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THE FAMILY CURSE.

"How refreshing it is to breathe pure country air, mamma, after the stifling atmosphere of geometry and french verbs which pervades madam Longchamps whole house, from garret to basement. If ever I have a daughter she shall not see the interior of a boarding school—least of all a New York one—during her minority."

Mamma and I were seated on the porch at Heatherly as I made this remark. The Gothic pillars and tall trellises were garlanded with June roses and honeysuckle; the great oaks on the lawn were murmuring all sorts of low, breezy welcomes to the sunlight, and perfume, and color of that delicious morning; and a perfect populace of linnets appeared to be holding special holiday throughout the land.

"You have given Madam Longchamps credit for making an admirable French scholar of you, Bertha," mamma replied. "I could not but hear a few words of your conversation with Mr. Hamilton last evening."

"Yes" I said, "he would speak in French, although I would have preferred my native tongue. It appeared so patronizing in Mr. Hamilton—as if he had said to himself, "She is a boarding school miss, and I'll give her an opportunity of showing off what she has learned."

Mamma laughed.

"Your suspicion wrong Mr. Hamilton, I am quite sure, Bertha. I thought he appeared quite attracted by you last evening, and I wondered at the time whether his attentions annoyed your cousin Ruth."

"Cousin Ruth!" I exclaimed. "Why mamma, you don't really mean that they—"

"Are engaged?" finished mamma. "Yes, Bertha, I do. I gave my consent to the marriage only the other day. Since your return I have not spoken to you on the subject, imagining that Ruth would make you her confidant."

At this moment my cousin Ruth herself appeared upon the porch where we were sitting. She was a tall, stately girl, several years older than myself, perfectly graceful, and, after a certain type of beauty, perfectly beautiful.

Her figure was slender, flexible and admirably well rounded. Her hair, deep golden and massively luxuriant, gave out from its silky depths a dull, yet vivid lustre, that reminded me of the still bosom of some lake at twilight; her eyes were blue, starlike, and at times wondrously expressive. But her face was colorless, immobile and statuesque.

Ever since I first saw Ruth Illersley—and that was years ago, before father's death, when she came to our house, a silent, black-robed little orphan; to live with us for food—ever since then I had considered her the most thoroughly emotionless, and at the same time the most unspotted and saintly creature that it was possible to imagine. She seldom smiled; she seldom spoke; she never laughed. But then she was always angelically peaceful, and gentle, and kind. I dont think that the most deadly insult would have offended her. I can never recollect hearing her giving utterance to a cross word or an uncharitable thought. To mamma and myself she had always been a living puzzle, a kind of a metaphysical curiosity.

"And so you are engaged to Mr. Cecil Hamilton?" I said, taking Ruth's delicate, soft hand in mine, as she approached to where I was sitting. "Naughty girl; I have been home three days and you have not said a word about the matter. I am afraid you don't love me any longer, Ruth."

A slight pressure of the hand was her only reply to my last remark. Then answering the one before it in her low, flute-like voice:

"I thought," she said, quietly, "that aunt Edith would have broken the news to you Bertha."

"And you love him very dearly, Ruth?"

"Very."

Her reply was perfectly cold and dispassionate; not the least color tinged her face at this acknowledgement of her love.

"Well," I said, "I wish you joy. Cecil Hamilton is charming, as far as I know. You are going to make a splendid match, too, in a social point of view, and I've no doubt that half the girls in Chester are wild with envy."

Later in the day mamma and I were together again, Ruth having gone on an afternoon trip to the neighboring village for the purpose of making a few purchases there. I was so pleased with the news of this engagement—loving my cousin fondly, as our almost life-long companionship had taught me to love her—that somehow I found myself able to talk of no other subject just then.

"Mamma," I said, "you don't seem to feel half as glad at Ruth's happiness as I do."

Mamma smiled, but, as it seemed to me, in a kind of joyless, forced way.

"You don't want her to marry," I continued. "Now, tell me, mamma, what can your objections possibly be?"

Somehow it seemed that my mother grew a shade or two paler when I spoke these words.

