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A MIRROR

FOR

YOUNG WIVES.

"I must have it, Charles," said the handsome little wife of Mr. Whitman. "So don't put on that sober face."

"Did I put on a sober face?" asked the husband, with an attempt to smile that was anything but a success.

"Yes, sober as a man on trial for his life. Why, it's as long as the moral law. There, dear, clear it up, as if you had at least one friend in the world. What money lovers you men are!"

"How much will it cost?" inquired Mr. Whitman. There was another effort to look cheerful and acquiescent.

"About forty dollars," was answered, with just a little faltering in the lady's voice, for she knew the sum would sound extravagant.

"Forty dollars? Why, Ada, do you think I am made of money?" Mr. Whitman's countenance underwent a remarkable change of expression.

"I declare, Charles," said his wife, a little impatiently, "you look at me as if I were an object of fear instead of affection. I don't think this is kind of you. I've only had three silk dresses since we were married, while Amy Blight has had six or seven during the same period, and every one of hers cost more than mine. I know you think me extravagant; but I wish you had a wife like some women I could name. I rather think you'd find out the difference before long."

"There, there pet, don't talk to me after this fashion! I'll bring the money at dinner time, that is, if—"

"No ifs, or buts, if you please. The sentence is complete without them. Thank you, dear. I'll go this afternoon and buy the silks; so don't fail to bring the money. I was in at Silskin's yesterday, and saw one of the sweetest patterns I ever laid my eyes on; just suits my style and complexion. You won't disappoint me?"

And Mrs. Whitman laid her soft white hand on the arm of her husband, and smiled with sweet persuasion in his face.

"Oh, no. You shall have the money," said Mr. Whitman, turning off from his wife, as she thought, a little abruptly, and hurrying from her presence. In this precipitation he had forgot the parting kiss.

"That's the way it is always," said Mrs. Whitman, her whole manner changing as the sound of the closing street door jarred upon her ears. "Just say money to Charles, and at once a cloud in the sky."

She set down poutingly, and half angry.

"Forty dollars for a new dress!" ejaculated the husband of the vain, pretty, thoughtless Mrs. Whitman, as he shut the door after him. "I promised to settle Thompson's bill to-day—three dollars—but I don't know where the money is to come from. The coal is burnt up, and more must be ordered. Oh, dear, I am discouraged. Every year I fall behind. This winter I did hope to get a little in advance, but if forty dollar silk dresses are the order of the day, there's no end to that devoutly to be wished for consummation. Debt! debt! How I have shrunk from it; but steadily now it is closing its Briarean arms around me, and my constricting chest labors in respiration. Oh! if I could but disentangle myself now, while I have the strength of early manhood, and the bonds that hold me are weak. If Ada could see as I see—it could make her understand rightly my position. Alas! this is hopeless, I fear."

And Mr. Whitman hurried his steps, because his heart beat quicker and his thoughts were unduly excited.

Not a long time after Mr. Whitman left home, the city postman delivered a letter to his address. The wife examined the writings on the envelope, which was in a bold, masculine hand, and she said to herself as she did so:

"I wonder who this can be from?"

Something more than curiosity moved her. There intruded on her mind a vague feeling of disquiet, as if the missive bore unpleasant news for her husband. The stamp showed it to be a city letter. A few times, of late, such letters had come to his

address, and she had noticed that he had read them hurriedly and thrust them without remark into his pocket, and became silent.

If the thought of Mrs. Whitman recurred, as was natural, to the elegant silk dress of which she was to become the owner on that day, she did not feel the proud satisfaction her vain heart experienced a little while before. Something of its beauty had faded.

"If I only knew what the letter contained," she said, half an hour after it came in her mind, still feeling the pressure which had come down upon it so strangely, as it seemed to her. She went to the mantle piece, took up the letter, and examined the superscription. It gave her to understand that its contents were of a nature to trouble her husband.

Mrs. Whitman turned the letter over and over again in her hand, in a thoughtful way, and as she did so, the image of her husband sober faced and silent, as he had become for most of the time of late, presented itself with unusual vividness. Sympathy stole into her heart.

"Poor Charles!" she said, as the feeling increased: "I'm afraid something is going wrong with him."

