

A Happy Outcome.

Day by day I had seen the lines of care deepen round my father's mouth and forehead, and watched my mother's pale and anxious gaze rest upon him.

Night after night did Maude and I lay side by side, and spend the hours when sleep, they tell us, lends us beauty in wondering what trouble was hovering over us.

But the knowledge came all too soon. My father had lent money which he supposed he could call in at any time. The time arrived, but the money was not forthcoming. His health was rapidly failing him, a fact his business anxieties in no way helped, and we soon knew he must mortgage heavily the farm, and that if his health continued to fail he might soon be unable even to pay the interest.

Then Maude and I began to hold our whispered conversations to better purpose—to decide that we were strong, and young, and healthy, and that such gifts were given to us to be made use of. And so it ended in our sending off a mysterious letter to the old school-teacher, and waiting and watching days for a reply, which came at last to tell us she had succeeded in finding a situation as governess, at a competency which to us seemed wealth. The lady was willing to take any one on her recommendation, and either of us, she felt assured, would fill the role. So she left it for us to decide—one must go and one must stay.

At last Maude said it must be she who would go. She was older than I, and she thought she would be happier away working than at home sitting with folded hands. She was so pretty, so loving and so lovable, that it seemed as though we could not let her go among strangers.

At first father and mother would not listen to it, but we overruled all objection, and Maude wrote and appointed a day for her coming.

The intervening time passed rapidly away in busy preparation, and at last the one Sunday left us rose bright and clear. Maude looked so lovely that morning in her pretty hat, with its long, drooping feather, that I did not wonder the eyes of a stranger in the church wandered persistently to our pew.

He was a tall, handsome man, sitting with the Leonards—a name which in our village represented its aristocracy and wealth.

There were gentlemen from London visiting there constantly, but their gaze did not often wander from the stylish, elegant, Misses Leonard to seek any other attractions.

I saw them glance round once or twice, as if to discover what else in the church could possibly distract attention from themselves, and I fear I felt more pride in Maude's beauty than was quite consistent with the sacred place in which we were.

But after she had gone, and at night I went, for the first time, to my room alone, I felt that she had chosen the better part—that it was easier even to go forth among strangers, with her hand at the plow, than to sit down quietly on the vacant hearthstone.

However, I soon found plenty for heart and hands. My father grew rapidly worse instead of better, and it was hard work so to word my letters to Maude that she should not know of the skeleton in our home—the shadow of coming death.

Her letters were bright and cheery, and when at last I told her that our father grew no better, she answered she had met Dr. Melrose, who was a relative of the lady whose children she taught, and asked him to go down and see father, and that she would defray the necessary expenses.

I almost gasped when I read the name—Dr. Melrose. His fame had reached even our ears. I wondered how she could have approached him with such a request; but I said nothing to father of her desire, and one morning, about a week later, his card was put into my hands.

With quick, trembling limbs, I hastened down to meet him, and opened the parlor door to find myself face to face with the stranger, who, weeks before, had sat in the Leonards' pew.

My face grew red and pale as I recognized him; but he came forward very quietly, and, taking my hands, said: "Come, we will have a little talk first, and then you shall take me to see your father."

I quickly obeyed him, and sat down beside him, as he directed, while he did not seem to observe my agitation, told me of my sister—of her happiness in her new home, how already she had won her way into their hearts, and how glad he was that business at this time called him to this spot, and enabled him to perhaps be of some assistance.

Then I found words, and when he left me to visit my father, I found myself awaiting his return with a calm assurance that could mortal aid avail him, he would find it in Dr. Melrose's healing touch.

A half hour passed before his return, and when he entered the room I knew I might hope.

"It is not so bad as I feared," he said. "Time and careful nursing will soon restore him. The latter I shall intrust to you."

Then he gave me his directions so clearly that I could not misunderstand them, and when he bade me good-by, holding both my hands for a moment

in his own, and said: "You must take care of yourself as well, and not give me two patients instead of one," he smiled so kindly that I felt my heart leap as I thought.

"It's for Maude's sake he has done this thing. He loves her."

It did not seem strange that she should have won the heart of a man as high in the world's favor as Ernest Melrose stood. It would not have seemed strange to me had she won royalty; in my eyes she might have graced any throne.

