

# A SAFE DEPOSIT.

By the Rev. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, D. D.

## CHAPTER V.

Edith Lane resolved once and for all that she would tell her father of her return. But all day he was at his office, and each time when he returned she hated to tell him, and so put it off till morning. Each morning he came in haste for his breakfast, and the poor girl put it off again. After the second of these failures she had no chance. As she came home in the afternoon from an early archery party she found a note from her father saying that he was called to New York. This was followed by a telegram from New York saying he was called to London. And so poor Edith was left to her own newly-acquired skill in managing her own business for the next six weeks.

What soon became very clear was that she must have money. Indeed, this is something which generally becomes clear to most people in modern society. Edith first made the mistake which many other people make of thinking that it will do any good to say aloud, "I must have some money." She said this to the looking glass twice as she dressed herself. But no money came from that. As to housekeeping and wages there was no trouble. The housekeeper had been supplied. But for herself, Edith knew there would be trouble very soon.

She at once put herself on short allowance. She did not go into a shop. She passed the most attractive book stores, saying, "Lead us not into temptation." She went on foot if she could not ride in her own carriage; by which I mean she never took the people's carriage—the street car. She was even mean enough to put a nickel into the contribution box at church, sitting in the very pew where the deacon was always sure of a five dollar bill. But then Edith made an account of this, and solemnly pledged herself for every nickel she laid on the altar to place a ten dollar bill when she had it. Dear child, she knew the difference between little turtle doves and good large lambs. These economies she kept up steadily. But economies do not create money.

And it seemed as if never were the unexpected expenses so terrible. Then came a bill for annual costs at the cemetery which her father had forgotten. Edith promptly paid that. Then came her annual subscription to the Sheltering Arms, her assortment at the Ladies' Relief and the Sewing Women's Friend. The same afternoon came a man from the Oklahoma free school. Every young lady of her acquaintance had subscribed \$10. Dr. Witherspoon had recommended it, and Edith knew that she was expected to subscribe. Edith's appeals were made, indeed, from one and another similar charity. And as a climax the 1st of July came and all her quarterly bills. The footing was terrible. And she with so little in her pocket, and if there was any virtue in arithmetic not \$40 in the Waverley Bank.

Edith, on the 21 of July did what you or I would have done. She ordered her coupe and bade James take her to the Amicable again. It was just possible that the things might have changed themselves back again.

The warders knew her and told her it was a pleasant morning, as it was. But it seemed to Edith that they looked on her with an inquiring air, as if they wondered that she dared to come. Still she braced herself to her duty. She gave the myrtle number and she produced her key, at which the bolt flew back at the right moment, just as it does in the "Forty Thieves." She carried the tin box out to the very same cell she had occupied before. She felt as if she were a nun in a convent. She opened the box and there was nothing there. Then she waited a little—poor child, this was to deceive the warders. Then she looked in the box and carried it back. She dared not look them in the face as they bade her good day, but she felt in every bone that they disapproved of her and even scorned her. Sadly and doubtfully she bade John take her home and he did so.

An idea had crossed her in the cell. The bonds she had in place of hers were not hers. No. But they took the place of hers. Now, as she could not out of her own coupons and deposit them in the Waverley Bank as her father had taught her, might not she honestly cut off these coupons and deposit them when the moment came, by her own?

It is quite clear, dear reader, to an instructed conscience like yours and mine, that she might not; but Edith had accustomed herself to think of these coupons as so much money, and as she certainly would have taken some greenbacks had she left them in her box and found them there without looking to see if they were the bills of one bank or of another, so she supposed, though she supposed wrongly, that a coupon of the Cattaraugus and Opelousas was money as truly as a coupon of the C. B. & Q., if only it were dated rightly.