Placing the letter on the mantelpiece, where he could see it when he came in, Mrs. Whitman entered upon some household duties, but a strange impression, as of weight, lay upon her heart—a sense of impending evil—a vague feeling that all was not going well with her husband.

"He has been a little mysterious of late," she said to herself. The idea affected her very unpleasantly. "He grows more silent and reserved," she added, as though her mind under a kind of feverish excitement, became active in a new direction. "More withdrawn, as it were, and less interested in what is going on around him. His coldness chills me at times, and his irritation hurts me."

She drew a long, deep sigh. Then with an almost startling vividness, came before her mind in contrast, her tender, loving, cheerful husband of three years before, and her quiet, silent, sober-faced husband of to-day.

"Something is going wrong with him!" she said aloud, as the feeling grew stronger. "What can it be?"

The letter was in her hand. "This may give me light." And with careful fingers she opened the envelope, not breaking the paper, so that she could seal it again if she desired to do so. There was a bill of sixty dollars and a communication from the person sending the bill. He was a jeweler.

"If it is not settled at once," he wrote, "I shall put the account in suit. It has been standing for over a year, and I am tired of getting excuses instead of my money."

The bill was for a lady's watch, which Mrs. Whitman had almost compelled her husband to purchase. "Not paid for? is it possible?" exclaimed the little woman, in blank astonishment, while the blood mounted to her forehead.

Then she sat down to think. Light began to come into her mind. As she sat thus thinking, a second letter came to her husband. She opened it without hesitation. Another donning letter.

"Not paid! Is it possible?" she repeated the ejaculation. It was a bill of twenty-five dollars for gaiters and slippers, which had been standing for three months.

"This will never do!" said the awakening wife—"never—no, never!" and she thrust the two letters into her pocket in a resolute way. From that hour until the return of her husband at dinner time, Mrs. Whitman did an unusual amount of thinking for her little brain. She saw, the moment he entered, that the morning cloud had not passed from his brow.

"Here is the money for that new dress," he said, taking a small roll of bills from his vest pocket, and handing them to Ada as he came in. He did not kiss her, nor smile in the old bright way. But his voice was calm, if not cheerful. A kiss and a

smile just then would have been more precious to a young wife than a hundred silk dresses. She took the money saying:

"Thank you, dear. It is kind of you to regard my wishes."

Something in Ada's voice and manner caused Mr. Whitman to lift his eye with a look of inquiry to her face. But she turned aside so that he could not read its expression.

He was graver and more silent than usual, and ate with scarcely an appearance of appetite.

"Come home early, dear," said Mrs. Whitman, as she walked to the door with her husband, after dinner.

"Are you impatient to have me admire your silk dress?" he replied, with a faint effort at a smile.

"Yes; it will be something splendid," she answered.

He turned off quickly from her, and left the house. A few moments she stood with a thoughtful face, her mind indrawn and her whole manner completely changed. Then she went to her room, and commenced dressing to go out.

Two hours later and we find her in a jewelry store on Broadway.

"Can I say a word to you?" She addressed the owner of the store, who knew her very well.

"Certainly, he replied, and they moved to the lower end of one of the long show cases.

Mrs. Whitman drew from her pocket a lady's watch and chain, and laying them on the show case, said, at the same time holding out the bill she had taken from the envelope addressed to her husband.

"I cannot afford to wear this watch, my husband's circumstances are too limited. I tell you so frankly. It should not have been purchased, but a too indulgent husband yielded to the importunities of a foolish wife. I say this to take blame from him. Now, sir, meet the case if you can do so in fairness to yourself. Take back the watch and say how much I shall pay you besides."

The jeweler dropped his eyes to think. The case took him a little by surprise. He stood for nearly a minute, then taking the bill and watch said:

"Wait a moment," and went to a desk near by.

"Will that do?" He had come forward again, and now presented her with a receipted bill. His face wore a pleased expression.

"How much shall I pay you?" asked Mrs. Whitman, drawing out her pocket book.

"Nothing. The watch is not defaced." "You have done a kind act, sir," said Mrs. Whitman, with a trembling voice. "I hope you will not think unfavorably of my husband; it's no fault of his that the bill has not been paid. Good afternoon, sir."

