts and our treasures are there. Why should we not "look up and lift our heads" toward the land where we shall "see the King in his beauty," and meet the dear ones who are waiting our coming?

In self-examination, take no account of yourself by your thoughts and resolutions in the days of religion and solemnity; but examine how it is with you in the days of ordinary conversation, and in the circumstances of secular employment.

God is love; and, toward the fuller possession and fruition of this life there is but the straight road—devotion. Other things are good and useful; one is vital—heart communion with God. We may well fear that not only the world, but the church also, is growing too busy to pray.

The crown is in the distance, but the glory is already begun. The immortality which outflows from Christ is consummated at the day of Resurrection; but it starts from that threshold over which the ransomed soul passes into the radiant joys and blissful expectancies of Paradise.

God makes crosses of great variety; He makes some of iron and lead, that look as if they must crush; some of straw, that seem so light, and yet are no less difficult to carry; some He makes of gold and precious stones, that dazzle the eye, and excite the envy of spectators, but in reality are as well able to crucify as those which are so much dreaded.

Sleeping Together.

Somebody has said that more quarrels occur between brothers, between sisters, between hired girls, between clerks in stores, between apprentices in mechanics' shops, between hired men, between husbands and wives, owing to electrical changes which their nervous systems undergo by lodging together night after night under the same bedclothes, than by any other disturbing cause. There is nothing that will so derange the nervous system of a person who is eliminative in nervous force than to lie all night in bed with another person who is absorbent in nervous force. The absorbent will go to sleep and rest all night; while the eliminative will be tumbling and tossing, restless and nervous, and wake up in the morning fretful, peevish, fault-finding, and discouraged. No two persons, no matter who they are, should habitually sleep together. One will thrive and the other will lose.

A MODERN RESURRECTION.

A Miracle that Took Place in our Midst Unknown to the Public—The Details in Full. (Detroit Free Press.)

One of the most remarkable occurrences ever given to the public, which took place here in our midst, has just come to our knowledge and will undoubtedly awaken as much surprise and attract as great attention as it has already in newspaper circles. The facts are, briefly, as follows: Mr. William A. Crombie, a young man formerly residing at Birmingham, a suburb of Detroit, and now living at 287 Michigan Avenue in this city, can truthfully say that he has looked into the future world and yet returned to this. A representative of this paper has interviewed him upon this important subject and his experiences are given to the public for the first time. He said:

"I had been having most peculiar sensations for a long while. My head felt dull and heavy; my eyesight did not seem so clear as formerly; my appetite was uncertain and I was unaccountably tired. It was an effort to rise in the morning and yet I could not sleep at night. My mouth tasted badly, I had a faint all-gone sensation in the pit of my stomach that food did not satisfy, while my hands and feet felt cold and clammy. I was nervous and irritable, and lost all enthusiasm. At times my head would seem to whirl, my heart palpitated terribly. I had no energy, no ambition, and I seemed indifferent of the present and thoughtless for the future. I tried to shake the feeling off and persuade myself it was simply a cold, or a little malaria. But it would not go. I was determined not to give up, and so time passed along and all the while I was getting worse. It was about this time that I noticed I had begun to float fearfully. My limbs were swollen so that by pressing my fingers upon them deep depressions would be made. My face also began to enlarge, and continued to until I could scarcely see out of my eyes. One of my friends, describing my appearance at that time, said: 'It is an animated something, but I should like to know what.' In this condition I passed several weeks of the greatest agony.

"Finally, one Saturday night, the misery culminated. Nature could endure no more. I became irrational and apparently insensible. Cold sweat gathered on my forehead: my eyes became glazed and my throat rattled. I seemed to be in another sphere and with other surroundings. I knew nothing of what occurred around me, although I have since learned it was considered as death by those who stood by. It was to me a quiet state, and yet one of great agony. I was helpless, hopeless and pain was my only companion. I remember trying to see what was beyond me, but the mist before my eyes was too great. I tried to reason, but I had lost all power. I felt that it was death and realized how terrible it was. At last the strain upon my mind gave way and all was a blank. How long this continued I do not know, but at last I realized the presence of friends and recognized my mother. I then thought it was earth, but was not certain. I gradually regained consciousness, however, and the pain lessened. I found that my friends had, during my unconsciousness, been giving me a preparation I had never taken before, and the next day, under the influence of this treatment, the bloating began to disappear, and from that time on I steadily improved, until to-day I am as well as ever before in my life, have no traces of the terrible acute Bright's disease, which so nearly killed me, and all through the wonderful instrumentality of Warner's Safe Cure the remedy that brought me to life after I was virtually in another world."

"You have had an unusual experience. Mr. Crombie," said the writer who had been breathlessly listening to the recital, "Yes I think I have," was the reply, "and it has been a valuable lesson to me. I am certain, though, there are thousands of men and women at this very moment who have the same ailment which came so near killing me, and they do not know it. I believe kidney disease is the most deceptive trouble in the world. It comes like a thief in the night. It has no certain symptoms, but seems to attack each one differently. It is quiet, treacherous, and all the more dangerous. It is killing more people, to-day, than any one other complaint. If I had the power I would warn the entire world against it and urge them to remove it from the system before it is too late."

One of the members of the firm of Whitehead & Mitchell, proprietors of the Birmingham Eccentric, paid a fraternal visit to this office yesterday, and in the course of conversation, Mr. Crombie's name was mentioned. "I knew about his sickness," said the editor, "and his remarkable recovery. I had his obituary all in type and announced in the Eccentric that he could not live until its next issue. It was certainly a most remarkable case."

Rev. A. R. Bartlett, formerly pastor of the M. E. Church, at Birmingham, and now of Schoolcraft, Mich., in response to a telegram, replied: "Mr. W. A. Crombie, was a member of my congregation at the time of his sickness. The prayers of the church were requested for him on two different occasions. I was with him the day he was reported by his physician as dying, and consider his recovery almost a miracle."

Not one person in a million ever comes so near death as did Mr. Crombie and then recover, but the men and women who are drifting toward the same end, are legion. To note the slightest symptoms, to realize their significance and to meet them in time by the remedy which has been shown to be most efficient, is a duty from which there can be no excuse. They are fortunate who do this; they are on the sure road to death who neglect it.

The wages of sin is death. It is strange that sin does not strike for higher wages.

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