She was a little confused when she found that no coupons had been cut off the Cattaraugus and Opelousas bonds for five years, but little did she know of the weaknesses of that enterprise. She did know that her quarter's coupons on her own bonds would have yielded her \$540; she made out that amount as well as she could from the Cattaraugus and Opelousas coupons, took no more than she needed, wrote a memorandum of what she had done and pinned it upon the coupons. "For," she said, "I may die, and she remembered that she had heard her father say that some written memorandum must be left for the benefit of executors."

She then ordered her carriage again and rode to the Waverley Bank. She handed her bank book to the teller, as she had done before, and the man bowed, as the other men bowed, and said it was a fine day. She also said it was a fine day, but the spell did not work. When he looked at the coupons he made no entry in her little book. Indeed, she thought he started, and he crossed the room and spoke to his chief. The attentive chief at once came to the window.

"Miss Lane," he said, "your father has made a mistake. These are Cattaraugus Opelousas coupons, and you know it is long since those could be negotiated. I think your coupons are C. B. & Q. C. K. W. and from United States bonds, are they not?"

"Are these not just the same thing?" said Edith, feeling as if she should sink through the ground. "I know nothing about it, only I found them in my safe." Here she held closely to the truth.

She could see a vague smile of contempt pass over the cashier's face as he said, "Well, I don't know what hopeful people would say,

Miss Lane, only these things have no value on the market. Bring us around your C. B. & Q. and we will cash them for you gladly."

Then, as he was turning away, the teller whispered to him again, and he said, "Do not give yourself any trouble, but you have overdrawn your account a little."

Poor Edith did not know what this meant, and he explained that she had drawn more money from the bank than she had in it, that this would be made clear to her as she looked at the checks which the teller gave her. It was of no consequence, the cashier said, only he thought he would call her attention to it. So poor Edith left the bank, without any money, and feeling that she was much deeper down in the bog of disgrace than she had known.

Fortunately she did not understand that, if anybody had supposed that she was dishonest in overdrawing her bank account, she could have been arrested before she left the building. This would not have happened, however, in any circumstances, to her father's daughter. The Waverley Bank was a new bank, and the people were very glad that he had brought her account and placed it there. Edith retired to her carriage with as good grace as she could and bade James to take her home.

## CHAPTER VI.

She had several courses before her. First, she could telegraph to her father in London, "I am disgraced and without money. What shall I do?" Second—and of this she thought seriously—she could go to Dr. Witherspoon, who had christened her into twenty years ago, and had received her into the Church six years ago, and loved her as her father did.

This would have been the wisest thing for her to do; but she had a sense of mortification which hindered her from doing this. Then she thought over the list of her mother's old friends among the ladies of Tamworth, and there was not one of them whom she liked as a counsellor. Then she remembered a sermon which Dr. Witherspoon had preached a few weeks before, of which the doctrine was, "Face Your Perplexities." He had told them they should not run away from their perplexities, but must look them in the face, and find out how great they were. She remembered that some man she had talked with not long before had told her that the turning point of Robinson Crusoe's fortunes comes in the moment when he faces his perplexities. On some piece of paper he had, with some ink he had made, he wrote them down as that he could look at them and see what they were. Edith took a sheet of note paper and proceeded to write down hers. The list took the following order:

1. I am a fool.
2. I believe I am a thief, but am not certain.
3. I have no money.
4. I have taken from the Waverley Bank \$47 which I had no right to.

By adding up the amount of her checks and comparing it with her own account she had found the fatal mistake which showed that instead of having \$40 in the bank she had taken out \$47 more than she should have done.

Edith's list went on—

5. I owe honest tradespeople who have trusted me \$172.11.
6. I wish I had as much as \$75 in the house, if it were only to keep up decent appearance, till papa gets home.
7. In fact, I have \$11.97; if I suppose the housekeeper would lend me something, but I do not like to ask her, and I have no right to starve the family.

Then, by an unfortunate suggestion of one of those lower powers who have been alluded to, who are permitted to have some part in the government of this world under strict orders from higher authorities, however, it happened that Edith remembered a horrible scandal which had convulsed Tamworth a year or two before, when a certain Mrs. John Fisher had borrowed a thousand dollars, at a jeweller's, on the pledge of a bracelet, which became very famous in the scandal of the town.

