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The Road to Understanding

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CHAPTER VIII.—(Cont'd.)

"You'll come again, of course," the father said as he held out his hand. For the first time that evening there was a touch of constraint in his manner. "Suppose you come to dinner—Sunday. Will you?"

"Surely I will, and be glad—"

With a swift surge of embarrassed color Burke Denby stopped short. In one shamed, shocked instant it had come to him that he had forgotten Helen—forgotten her! Not for a long hour had he remembered that there was such a person in existence. "Er—ah—that is," he began stammering.

An odd expression crossed John Denby's countenance.

"You will, of course, bring your wife," he said. "Good-night."

Burke mumbled an incoherent something and fled. The next moment he found himself in the hall with Benton, deferential and solicitous, holding his coat.

Again out in the crisp night air Burke drew a long breath. Was it true? Had dad invited him to dinner next Sunday? And with Helen? What had happened? Had dad's heart got the better of his pride? Had he decided that quarreling did not pay? Did this mean the beginning of the end? Was he ready to take his son back into his heart? He had not said anything, really, as if nothing had happened. But that would be like dad. Dad hated scenes. Dad would never say: "I'm sorry I was so harsh with you, come back—you and Helen. I want you!"—and then fall to crying and kissing like a woman. Dad would never do that.

It would be like dad just to pick up the thread of the old comradeship exactly where he had dropped it months ago. And that was what he had seemed to be doing that evening. He had talked just as he used to talk—except that never once had he mentioned mother. Burke remembered this now, and wondered at it. It was so unusual in dad. Had he done it purposely? Was there a hidden meaning back of it? He himself had not liked to think of mother, lately; yet, somehow, she seemed always to be in his mind. In spite of himself he was always wondering what she would think of—Helen. But, surely, dad—

With his thoughts in a dizzy whirl of excitement and questionings, Burke thrust his key into the lock and let himself into his own apartment.

The hall—never had it looked so hopelessly cheap and small. Burke still under the spell of Benton's ministrations, jerked off his hat and coat and hung them up. Then he strode to the living room.

Helen, fully dressed, was sitting at the table reading a magazine. "Hullo! Sitting up, are you, chicken?" he greeted her, brushing his cheeks with his lips. "I told you to; but maybe it's just as well did—I might have waked you," laughed boyishly. "Guess what's happened?"

"Got a raise?" Helen's voice was not a question.

"My husband frowned.

"I got one last month, you know. I'm getting a hundred now. More can you expect—in my opinion?" He spoke coldly, with a sharpness. He was wondering why Helen always managed to be the zest out of anything he was doing, or say. Then, with an effort at gayety, he went on: "Letter than a raise, chicken. Invited us to dinner next Sunday."

"Dinner! Only to dinner?"

"To dinner! Great Caesar, only to dinner!"

"I can't help it, Burke. It seems to me that you are jumping and so pleased over just when it ought to be for me and all the time; and—"

"Helen, it isn't the dinner. It's dad's 'cares.' The man's pleased, and became not quite that maybe he's forgiven me. He's going to be now the dad that I used to know. I've missed him so! I've—"

He interrupted tartly. "Should think it was time for you—and I'm not saying there was anything to it. There wouldn't have been any."

"Your own business—"

A brief silence. Burke, white and stern, had got up and was moving restlessly toward the door. "What was he giving in?"

"He was very kind."
"What did you tell him?"
"What do you mean?"
"About the dinner, Sunday."
"I don't know, exactly. I said—something; yes, I think. I meant it for yes—then." The man spoke with sudden utter weariness.

There was another brief silence. A dawning shrewdness was coming into Helen's eyes.

"Oh, of course, yes. We'd want to go," she murmured. "It might mean he was giving in, couldn't it?"

"There was no reply."
"Do you think he was giving in?"
"Still no reply."
Helen scowled.

"Burke, why in the world don't you answer me?" she demanded crossly. "You were talkative enough a minute ago, when you came in. I should think you might have enough thought of my interests to want us to go to live with your father, if there's any chance of it. And while it wouldn't be my way to jump the minute he held out his hand, yet if this dinner really means that we'll be going up there to live pretty soon, why—"

"Helen!" Burke had winced visibly, as if from a blow. "Can't you see anything, or talk anything, but our going up there to live? It's enough for me that dad just looked at me to-night with the old look in his eyes; that somehow he's smashed that contorted wall between us; mind the dinner. We won't go."

"Nonsense, Burke! Don't be silly. Of course we're going! I wouldn't miss it for the world—under the circumstances." And Helen, with an air of finality, rose to her feet to prepare for bed.

Her husband, looking after her with eyes that were half resigned, half rebellious, for the second time that evening gave a sigh of utter weariness, and turned away.

They went to the dinner. Helen became really very interested and enthusiastic in her preparations for it; and even Burke, after a time, seemed to regain a little of his old eagerness. They had, to be sure, nearly a quarrel over the dress and hat that Helen wished to wear. But after some argument, and not a few tears, she yielded to her husband's none too gently expressed abhorrence of the hat in question (which was a new one), and of the dress—one he had always disliked.

"But I want to make a good impression," pouted Helen.