"You have a very foolish method of leaping at conclusions, Bertha. I am sorry to lose Ruth, but that—that is all," and mamma became intently busy with her embroidery.

"You believe she will make Cecil Hamilton a good wife?" I persisted,

"I hope so," was the evasive reply.

"Only hope, mamma?"

"How you cross-question one. Bertha." Mamma laid down her embroidery here and looked me straight in the eyes. "To be plain with you, since you insist upon plainness, I am sorry that Ruth Illersley is going to be married—more I cannot say; more I do not feel myself privileged to say, Bertha, even to you."

Her words puzzled me, but I knew mamma's firmness of character so well that I felt convinced she would remain silent beneath further questioning, and consequently held my peace.

That evening and many other evenings afterward, the trio of which our family was composed enjoyed the presence of Cecil Hamilton.

He was an exceedingly well-bred, handsome man, this fiance of my cousin Ruth, and his society charmed me more and more as I became better acquainted with him. He appeared very fond of Ruth for several weeks after my arrival, and showed her attentions of the most devoted sort. She received these attentions in her quiet, undemonstrative way, and, if my experience concerning the behavior of lovers had not been so slight, and my knowledge of Ruth's cold, unenthusiastic disposition so thorough, I should have argued from appearances that the love was entirely on Cecil Hamilton's side.

Gradually I began to discover that his love was diminishing. He still treated Ruth with the same mixture of respect and fondness, but it was evident her society no longer possessed for him its previous charm. But in proportion as Cecil's love appeared to lessen, Ruth's seemed to increase. I have known her to sit for a whole hour in his society, while mamma and her betrothed and myself were chatting together, and scarcely once take from Cecil Hamilton's face her almost burningly intense look.

They were marvelous eyes, those of Ruth Illersley; without their depth and lustrous expression, her countenance, notwithstanding its beauty of feature, would have been vacant and devoid of interest. I began to fancy that Cecil shrunk at times from the steady gaze directed on him by Ruth, and avoided meeting it. By-and-by, from a hundred signs of indifference on the part of Cecil, I learned that his love for my cousin had entirely departed.

But I learned more, one evening. It was a pleasant moonlit night in August, and I was sitting alone on the porch of Heatherly, when Cecil Hamilton's step sounded on the graveled pathway that led from the outer road.

He ascended to where I was sitting, took a chair beside me, and for some time we conversed on commonplace, everyday matters. Presently I said, during a little pause in the conversation: "I will go and tell Ruth you are here, Mr. Hamilton."

"Why so? Are you already wearied with my society, Miss Bertha?"

He asked the question in a low, earnest voice, bending towards me as he spoke. I thanked the moonlight for concealing the vivid flush that somehow dyed my cheeks at these words.

"I am going to tell you a secret, Bertha Fane," he went on, "which will make you despise me, perhaps, when I have told it. Until I saw you, I believed—firmly believed—that Ruth Illersley held an inviolable place in my heart. Since then I have learned my foolish mistake; for not until we met, Bertha, did I ever know the true meaning of that little word 'love.' Ruth, with all her beauty and mildness of heart, is no wife for me. God help me! I have tried hard to leave such words unspoken between us; but, somehow, they would find utterance."

I cannot say what answer I would have made to this declaration from Ruth Illersley's promised husband; perhaps in spite of the passionate heart-thrill it awoke, I should have replied with indignant scorn. But, at the very moment he ceased speaking, a wild piercing, discordant laugh, rang from the doorway behind us.

It was Ruth; and she had heard every syllable that Cecil Hamilton uttered. This I knew the instant my gaze rested upon her ghastly face, with its fierce, burning eyes directed toward Cecil. But why that horrible laugh, the sound which sent the blood curdling about my heart with vague yet intense terror?

Cecil and I had both risen, and were facing her, as she stood in the doorway. Suddenly the expression of a demon seemed to convulse her placid marble-pale countenance, and her look was transferred from Cecil to myself. Then, before I had time even vaguely to anticipate the action like a tigress she sprang forward and seized me in her arms. I felt her hot breath upon my cheek, and the sharp sting of her nails as they buried themselves in my flesh; and then, dragged to the ground by her furious clutch, my head struck against one of the stone pillars of the porch, and I knew no more.