Edith said to herself, "I wonder if I could not borrow \$200 of somebody. I think if I were a man I should know how to borrow \$200. I observe in books that men always borrow money when they want it. I do not see why I cannot borrow this money."

For Edith had been so little tempted in her younger life that she never learned what most young men learn when they are young—or that there are two devils of special danger in modern life; that the larger devil is named Drink and the smaller devil is named Debt. There had been no occasion for Edith to have these lessons taught her, and though the poor child had had some reasons to know the devil—as everybody has in American life—she was profoundly unconscious of the dangers of the temptations of the second. She did know what a horrible sorcery Mrs. John Fisher had got into, and she dreaded any such sorcery. But, on the other hand, she knew that in the jewel case under her hand were baubles she never used, which were worth twenty times the sum that would make her perfectly comfortable till her father came home. And so it was, that, having read in novels about poor people pledging what they had to borrow money, she thought did cross her mind, that she might borrow something, if she knew how, on the pledge of some part of her jewelry.

It is a very curious phenomenon belonging to human nature, whether of men or women, that a person in a sorcery generally prefers to tell some utter stranger of his trouble, and not to tell some near or intimate friend. This is not the place to discuss the reason for this phenomenon, but it is a phenomenon observable by all people who hold the position of general counsel for mankind. This phenomenon showed itself in Edith's case. She did not go to Dr. Witherspoon; she did not go to her father's partner; she did not go to any of her somewhat distant relatives in Tamworth, nor, as has been said, to any of the old friends of the family. But before night came on, she felt as if she should die if she did not take the advice of somebody. She made her choice of a confidant almost at hazard.

## CHAPTER VII.

It happened that that was the evening for the meeting of the Chautauque Circle, to which Edith belonged. The girl had rather tired of gay society, since the first two winters that followed her "coming out." She had danced quite well, she had received a good deal of attention, she had tasted that cup pretty thoroughly, and then, without being cynical at all about it, she thought she had drunk about as much of it as she wanted. On the other hand, some near

friends of hers had engaged in the Chautauque course of reading; she was sitting with them one evening, when some reading aloud went on, and found herself interested in the solid and practical work which they had engaged in. She thought rightly that she had time to make up some back work, and sent to Plainfield to connect herself with the circle, and had become one of the most diligent of the readers.

This accident determined her now in the choice of her adviser. She had meant to say to make some afternoon visits. But the day was hot and the air sultry, and she made this an excuse for sending William with her carriage, back to the stable. She would go to Vincent Chapel in the evening. And to Vincent chapel she went. It was the last meeting of the circle before the summer recess.

She had been chosen secretary and recorder of the Gill Circle at the meeting in April, and her record was carefully prepared. It was the year for English history, and they had set apart the subject—always interesting to young people—of "Mary Stuart," for their evening discussion. That happened, which is apt to happen, that all the women were very hard on poor Mary, while all the men defended her. As there were more women than men, the men had to stand well to their guns.

"I understand the president very well," said Edith, firmly. "I meant to do justice to her argument before. But it seems to me to mean this—that because this woman was pretty she is to be excused for being wicked, and that because she was a woman it is to be expected that she will act like a fool."

They all laughed heartily at this, and the president hastened to say that this was not the centre of his position; that Mary certainly had been very badly educated, &c., &c., &c., and that Bothwell had, &c., &c., &c., and so on, as may be imagined.

"Still, I cannot see that this changes our opinion on the question—whether she did right or wrong."

This was the unflinching reply of the stern Edith. "It shows why she did right, but it does not show that she did right—unless the president means that when a woman dresses her hair in a becoming way, and invents a new headdress, she may do as she chooses."