Mrs. Whitman drew her veil over her face and went with light steps and light heart from the store. The pleasure she had experienced on receiving her watch was not to be compared with that now felt in parting with it. From the jeweler's she went to the boot maker's, and paid a bill of twenty-five dollars, and from thence to the milliner's and settled for her last bonnet.

"I know you are dying to see my new dress," said Mrs. Whitman gaily, as she drew her arm within that of her husband's on his appearance that evening. "Come into the parlor, and let me show it. Come along; don't hang back, Charles, as if you were afraid."

Charles Whitman went with his wife passively, looking more like a man on his way to receive sentence than in expectation of a pleasant sight. His thoughts were bitter.

"Shall my Ada become lost to me?" he said in his heart—"lost to me in a world of folly, fashion, and extravagance?"

"Sit down, Charles." She led him to a large cushioned chair. Her manner had undergone a change; the brightness of her countenance had departed. She took something in a hurried way from a drawer, and taking up a foot stool placed it on the

floor near him, and looked tenderly and lovingly in his face; then handed him the jeweler's bill.

"It is receipted, you see." Her voice fluttered a little.

"Ada! how is this, what does it mean?" He flushed and grew eager.

"I returned the watch, and Mr. R. receipted the bill. I would have paid for damage, but he said it was uninjured, and asked nothing."

"Oh! Ada."

"And this is receipted, also, and this," handing him the other bills which she had paid.

"And now, dear," she added quickly, "how do you like my new dress—is it not beautiful?"

We leave the examination and scene that followed to the reader's imagination. If any fair lady, however, who, like Ada, has been drawing too heavily on her husband's slender income, for silks and jewels, is at a loss to realize the scene let her try Ada's experiment. Our word for it she will find a new and happy experience in life. Costly silks and jewels may be very pleasant things, but they are too dear when they come at the price of a husband's embarrassment, mental disquietude, alienation. Too often the gay young wife wears them as the sign of these unhappy conditions. Tranquil hearts and sunny homes are precious things—too precious to be burdened and clouded by weak vanity and love of show. Keep this in mind, ye fair ones who have husbands in moderate circumstances. Do not let your pride and pleasure oppress them. Rich clothing, costly lace, and gems, are poor substitutes for smiling peace and hearts unshadowed by care. Take the lesson and live by it, rather than offer another illustration in your experience of folly we have been trying to expose and rebuke.

BRIGHAM YOUNG ON FAST YOUNG MEN.—Brigham Young is evidently "down on" young men of immoral habits. In a recent sermon he spoke of having refused several young saints the privilege of visiting his house and becoming acquainted with his daughters, because they were in the habit of profaning the name of Deity, and then added: "I do not wish my daughters to be entangled with one who does not serve God. I would rather see every one of them sealed to Father Perkins here, who is eighty-five years of age, than that any of them should be sealed to a wicked man."

THE POPE AND AUSTRIA.—The reply of Baron Beust to the recent Papal allocution is published in the foreign journals. He says the language of the allocution is of a severity he has a right to complain of, and charges the Holy See with extending its interference to objects which the Austrian government cannot admit to be within its authority. In conclusion, he says that the Austrian government will continue to allow the Church to enjoy in peace the liberties the laws secure her, and to treat her in a spirit of conciliation, which he hopes will be reciprocated.

DEATH OF THE LARGEST MAN IN KENTUCKY.—William G. Willis died at his residence in Bullittsville, Boone county, Kentucky, a few days ago, of apoplexy, in the forty-eighth year of his age. He was probably the largest man in Kentucky, weighing five hundred pounds. His average weight for a number of years has not been less than four hundred and ninety pounds, and sometimes is reached five hundred and twenty-five pounds.

A spunky young lady in Lewiston, Me., recently severely thrashed a fellow who used insulting language to her, she taking him by the collar and compelling him to retract the language he had used.

A HORRIBLE MISTAKE.—Bartholemey Poncey, a Frenchman who served in the United States Army during the whole war, was guillotined after his return to France, as guilty of the murder of an old gentleman from the Isle of Bourbon. It is now believed that he was entirely innocent, and that the French government is at present in possession of documents showing who the real assassin was.