So I wrote her of his visit, and its wonderful results; how father improved day by day, and how with health came hope and courage, so that soon the clouds would scatter and we should have her home again.

But she answered, begging me never to think of her except as happy—that in Mrs. Marvin she found a second mother, and in her work only pleasure.

She rarely mentioned Dr. Melrose's name; but I could well understand why she was silent.

So the winter passed. Two or three times the doctor came to relieve the monotony. My parents grew to welcome him as a friend, and I, in my heart of hearts, as a brother, for I felt sure I had guessed the secret of his love for Maude.

He talked of her so constantly, tell and how her beauty of character had far exceeded even the charm of face and form.

We looked to him almost as our deliverer, for father's health and vigor were at last restored; but when he asked him for his bill, he laughingly replied:

"That was a private matter with Miss Maude. She is to settle that."

My father looked amazed; but I could appreciate the payment he would accept and imagined their surprise when he should demand it at their hands.

The summer was rapidly approaching—the time for Maude's home-coming was at hand.

With glad, happy heart I decorated our room with the roses she so loved, hung fresh muslin curtains from the windows, looped them back with sprays all the while singing aloud in my joy.

I had reason to be happy, for Maude was coming to a home over which hung no shadow of debt. The mortgage had been paid. What she had saved she had given toward her trousseau when she needed one, for father had prospered beyond all expectation.

At last I heard the sound of wheels. Nearer and nearer.

"I bring you a surprise," she had written, and by her side sat Dr. Melrose. I knew it all. Was it not as I pictured, fancied, hoped? I knew that an impulse which sprang from some corner of my brain caused me to turn hastily up the stairs, and, burying my head in my pillow, sob aloud.

"Ellie, darling! Where are you?" questioned a sweet, girlish voice; and I sprang up, ashamed of my momentary weakness, to find myself clasped in my sister's warm loving embrace. She had come back lovelier than ever. Ah, I could guess what had deepened the flush upon her cheek, the radiance to her eye!

I smoothed my disordered hair, listening the while to her merry talk, though not a word did she say of him, whose deep, manly tones I could hear now and then as he sat talking.

"Look your best," she said, with a roguish twinkle—"your very, very best! There—I am satisfied."

And, taking me by the hand, she ran rapidly down into the room where they all sat.

Dr. Melrose instantly arose, and came forward with his old smile of welcome, and made a movement as though he would already give me a brother's kiss, but remembered in time that his secret was not yet disclosed.

The evening passed rapidly away in pleasant laugh and jest. Occasionally I intercepted a glance between Maude and her guest, full of meaning, but no one else seemed to notice it. At last he rose to bid us good night, and as he held my hand a moment in his own, he whispered:

"You have always been the most impatient in pressing my small claim upon you. To-morrow I will present it to you for payment. May I see you for a few moments in the morning?"

"Certainly," I answered; but my voice trembled, and I think had he stayed a moment longer I should have burst into tears.

All through that long night I watched my sister, sleeping so peacefully by my side, waging my little war with myself.

How natural that he should love her so young, so lovely! But, ah! why had my heart gone forth unasked to meet his? At least the secret was all my own—none would suspect it.

I had not known it myself until I had seen them side by side. With, perhaps, a shade less color, a little quivering of the lips, but nothing more, I entered the parlor next morning to greet Dr. Melrose, who stood waiting for me. "I have come, as you know, to claim my payment, Ellie. Can you not guess it?"

A momentary struggle with myself, then I answered bravely:

"Yes, I know it all. You have my consent, Dr. Melrose, although you take our dearest possession."

He looked bewildered, but suddenly seemed to understand, as he said, gravely:

"Then you know, Ellie? Since the day I first saw you in church I have loved you, have cherished as my fondest dream the hope of making you my wife! Darling, you are sure I have your consent?"

"But Maude?" I almost gasped.

"Maude is only too happy in the hope that I may win you. She is engaged to a cousin whom she met at Mrs. Marvin's, and who is soon coming to claim her. He is a splendid fellow, and well worthy of her; but I, ah! my darling, can accept no other payment than yourself!"

And, in a wild burst of passionate joy, of marvelous unbelief, I gave it to him, as he sealed it with the first kiss of our betrothal.

HOUSEHOLD.

HOUSEWIFELY PROGRESS.