After this it may be imagined that the president and Edith were very good friends through the rest of that evening, and the reader will not be surprised that, in the simple and admirable code of Tamworth and of that circle, Edith asked him, as they ate their ice cream together, if he would do her the favor to walk home with her. She had not liked, to fix a time for the carriage, she said. He gladly agreed to do so, as any young man in Tamworth would have been glad to do.

So soon as they were well in the street, away from light, Edith, who had studied out the whole conversation in advance, said to him, "I have a question of conscience, on which I want the advice of a man—of a business man. My father is away for six weeks. I had there is a mistake about my money, and I have overdrawn at the bank on my account. Now, it happens that I have received \$100 by accident; I know not from whom. It is lying in my desk—unused. Should you think I might use that, as if it were lent to me, and repay it when my father comes home?"

The president heard her through, waited a moment, and then said, "I believe at law you might—I doubt if you could be sued for doing it. But it is not a nice thing to do. If it had been you would not be in doubt yourself."

"Thank you," said Edith. "You feel just as I do." But he did not let her go on. "You see," he said, "your unknown correspondent might appear to-morrow morning, and you would want to have her money ready for her. You would do much better to borrow yourself at your bank or of some friend."

"I have so many friends," and Edith, more bitterly than she meant, "that I cannot select, and I am afraid my father would be wretchedly annoyed if he knew I was in this scrape, though really it is from no fault of mine. I cannot well borrow at the bank without saying that he has been careless or making people think so. It gives a certain publicity to the mistake he made, when he thought that for six weeks I could—paddle my own canoe."

"I do not think there is such publicity as you fear." You see, said he, good naturedly, "the bank people would be only too glad to lend your father's daughter anything. It can be most easily arranged. How much do you want?"

"Oh, I want as much as \$250. These are all the subscriptions papa likes me to make."

The young man laughed lightly, as she thought.

"Pardon me," he said. "From your tone I thought you were going to say two hundred and fifty thousand. I wish, Miss Edith, you would let me lend it to you myself. You have been kind enough to ask my advice. Will you be good enough to take it."

Edith was now taken wholly aback. She had chosen her adviser—as he said. Here was a proposal which would lift her out of the depths. For the instant she felt that if only she had the three bits of paper he spoke of she should be perfectly happy. She could see the two notes of one hundred—and one note of fifty—clean, two of them appeared, crisp and clean, and one fishy and dirty, before her mind's eye.

But she did not waver, even for that instant. Her manner was kind enough, but absolutely firm as she declined. "You are quite right in saying that I had better ask the bank people. I will certainly do so. You are very kind, and I shall always be grateful to you for your willingness. But it will be bitter so."

"I hope you are not offended," said he, somewhat proudly. "You seem to be distressed. We are not in a novel. I wanted to be of use. That is all."

"Offended—how could I be offended," said she. "I asked for information and advice. You have given me both. And I shall thank you for showing me how. Will you not come in? No. Good night, then." And she gave him her hand. "Please do not think I am offended."

CHAPTER VIII.  
Edith rose the next morning with a new resolution. She went to her desk as soon as breakfast was over and wrote this note:—

"LETTERS LOST.—A parcel of six letters, dated in May, 1883, and tied together with a white ribbon. The finder will be unasked and liberally rewarded if he will send a note to G. R., at the Post Office."

This advertisement was inserted in the Argus of that day. The hope she had was well enough founded. But, alas! Antony hated the politics of the Argus, which pretended to be an independent paper, and was on any side which the proprietor thought profitable. Antony never looked at any part of the Argus, least of all at the advertisements. So poor Edith's notice might have been published a month and he would have been none the wiser.

On his part, he went to the Waverley Bank and asked the cashier if he would lend him \$250. "What collateral?" said the cashier, who was his old ally and friend. "None," said Antony, "unless you will take stock in the Salt-Acting Coupler Corporation, not yet organized. But if you would endorse my note I think the directors would pass it."

"Nonsense," said the cashier. "Bank rules will not permit that. But if you want \$250, old fellow, here it is. Give me a memorandum and pay me when you like. Make it to me; this is not the bank's money, it is mine. You know I am glad to serve you."