"Exactly! So do I want you to," returned her husband significantly. And there the matter ended.

It was not a success—that dinner. Helen, intent on making her "good impression," very plainly tried to be admiring, entertaining, and solicitous of her host's welfare and happiness. She resulted in being nauseatingly flattering, pert, and inquisitive. John Denby, at first, very evidently determined to give no just cause for criticism of his own behavior, was the perfection of courtesy and cordiality. Even when, later, he was unable quite to hide his annoyance at the persistent and assiduous attentions and questions of his daughter-in-law, he was yet courteous, though in unmistakable retreat.

Burke Denby—poor Burke! With every sense and sensitiveness keyed to instant response to each tone and word and gesture of the two before him, each passing minute was to Burke, but a greater torture than the one preceding it. Long before dinner was over, he wished himself and Helen at home; and as soon as was decently possible after the meal, he peremptorily suggested departure.

(To be continued.)

SALTING THE BABY

Peculiar Custom Practiced in Asia Minor and Greece.

The strange custom of salting new-born babies is still practiced in certain regions of Europe and Asia. The method varies with the differing nationalities of the peoples employing it.

The Armenians of Russia cover the entire skin of the infant with very fine salt. This is left on the baby for three hours or more, when it is washed off with warm water.

A mountain tribe of Asia Minor are even more peculiar in this regard than the Armenians, for they are alleged to keep their new-born babies covered with salt for a period of twenty-four hours. The modern Greeks also sprinkle their babies with salt. The mothers imagine that this practice brings health and strength to their offspring, and serves to keep away the evil spirits as well.



The Housewife's Corner

Keeping Daughter on the Farm.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that half of the automobiles on farms in Ontario are there in the first instance because the farmer's sons want them or actually demanded them as their price for staying on the farm.

Just as good wages as they could get elsewhere or a share in the farm profits, plus the automobile, are some of the things that are being given nowadays to make farmers' sons willing and content to remain on the farm. This is only right. But—is anything like as much attention being given to keep the girls contented?

In every town in the rich agricultural sections, daughters of well-to-do farmers are engaged in domestic service. Their parents in most instances object strenuously to their daughters working out in this way. The daughters, if the truth were known, do not particularly fancy domestic service. They would rather earn in some other way, yet housework is all they have had experience in. Then the day comes when "they get so tired of sticking at home on the farm and not having any money."

"It's certainly queer," said a town woman to me recently in talking of her new helper, "to think of Mary being our maid. Her father could buy and sell us a half dozen times. They have a lovely farm-home but she'd rather work out than stay at home."

Why? Could not she as well as her brother have been made willing to stay on the farm? There is a farmer's daughter in Mary's own neighborhood who is happy all the day long in being a farm girl. Her parents have no more of this world's goods than Mary's, possibly not so much. What then is the difference?

The difference is this other girl was sent to college, the agricultural college by her own choice, and while there had suitable clothes and necessary spending money. Now that she has graduated she is putting her training into practice at home on the farm. She takes charge of the garden and poultry and the lawn. For this work and the additional housework she does, she draws a weekly pay cheque just as her brother does. She has a car at her disposal and takes the cream and eggs to town and does the marketing. Afternoons and evenings, when it is pleasant, she is often out for a drive with mother and friends. They go to the movies, lectures, concerts.

"Would you rather live in town than in the country?" I asked this girl.

"I should say not," was her quick answer. "I have everything at home that I could have in town, and a lot more besides. I love the farm!" The farm is the centre of the universe to her but it is not also the circumference. Farm economy has taken into account her right to training for labor and compensation for work. She doesn't covet the pleasures and opportunities of town girls for she has them plus the freedom and beauty of her country home.

Wage War on Flies.

Certain authorities are predicting more than usual trouble with flies during the coming summer, owing largely to the comparatively mild winter. Whether or not the theory is correct, no chances should be taken. The common housefly is one of man's most dangerous enemies. As a means of spreading a number of serious diseases such as typhoid fever, dysentery and tuberculosis the fly plays a sinister role. Its ability to reproduce itself is amazing, the descendants of a single pair numbering millions in a season under ordinary favorable conditions. Such conditions exist where rubbish, filth and manure are left unprotected so that flies may lay their eggs therein. Consequently, the first principle in exterminating the pests is rigid cleanliness and then more cleanliness. The fly avoids clean conditions as men avoid the plague. Dirt and disorder are its natural habitat. It is of prime importance that every individual and every community should see that the winter's accumulation of dirt and rubbish should be carefully collected and destroyed. Manure should be so handled, either in fly-proof pits, or bins with maggot traps, as to prevent flies breeding. It is important also that garbage be carefully gathered and disposed of, for it, too, provides a sanctuary for flies.

In addition to combatting them in their breeding places, flies should be killed by any and every means available, especially early in the season.

Further, it is essential that food products be kept properly screened from flies. Civic authorities should insist on shopkeepers so protecting their wares and endeavor by every possible means to have householders take like precautions. The time to begin is now. Far more can be accomplished in the springtime with less expenditure of effort than at any other season of the year.

Beware Patent Pills.
The oft repeated warning must

again ring out! Beware of the so-called "patent" medicine pills!