It is a trifle, apparently, writes Marian Harland, when a woman taboos oil in salad dressing because she "has never been used to putting it in," when she thinks mint sauce a "trashy" accompaniment to roast lamb, and "won't hear of hot sauce with cold pudding," or whipped cream as an accompaniment, to ice-cold raw tomatoes, when the vegetable dishes must all be set on the table with the meat, "as she has always had them," and lettuce be cut up and dressed in the kitchen at the cook's convenience, instead of being served, crisp and cool from the deft fingers of some members of the family, who is "up in salads."

Each protest is a symptom of decadence which is wilful, not inevitable. She has stopped learning because she has stopped. In time, mental muscles become stiff, but disuse is the cause of the change.

"I account that day lost in which I have learned no new thing," said an aged sage.

Our housewife may lay the saying to heart. If there be a better way than hers of doing anything—from making picklette to giving a wedding supper—she should be on the alert to possess herself of it. It is not true that it is easier for young people to keep themselves and their houses abreast of the times than it is for their elders. The first step that counts in the downward road is the tendency not to take any step at all. To stand still is to be left.

USES FOR PAPER.

A double newspaper with the corners folded down for the bib and tied around the waist with a strip of muslin makes a nice apron for dish-washing and baking. Several thicknesses of paper placed under the coat or wrap over shoulders and chest when going out in the cold will save many a severe sickness. If there are not beds' clothes enough to go around on a below-zero night, try laying your spare newspapers between the covers, especially over the feet. Use soft paper wrappings to polish your nickle stove plating.

SOME GOOD RECIPES.

Lemon Ice Cream.—Two quarts of milk, one quart of cream, three cups of sugar, three eggs, quarter of a box of gelatine, juice of two lemons and one orange, grated rind of three lemons. Mix sugar, juice and rind of lemons and orange juice, and set aside; soak gelatine in half pint of milk and cream and pour over gelatine until dissolved. When cold partly freeze; then add lemon juice and sugar, and eggs beaten separately; turn the crank rapidly and freeze.

Pineapple Ice Cream.—One half pound pineapple, one half pint sugar, one pint cream, one half pint of milk, juice of one lemon. Grate pineapple and add sugar and lemon juice; put cream and milk in freezer, and when partly frozen add sugar and fruit.

Peach Ice Cream.—One quart cream, one pint milk, two cups sugar, whites of two eggs, one dozen ripe peaches. Pare and mash the peaches, add sugar, and let it stand; add cream and milk, and just before freezing the beaten whites.

Vanilla Ice Cream.—One quart of cream, one pint of milk, two cups of sugar, whites of two eggs, one teaspoonful of vanilla. Mix the sugar with the cream and milk; add flavoring and strain into freezer. Beat the whites to a stiff froth and add just before freezing.

Coffee Ice Cream.—One quart cream, one and a half cups of sugar, one pint strong coffee. Whip cream, mix coffee and sugar thoroughly, add to cream and freeze.

Peach Short Cake.—One quart of flour, one teaspoonful salt, two heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder, two tablespoonfuls of butter, one pint of milk. Sift the flour, salt and powder together, rub in the butter cold; add the milk and mix into a smooth dough, just soft enough to handle; divide in half and roll out to the size of breakfast plates; lay on a greased baking tin and bake in a hot oven 20 minutes, separate the cake without cutting, as cutting makes them heavy. Have two dozen peaches peeled and cut in slices; use half of them to cover the bottom halves of shortcake; sprinkle plentifully with sugar and cream; lay on the top halves with the crust downward; use the rest of the fruit over them, and sugar plentifully.

Cream Oake.—One half cup of butter, one cup of sugar, one half cup of milk, one and one-half cups of flour, with three quarters of a teaspoonful of baking powder. Stir butter and sugar to a cream, beat the three whites to a stiff froth and add them with the sifted flour and powder, with the milk, alternately, to the creamed butter and sugar. Bake in two equal good-sized jelly tins. For filling boil three quarters of a cup of milk with a pinch of salt, three tablespoonfuls of sugar and one half tablespoonful of butter, mix one tablespoonful of flour with one quarter cup of milk and stir into the boiling milk. Continue the boiling for a few minutes longer, remove from the fire, and add the juice

of half a lemon and spread between the layers.