Antony thanked him, and said, what was true, that he would do as much for him gladly. Then he went to the Amicable reading room and wrote to Edith this letter:—

ANTONY BLAKE TO EDITH LANE.  
WEDNESDAY MORNING, July 3.  
MY DEAR MISS LANE—As I absolutely have these bills in my hand I take the liberty of asking you to use them as you will. There is no reason why you should have the annoyance of addressing the officers of the bank. Please impute me to be president of the Waverley B. K. as well as president of the Chautauque Circle. Very truly yours,

ANTONY BLAKE.

So poor Edith actually saw her way clear to pay all her debts by incurring this one very pleasant debt to this one very gentlemanly man. She asked the servant if the bearer were waiting and was told he had gone.

"Send John to me. I want to send a note down town."

EDITH LANE TO ANTONY BLAKE.  
DEAR MR. BLAKE—You are most kind. But already I see my way out of my embarrassments, and I return the notes at once. Very truly yours,

EDITH LANE.

John found Antony at the St. Clair, where he had been bidden to go.

Antony did not quite like the note. It seemed to him a little shorter or more sharp than it need be. Anyway, if she could be proud he could also. He put the note in his pocket and turned it over in his mind, all through a long interview which he had with the Ramrills, who had sent for him again.

Then he determined to call on Miss Edith that evening. But lest she should be out he wrote the following letter:—

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON, July 3.  
MY DEAR MISS LANE—Last I do not find you at home I venture to write. For I have at bottom the feeling that you think I have taken a liberty and presumed on the confidence which you gave me so generously last evening.

"I want simply to say that you are unjust to me if you think so. I know that from the standard of the novel writers of fifty years ago my proposal was not to be heard of. But I think the standard of America is higher and better. I hope the standard of Tamworth is higher and better. I think men and women meet each other with mutual respect and mutual confidences. It is not in vain that we go to the same schools, work in the same causes, study in the same circles, and in a word, live in the same life."

If you and I were "Henry and Emma" or "Paul and Virginia," or "Silly and Billy," or "Fergus and Evelyn," or any other absurd people in a novel, of course you would not wish to have me help you in any sensible way, and I should never think of proposing to you. But seeing we are plain Tamworth people, members of the same church, and officers in the same circle, I see no harm in what I have done, and I will not say I do.

Truly yours,  
ANTONY BLAKE.

When Edith came home late from a long drive which she had taken in the country this note was waiting for her.

She read it more than half through with approval of the young fellow's pluck and pride. But when she came to "Fergus and Evelyn" the words seemed to stand out of the paper.

Or were there ever two people in love with each other with those two names? She read the note through and then went to her father's den. She looked in the Telephone Directory, and then asked for 297.

"Hello!"  
"Does Mr. Antony Blake live in the St. Clair?"  
"Ask Mr. Antony Blake if he can come to No. 99 Carwen street."  
In ten minutes Mr. Antony Blake was there, though it was half-past ten at night.

these Cattaraugus bonds yours, and this hundred dollars, perhaps, too?" And he handed him the well known parcel.

Mr. Lane's absence in England was prolonged, and it was September before he returned. Edith met him at the Tamworth station, with the carriage, to bring him home. "I have so much to tell you, papa, and I do not know how to begin."

"It is clear that it is good news," said he. "You look so well. And you are a good woman of business—that has appeared all through your letters."

"That you will have to judge of, papa." At that moment as they crossed the station her father saw Antony Blake, pressed his hand warmly and asked him to come and see them, which Antony said he would gladly do.

"That young man," said Mr. Lane, as they entered the carriage, "is one of the most successful young men in this State. Why not? He has an invention which will save thousands of lives and must be used on every railroad. He has established a new machine shop here to make his couplings, and Whycliffe and all of them are crazy about him."

"But, Edith, he is no stranger to you; you used to know him. He is the same man who was in your reading club."