With the return of consciousness I saw mamma's anxious face bending over me as I lay upon the bed in my own chamber.

"It is the family curse," I heard her say. "Ruth Illersley's father and her two brothers died in a mad house before she had reached the age of seven. For years I have prayed God to spare her from so dreadful a doom, and it has come at last!"

* * * * * *

I am the wife of Cecil Hamilton now, and poor Ruth, to whom the light of reason was never restored, is finally at peace. But not until my cousin had passed from earth did Cecil obtain my consent to the marriage.

Ruth Illersley's face, wan and wild as it looked that night, haunts me in my dreams, sometimes. All memories have their spectres, I suppose, she is mine.

Cure for Cancer.

There is an odd plant which grows in Ecuador, and which is known to be very poisonous, called by the natives "cundurango." It is said to have recently been found to be a specific for cancer. It appears that a native of the country had been suffering for a long time with a cancer, and the doctors whom he was able to consult told him that his case was helpless. Wearied of the constant pain, and seeing no prospect before him but suffering and death, he determined to die, and asked his wife to put him out of his misery. She consented, and made a decoction of condurango for him to drink, expecting to produce death in a short time. To the surprise of them both he felt much better after taking the dose, and soon took another. In a short time he was completely cured. The doctors soon heard of the wonderful case, and began to experiment with the plant on other cancerous patients, and with uniform success. They report marvelous cures. It is said that the United States minister to Ecuador has just sent a number of specimens of the plant to the state department at Washington.—Raleigh N.-O.-Chronicle.

Specimen Cases.

S. H. Clifford, new Cassel, Wis., was troubled with Neuralgia and Rheumatism, his Stomach was disordered, his Liver was affected to an alarming degree, appetite fell away, and he was terribly reduced in flesh and strength. Three bottles of Electric Bitters cured him.

Edward Shepherd, Harrisburg, Ill., had a running sore on his leg of eight years standing. Used three bottles of Electric Bitters and seven boxes of Bucklen's Arnica Salve, and his leg is sound and well. John Speaker, Catawba, O., had five large Fever sores on his leg, doctors said he was incurable. One bottle Electric Bitters and one box Bucklen's Arnica Salve cured him entirely. Sold by J. D. Morris, Druggist.

A Sad Death.

The death of Herbert, the fifteen months old son of Mr. W. F. Wilson shortly after 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon, was a peculiary sad one. The child had been sick for several days and medicine was being given it at stated intervals. It was worse Wednesday night and Mrs. Wilson and her sister were excited about it. The latter was requested to give the the medicine but by mistake gave a teaspoon full of laudanum. When the error was discovered the drug had taken too strong hold to save the child's life.—Salisbury Herald.

Highest of all in Leavening Power.—Latest U. S. Gov't Report
Royal Baking Powder
ABSOLUTELY PURE

A HOLE THROUGH THE EARTH.

Supposing a Ball Were Dropped Into It, Where Would it stop.

"W. M. J.," residing at Richmond, Mo., sends the following peculiar query to the editor of "Notes for the Curious," and asks for an answer to it.

"If it were possible to drill a hole of a foot or more in diameter entirely through the earth and then to start a ball weighing 100 pounds or more to falling through the same, at what point would it stop?"

Answer: Weight, in the sense that "W. J. M." refers to it, is the measure of attraction of gravitation; or, in other words, it is the measure of force with which a body is attracted by the earth. This attractive force decreases both ways from the surface of the earth, both outward into space or downward towards the globe's supposed molten center. In partial explanation of this assertion I will say that any given sized bulk of iron, or any other mineral or material whatever, will weigh less on top of a high mountain than it will at sea level. In order to be exact in this matter I will say that a mass of one thousand pounds weight will lose exactly two pounds between tidewater and the top of a mountain four miles high. This, it is plain to be seen, is because the force of the earth's attraction is much less on the mountain top than it is at sea level.

