

Artistically Neat PRINTING OUR HOBBY THE CHAMPION Arcadia.

MY DISCOVERY

(Original.)

On taking up my mail one December morning I found an invitation to spend a week with my newly made friend, Frank Curts, at his country seat, which he proposed to open for the holidays. His wife was to have a guest, Clara La Vergne, whom Frank had never seen, but whom his wife pronounced very jolly. There was to be only the four of us in the party, I being invited for Miss La Vergne's benefit. I had no other plans for the holidays; therefore I accepted the invitation.

Kate Curts I had known since a short time before her wedding. She was a society devotee and had belonged to the smart set. Her friend, Miss La Vergne, was a tall woman with very black hair, which she wore about six inches long and tied child fashion with a ribbon at the back of her neck. This, she explained, was on account of its having been shaved some time before during a case of fever. Both the women were so young that neither would have looked out of place in pinafores.

I had not been long in the house before I began to study the intimacy between Miss La Vergne and Mrs. Curts. When together they did not act as young women friends usually do. They did not go about with their arms around each other's waist or sit holding each other's hand. Once on coming suddenly into a room where they were I caught them caressing each other, and on seeing that they were observed they seemed rather disconcerted. Instead of spending their mornings upstairs in feminine occupations they rode horseback or drove in a cutter. I never noticed them together in the upper parts of the house. They invariably spent their time when in each other's company in the rooms below.

One evening at dinner I jocosely twitted Mrs. Curts for inviting me to the house without providing a young lady to entertain me, declaring that Miss La Vergne was so wrapped up in her hostess that she had no time to give to me. After that the young lady seemed more disposed to accept my attentions, though it appeared to me she did so feeling that it was incumbent upon her. I took advantage of her altered manner toward me and endeavored to ingratiate myself with her. She was handsome and generally attractive except her voice, which was harsh. I found that my attentions were so unwelcome that I desisted and left her to enjoy her friendship with Mrs. Curts. Nevertheless I continued to study the friend-

ship. I have heard of such cases of feminine devotion, but had never before encountered one. It was therefore interesting. The more I observed the two together the more I became convinced that they had an important secret between them.

One morning on rising, being unable to work the electric bell, I slipped on my dressing jacket and went downstairs to get something I needed. Passing the dining room door I saw Miss La Vergne standing over the breakfast table. She was beside Frank's seat pouring a few drops of some fluid into a half grapefruit at his plate. Suspicious I had had for some time became a certainty. Miss La Vergne was no woman at all, but a man and Mrs. Curts' lover, and was trying to poison her husband.

I passed on without her (or him) having seen me and back to my room. As soon as I had finished dressing I returned to the dining room, and exchanged the grapefruit on my plate with that on Frank's. At breakfast I left my fruit untouched, but kept a sharp eye on the lovers. Mrs. Curts watched her husband uneasily when he ate his grapefruit, as if to notice whether he tasted anything unusual. Of course he did not.

We always had fruit for breakfast, and, since grapefruit was a favorite with us all, we had it every morning. Before breakfast the next day I went into the dining room and changed Frank's fruit for mine. This time I put a little of it to my lips and tasted a slight flavor which was not that of the fruit. I was puzzled to know what to do. I wondered if Frank had not got on to the plot, for he ate his breakfast in silence, and there was a strange look in his eye. Again his wife watched him while he ate his fruit and this time seemed a trifle disappointed that he found nothing unusual in it. She also noticed that I left my fruit untasted. When we had finished breakfast she and her lover left the room together, and when I passed the library a few minutes later they were in earnest conversation.

During the day Frank was gloomy and nervous. His wife watched him with frightened glances, and Miss La Vergne seemed to be in dread. As for myself, nothing could be more trying. The secret I carried was quite enough without being under the same roof with the actors in the coming tragedy. After lunch I put on my overcoat and gloves and went for a long walk, resolved to determine upon some plan of action before my return.

When I re-entered, the house was in a commotion. I was told by a servant that Mr. Curts was out of his head and the doctor was with him. Mrs. Curts came down presently and, taking

me into the library, said to me:

"Frank has long been subject to peculiar attacks. When they are coming on we are ordered to give him an antidote without his knowing it. We have been putting it into his grapefruit, but some one must have interfered with us, for this time it has had no effect."

Having made a fool of myself, I concluded that my further stay would be a burden to me if not to the others and departed the next morning.

O. NORMAN EDDY.

A Malignant Will.

Persons wishing to register in their last wills and testaments their feelings regarding their natural heirs may take as a model the following crisp effort of an Englishman, William Hall: "I give to that vile wretch, Samuel Hall, who I admitted of the temple many years since, but he sold his gown, and in seven years I could never get him to church but once, and twice he assaulted me, and at the time he had certainly killed me if by God's providence I had not by a maldservant been thrown against a great fire, the sum of 10 shillings, to be paid him every Monday upon request, and I wish that the first food he takes after my death will choke him."

Lincoln's Integrity.

No man ever believed in his calling more thoroughly than Lincoln, and he had no patience with the much mouthed charge that honesty was not compatible with its practice.

"Let no young man choosing the law for a calling yield to that popular belief," he wrote. "Resolve to be honest, at all events. If, in your judgment, you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer. Choose some other occupation rather than one in the choosing of which you do, in advance, consent to be a knave."—Frederick Trevor Hill in Century.

Pencil on Zinc.

An ordinary pencil mark on zinc is in a measure indelible. The writer saw recently a zinc label on which a name had been written with an ordinary lead pencil thirty years ago, and after a little of the oxide had been rubbed off the name was as legible as if it was just written. For permanency, where no illegibility is desired, nothing can be more durable.—Exchange.

Logically Demonstrated.

She—I can prove logically and mathematically that women are worth more than men. He—I'd like to see you do it, my dear. She—Isn't a mbs as good as a mile? He—So they say. She—And doesn't it take a whole lot of men to make a league?—Baltimore American.

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