According to a report in a recent issue of a western paper, a little four-year-old girl died on Wednesday, March 19th, after eating some of these pills with a very seductive name. The paper states that the doctor who conducted the post mortem, declared that the pills "contained strychnine, belladonna and aloin, which were all of vegetable origin and he imagined a few taken would cause serious trouble in a young child." The coroner, "expressed the opinion that the advertising on the boxes was desperately misleading. They might be a very good pill for purgative purposes, but they were fixed up so nicely that children would eat them readily, and a number of inquests had been held over children who had done so. The coroner stated that 'juries had passed recommendations urging that regulations should be passed requiring them to be labelled 'poison' but nothing had come of them'."

A recommendation such as the foregoing is but reasonable and is simply following the custom in Great Britain where all preparatory preparations containing "poisons" are so labelled, as laid down by law. The suggestion of the British Columbia jury is a very wise and proper one.

—C. A. Hodgetts, M.D.

Begin in Childhood.

There are men and women who have risen from obscure homes to positions of responsibility where ease of manner is essential. Yet if not taught in their childhood, where can people learn the simple act of being well-mannered? Refinement is inborn in some; but if one does not possess naturally a gracious and graceful manner—not an elaborate one, for good manners are simple and sincere—it should be taught in childhood until it becomes second nature. Many a successful business man wakes to his need of the "know how" that puts him at ease in social company, and he longs for that which should belong to him either by birth or education. If the home is not fitted to produce this "fine flower of courtesy," schools should be supplied with textbooks on good manners, and teachers should be able to interpret them.

ENGLISH IN JAPAN.

Native of Flowery Kingdom Has Difficulty in Practising English Language.

The biggest problem facing the Japanese studying English in his flowery home is finding some one to practice his oral English on. One might say he is up against it for laboratory facilities.

But, says E. F. S., who has just come from Japan, the students are eager to seize every opportunity. Miss Mann, an American, was walking along the main street in Nikko one day when she was approached by a native student, who said:

"Please may I speak English with you?"

"Be brief—what is it?" the lady replied.

For a minute the student swayed back and forth in his agony of phrasing a foreign sentence, and then he exclaimed:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, it is a warm day!"

TORONTO HAS NOW HER OWN CREATOR OF FASHIONS.

Toronto has made another step towards becoming the recognized centre of Fashions for Canada, for it will now have its own Creator of Fashions in the person of Suzanne Berique, who has been established in Paris for some years and who enjoyed the patronage of many of Paris' foremost society women, including many Americans. The following are some of the leaders she was privileged to dress:

La Baronne de Bethune.
La Vicomtesse de Sampigny.
Madame Vanderbilt.
Madame de Castanet.
Mademoiselle Harrison, etc.

Temporary apartments have been secured at 105 Bloor St. West, Toronto, where she will open an establishment catering to the very highest class of dressmaking in all its branches, including ladies' lingerie, gowns, mantles, etc. She will create new models or design special gowns for any person to protect her art and patrons from unscrupulous persons who would falsely claim to wear her creations, a trade mark and serial number is sewn in every garment and a complete record of same is kept. Hours: 2 to 5 p.m. Please write or telephone for an appointment. For no consideration nor for any money will a new creation or especially designed gown be duplicated for any one else. She will be in Canada what Worth is to Paris.

Wished it Had Been a Helmet.

A returned soldier had scarcely greeted friend wife after his return from France, when she asked eagerly: "And dearie, did you bring me a lot of souvenirs?" "Only this little bullet the doctor took out of my side," he answered gravely. "Aw, gee," sighed wife, "I wish it had been a German helmet."



MISSING

Captain Grant A. Gooderham, returned flying officer, missing from home since noon of Friday, May 2. Was suffering from loss of memory. Age 27, short, height about five feet four inches; broad shoulders and walked very erect; clean shaven; cleft in chin (may possibly have grown a beard by this time); grey eyes, heavy brown hair. Was wearing dark grey suit, blue overcoat with belt, green fedora hat and tan boots. Any information as to his whereabouts would be gratefully received by his parents, at 40 Madison Avenue, Toronto. Telephone College 1107.

Antiquity of Lawn Tennis.

It may be claimed that lawn tennis is at least three centuries old, having been played in 1591 when Queen Elizabeth was entertained at Elvetham, in Hampshire, by the Earl of Hartford, Strutt, quoting from Nichol's "Progress of Queen Elizabeth," tells us that "after dinner, about three o'clock ten of his Lordship's servants, all Somersetshire men, in a square green court, before her Majesty's window, did hang up lines, squaring out the form of a tennis court and making a cross line in the middle, being strip of their doublets, played, five to five, with handball to the great liking of her Highness."

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First Time He Saw It.
Strolling along the quays of New York harbor an Irishman came across the wooden barricade which is placed round the enclosure where emigrants suspected of suffering from contagious diseases are isolated. "Phwat's this boarding for?" he enquired of a bystander. "Oh" was the reply, "that's to keep out fever and things like that, you know." "Indade!" said Pat. "O've often heard of the board of health, but, bejabbers, it's the first time O've seen it."

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