Therefore, if a ball be started on the journey outlined in the querry sent in by our Richmond friend, its weight would be decreased to a certain extent with every yard of its flight or fall until finally, upon reaching the center of the earth, it would have no appreciable weight, the attraction at that point acting equally in every direction. This being true it is plain that the phenomenon of what we know as "weight" would be entirely wanting, and the ball would be held in suspension as though immovably transfixed by numerous magnetic or invisible points.—St. Louis Republic.

Plans Mapped Out.

Our esteemed contemporary, the Durham Sun speculates as follows on the future of telephoning in North Carolina:

"Who knows but what some day in the near future Durham will be connected, by telephone, with Oxford Henderson, Burlington, and Greensboro. Such a thing is possible in this age of progress."

We can come to Col. Robison's rescue in this matter and assure him that his speculation will soon be a reality. In a very short time the people of extreme eastern North Carolina will be able to converse with the people of the extreme west. And the inhabitants of the "land of the skies" will soon have the opportunity to hear the sounding billows of the old ocean while they remain at home. The plans are already mapped out that are to bind Goldsboro, Wilmington, Greensboro, Ashville, Charlotte, Henderson, and probably other points to Raleigh in connection with Durham by telephone. It is also probable that Norfolk will be connected, too. Verily the day is brightening for the old North State.—Raleigh Press.

A Household Treasure.

D. W. Fuller, of Canajoharie, N. Y., says that he always keeps Dr. King's New Discovery in the house and his family has always found the very best results follow its use; that he would not be without it, if procurable. G. A. Dykeman Druggist, Catskill, N. Y., says that Dr. King's New Discovery is undoubtedly the best Cough remedy; that he has used it in his family for eight years, and it has never failed to do all that is claimed for it. Why not try a remedy so long tried and tested. Trial bottles free at J. D. Morris' Drugstore.

The Strange Killing of a Boy by Lightning.

NORWOOD, June 26.—Last week a negro named Bill Christian at Cedar Hill, N. C., was struck and killed by lightning. Another negro was badly hurt.

Yesterday Mr. Bill Thompson was sitting at a shop about 150 yards from the place where the negro was killed—with his little son, about six years of age, standing between his knees. Lightining struck and killed the boy and did not hurt Mr. Thompson.

John Latta Taken by Revenue Officers but Escapes.

News reaches Durham that revenue officers, on yesterday, visited John N. W. Latta's place, some eight miles from Durham, and made a search of his premises. They found quite a large amount of whiskey, it is said, twenty-one barrels, which they took posession of and arrested Mr. Latta. He was carried to Hillsboro last evening, bound with a rope. The report comes this morning that he succeed in getting his knife out and cut the rope which bound him, and ran away. The party who brought this report says he saw Latta running with some of the rope still hanging to him. At this writing he had not been recaptured.—Durham Sun.

Horrible Outrage.

A special from Apex, N. C., to yesterday's Raleigh Press says:

News has just reached here of a terrible affair about three miles from here, of which a Miss Wimberly was the unfortunate victim. It appears that a certain Geo. Mills and his niece, Miss Wimberly, left the girl's home about sunset intending to go to a neighbor's for some flowers. When about a mile from home Mills says they were attacked by two men who assaulted the girl and ordered him to leave which he did, but instead of returning immediately and informing the girl's parents, he failed to let any one know about the affair until 12 o'clock last night. Search was begun at once but without success until about day this morning she was found in an unoccupied house, her head badly cut, and skull fractured in several places.

Something New in Tobacco Factories.

Revenue Agent Warren made an excursion to State Road neighborhood last week and found a blokade tobacco factory that "bands" anything in that line to be found in Western Carolina. Near an old tobacco barn a few feet from the State Road the ingenious blockaders had mortised a hole in a large tree, placed the tobacco to be prized in this cavity and by means of a long pole used as a lever were able to apply sufficient pressure to get the tobacco in proper condition. The manufacturers had hit the grit before Mr. Warren reached the scene of their operations, but the quantity of tobacco stems around the tree indicated that the concern had been in full blast for some time.—Elkin Times.

A Farmer Who Prospers.