Delicate Cake.—Sift three quarters of a cupful of flour, one quarter of a teaspoonful of baking powder and a speck of salt together. Put into a bowl two tablespoonfuls butter and two tablespoonfuls of sugar, beat them to a cream, then add the grated rind of half a lemon. Beat two eggs in separate bowls, add one egg and stir in half the flour, then the other egg and the rest of the flour; beat well. Pour the mixture into a well-greased cake tin and bake in a hot oven 30 minutes.

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

All the receptacles for flowers should be clear glass or white china. Some ladies have sets of Belleek, but it is rare and costly, and any clear glass will do as well.

Cheese sandwiches are always in order to serve with salad. Grate any cheese and rub it to a paste with butter, spread the bread, sprinkle with salt and pepper and cut into strips.

A little pipe clay dissolved in the water on washing days will thoroughly clean the dirtiest linen, and will help to save labor and soap, besides the clothes being made much whiter.

A favorite form of table decoration in Paris this summer is to place a tall vase or basket of fruit or flowers in the very centre of the table. A recent pretty decoration had what the school mistress sisters in "Vanity Fair" called a "beau-pot," or a nice plant of some kind, in the middle of the dinner table; but it has been reserved for the last two or three decades to heap the table with flowers—the costlier, the better liked—and to make this decoration a prominent feature of the entertainment at a dinner or supper, and, to a less extent, of a luncheon party.

White veils may be nicely cleaned by soaking for half an hour in a solution of ivory or castile soap. Then press between the hands until clean. Rinse in clear water. Make a cupful of very weak starch or gum arabic water, soak the veil in it a few moments, then clap in the hands until nearly dry. Spread a towel over a pillow and pin the lace in each point smoothly over it, letting it remain until perfectly dry.

Starch is a warm weather necessity, but it takes the unerring instinct of an artist to apply it properly. The sins of omission and commission the average laundress perpetrates in its name: be called one of life's little sad-ironies, if puns were not so detestable. If some gifted woman, or man, for that matter, would give up trying to make a book, a statue or a picture, and found a school where the gentle art of starching would be taught, she might attain fame and the eternal gratitude of her fellow mortals at a single bound. A department in which people could be instructed how to infuse the desirable amount of starch into their summer manners would also be valuable.

Simplicity is what is needed in the cooking of mushrooms or their flavor is destroyed. Long cooking toughens them, therefore, have everything in readiness to serve before beginning with the mushrooms. To cream them, wash one pound of the mushrooms, remove the stems, saving them for steak a la Bordelaise, peel caps and throw into water. Put into the chafing dish two tablespoonfuls of butter. As soon as melted add the mushrooms, cover and cook five minutes, add a teaspoonful of salt, and cook five minutes longer, pour in two tablespoonfuls of thick cream and a teaspoonful of sherry or Madeira. Sprinkle with paprika and a little nutmeg, if desired, and serve at once, with or without toast.

OUR GOOD QUEEN.

Not long ago Her Majesty Queen Victoria was traveling in France, and while out driving one day overtook a peasant funeral procession, where the road was so narrow there was no room to pass. The mourners stopped and stood aside, but she asked them to pass on, while she ordered her own carriage moved in line, and it moved slowly at the end of the sad little procession for quite a distance, the Queen sitting with bowed head the while till the roads diverged.

Again, when she was driving through the city of Nice one lovely afternoon, she saw a little child crying bitterly. She had her carriage stopped, and, leaning out, asked in the kindest tones the cause of distress, and at the same time pressed some bright, new coins into the little hand.

"Nothing now," said the small man, closing his fingers tightly over the precious money. And the Queen smiled well pleased when she saw smiles where the tears had been.

GIFT FOR A BRIDE.

At a recent wedding the bridesmaids gave to the bride a chest of linen as a joint present. The chest was a handsome piece of furniture, made in quartered oak, finely polished and fitted with compartment trays. Its contents included four sheets and pillow cases of fine linen, hemstitched and with the bride's initials in small letters at one side just below the hem; a beautiful tablecloth and a dozen dinner napkins, each piece having the bride's initials, and a number of fancy doilies and tray cloths. The embroidery was the work of the donors, which enhanced the value. Sprigs of lavender were laid away in the folds of the linen, each piece of which was done up in tissue paper tied with white ribbons, a spray of orange blossoms being fastened to the bow of white ribbon which tied together the cards of the donors.