"Yes, papa—and, papa, he has asked me to marry him, and I have told him I would ask you. But really, papa, he is the best man in the world, and I shall never marry any one else."

Thus was it that Edith made her revelation. It was not until the wedding day, however, that she told her father that the new machine shop was built with the proceeds of the sales of her governments, and C. B. and Q's.

## MAILS AT 250 MILES AN HOUR.

A Scheme to Carry Them by an Electric-Elevated Wire Road.

Within a twelvemonth from the present date mails will be carried from Boston to New York City in sixty minutes. So say the capitalists who are making arrangements for the establishment of a transport line on the so-called "por-electric" system for the convenience of letters and packages between the metropolis and the modern Athens. Even the least sanguine backers of the enterprise are confident that if the expected public support is given to the scheme not more than two years will be required at most for the establishment of the necessary plant in running order to bring the two centres of population within an hour's distance by post. The said plant will resemble, as to its most essential part, a little elevated railway supported on a single line of tall iron uprights and stretching from the Post-office here to that on the Island of Manhattan. Along the track on top runs a small car laden with mail freight, which at certain intervals during its transit is seen to go under a locking box-shaped arch. These box-like arrangements contain each one a coil of wire, passing beneath the rail below and around over the arch, so that the moving mail carriage runs, as it were, through a succession of soiled wire hoops. And these latter communicate the motive power to the vehicle.

The speed to be attained by the car in this manner is incalculable. As is recognized in mechanics, a constant repelling force is productive of nearly infinite velocity, obstructed only by the resistance of friction. In this system the only friction comes from the air and the slight contact of the car with the rails. Two hundred and fifty miles an hour is not thought to be an overestimate; of the speed easily to be compassed by the por-electric despatch. As the starting-point the wire coils will have to be close together and on up grades, but elsewhere, and especially on down grades, they may be few and far between, the motive power needed being slight. Six stations placed at intervals between here and New York, will supply the requisite currents from dynamo.

Many experts think that the system is destined to revolutionize the postal service in this country. For instance, it is expected that instead of mail hours apart between Boston and New York carriages will be sent over the tracks from either end of the line at five-minute intervals, thus rendering unnecessary the waiting for mails to close, and giving people in one city an opportunity to read their letters two hours after they are written in the other. Once prove the notion a success here and it will be quickly adopted everywhere. By applying it on a larger scale, too, who knows that it may not serve for transportation of passengers some day? At the rate of 250 miles an hour one could put a giraffe around the earth in four days! Truly, it is a wonderful century we live in.

## A Hint for Wives.

Young Wife—John, do you love me as much as you ever did?

Young Husband—More than ever, my love.

Y. W.—I am glad of it, for I love you a thousand times more than when we were first married.

Y. H.—You do?

Y. W.—Yes, I do, and I was just thinking that if you died I would never marry again—never.

Y. W.—Oh! you think so just now.

Y. W.—I am sure of it. I know my own mind, dearest.

Y. H.—Well, I believe you. You are a darling little wife (kissing her).

Y. W.—No, indeed, I would never marry again. Oh! by the way, John, dear, I saw the darlings little bonnet in Mrs. Feltstraw's that you ever saw—just too sweet for anything, and I was wondering if—

Y. H.—How much is it?

Y. W.—Fifteen dollars.

Y. H.—You shall have it. It would be a mean man if I didn't oblige such a sweet, loving little wife with a small favor like that.

Y. W.—Oh! you dear.

Not an Every-Day Occurrence.

Two teamsters came into collision in the street with their vehicles the other day.

First Teamster—"My dear sir, I'm very sorry for this accident. Will you kindly excuse me?"

Second Teamster—"Pray do not mention it, my dear sir. The fault was as much mine as yours."

After getting their carts clear of each other they lapsed politely, and with a pleasant "good day," proceeded about their business.

It is a great pity they had not had their photographs taken for caricatures.