The Yorkville correspondent of the News and Courier tells the story of a York county farmer who has been farming for forty years. For 32 years he pursued the "all-cotton" system, raising no supplies that he could buy on credit. Notwstanding the high prices of cotton since the war, he barely managed to keep even. Eight yeart ago, however, he commenced the system of buying no supplies that he could raise at home, and notwithstanding the fact that the price of cotton is constantly getting lower, he has managed to pay off the mortgage that was on his farm, and last year made more clear money out of a crop of seven cents cotton, than he ever made before during any one year of his long experience. We have secured the name of this farmer, and it is our purpose to, as soon as possible, give our readers the benefit of his story.—Yorkville, S. C., Enquirer.

"Benjamin Franklin was lately whipped for stealing chickens, Thomas Jefferson sent up for vagrancy, James Madison fined for getting drunk, Aaron Burr had his eye gouged out in a fight, Zachariah Taylor robbed a widow of her spoons, John Wesley was caught breaking into a store, George Washington is on trial for attempted outrage, Andrew Jackson was shot in a negro barroom, Martin Luther hung himself on the garden pailings while stealing a basket of vegetables, and Napoleon Bonaparte is breaking rocks for a $3 fine in New Orleans. What's the matter with the old boys?"—The Glasgow, Ky., Times.

Miss Wimberly, the young lady who was assaulted by George Mills, near Apex, one day last week, is improving. She was conscious a little while today. Though her condition is yet critical, it is thought she will recover.—Raleigh correspondent in Durham Globe.

It is now believed that the number of miners who perished in the Albion coal mine near Port-Y-Prid, Wales, the other day, will be found to exceed 340. It seems that there were more men in the mine than was at first supposed.

An Indiana university has abolished its law department for the reason that the crop of lawyers in that State is already too large, and it wants to reduce the output until the surplus stock is worked off.

Some People Wait
Until after the Holidays
Before Buying
Needed articles—We presume on account of the general close prices that are expected at that time. It's not much fun to swap dollars, but that is about what we are doing. Therefore, if you need
Groceries,
such as Flour, Meal, Meat, Lard, Sugar, Coffee, Syrup or Molasses, Salt; or is it something in the Fancy Grocery line, such as Confectioneries, Cheese, Cakes, Crackers, Canned Goods, of any kind, Cigars—best in town, Tobacco, Snuff, or any table delicacies, come to us, and we will give you liberal prices on all these things and so liberal that you cannot afford not to come.
Very Respectfully,
W. J. JOHNSON & Co.

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Of Interest to the Ladies
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MRS. J. A. NOELL.

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and similar annoyances are caused by an impure blood, which will result in a more dreaded disease. Unless removed, slight impurities will develop into Scrofula, Eczema, Salt Rheum and other serious results of
Bad Blood
I have for some time been a sufferer from a severe blood trouble, for which I took many remedies that did me no good. I have now taken four bottles of S.S.S. with the most wonderful results. Am enjoying the best health I ever knew, have gained twenty pounds and my friends say they never saw me as well. I am feeling quite like a new man. JOHN S. EDELIN,
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Why?
Oh! I don't know. Worry I expect.
Worrying about what?
Well, you know the servants are a heap of trouble.
The children worry me a heap.
I am broken down.
In the morning I generally have a headache;
Along towards evening my back feels as if it would break.
Every time the baby cries I nearly jump out of my skin, I am so nervous.
Your system needs toning up. Why not take Brown's Iron Bitters
the best strengthening medicine made. It will give you a good appetite, make your blood rich and pure, give you strength, make life a pleasure. Not only take it yourself, but give it to the children. It is pleasant to take. Small dose. The only iron medicine that don't blacken the teeth. But get the genuine—it has crossed red lines on wrapper.
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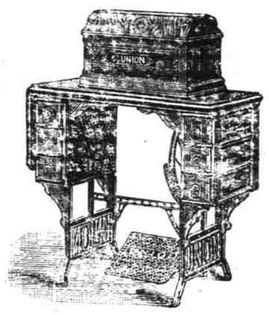
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