LONG ENGAGEMENTS.

YOUTH THE TIME FOR LOVE AND MARRIAGE.

No Honorable Man Will Bind a Girl to an Indefinite Engagement—Long Courtships Generally Never Materialize—Suspense is Wearing.

Do you believe in long engagements? Well it may be "that patient waiters are no losers," but no woman can afford to fritter away the best years of her life in the dismal state of uncertainty in which a long engagement places her.

The story of the girl who is faithful for fifteen or twenty years to the lover of her youth and who waits patiently for his father, and mother, and grandmother, and bedridden aunt, and lame brother to grow old and die, reads well when the skillful novelist tackles it and writes it up in good style, and it has been hashed and rehashed, like cold roast chicken, until it has become a chestnut in literature.

And we have all sighed over the woes of Angelina and Frederick, as their youth waned, and the old aunt still continued, and the marriage had to be deferred, and Frederick grew baldheaded and rheumatic, and at fifty was able to bestow the remnant of himself on the faithful Angelina, who had got to wearing spectacles, and false teeth, and had turned corners. It sounds delightfully romantic, but to live through such an experience is enough to break down the nervous system of the strongest woman in existence and make her wish there had never been any such institution as an "engagement" to anybody.

WRONG TO BOTH PARTIES.

A self-respecting man has no right to bind a woman to a long and indefinite engagement; and a girl is too soft-headed to be of much consequence in the world who will consent to be so bound. It is wrong to both parties. Life is not long enough to be passed in such an uncertain way. Marriages contracted in middle life may be happy—oftentimes they are; but youth is the time for love and marriage. As a man or woman grows older, principles and opinions, as well as habits, become more fixed, and it is much more difficult for either party to yield a point, and there has to be a good deal of yielding by somebody if married life is to be harmonious.

An engaged girl is practically nobody. She cannot go here, or go there; she cannot do this, or that, as a girl who is free can do, because he might not like it. Young men stand aloof from her because she is Dick's property, and they respect Dick's rights.

Her liberties are abridged, her enjoyments are curtailed and all she can do is to wait—and hope.

She is an odd number everywhere, unless Dick happens to be around to attend to her, but he is generally away somewhere, earning the money to get married on and flirting with some other girl to keep his courage up.

After two or three years go by people begin to say: "Oh, he'll never marry Angelina. He'll find somebody else he likes better."

And they are generally right. Probably he doesn't mean to be unconstant, but it is an awful strain on a man to be engaged for a term of years and behave and pose as a model meanwhile—especially if he meets many young women who are quite ready to help him forget he is engaged.

INSUFFERABLY MONOTONOUS.

No, we don't believe in marrying until one's mind is made up and one knows what one wants; but, when once you have made your decision, it is better to go right to business. Suspense in any of the affairs of life is wearing and insufferably monotonous. The girl who waits eight or ten years for the man who is going to marry her some time must have many anxious moments, as she sees her youth and bloom slipping away from her and notes the crow's feet at the corners of her eyes and the gray hair on her temples.

Her friends are married long ago, and have homes and babies of their own; and no matter if they do have domestic squalls now and then, it varies the monotony and it is nice to make up and be friends again.

Nine times out of ten an engagement that runs along for a term of years partner in the business generally never amounts to anything. The male marries somebody else who has "sand" enough to bring him to terms at once, and the waiting woman is left to vain regrets and hopeless old-maidism.

No girl should ever consent to wait an indefinite time for a man. Let both be free, and if they choose to wait, that is their business; but a woman should never doom herself to drag out years and years of her life hampered by an engagement.

We know of one instance where a courtship extended over a period of fifty-two years, and then, when the gentlemen was seventy-nine and the lady two years younger, they decided to give the whole thing up because they were too old.

Girls don't marry in haste to repent at leisure, but don't bind yourself to wait for Tom, Jonas or Peter, to get ready to marry you—some time away off in the "indefinite future."—Kate Thorn.

A FASHION NOTE.

Mrs. Crimsonbeak—I wonder what will be the prevailing color of girls' waists this season.

Mr. Crimsonbeak—Well, if they keep on lacing as tight as usual I think it would be a safe gamble to say that they will be black and blue.