

# A Fair Invalid

I thought it time to break my promise and go to the River House. I went one beautiful August day, when the heat seemed to be like a golden haze over the land, and the flowers drooped in sheer weariness, and the sky was so blue that one's eyes ached in looking at it. As I drew near I heard the rushing of the river and the low wash of the wavelets on the green bank, and they gladdened the heart within me. Once more I stood under the shadow of the grand old porch, and the world seemed far away.

In answer to my ring, the gray-haired butler appeared. I told him it was Jane Lewis that I wanted to see. He looked surprised, bowed solemnly, and ushered me into the library. There I waited for some time. Certainly rumor had not exaggerated the wonderful magnificence of the house. The carpets, hangings, pictures, statues, all amazed me. I detected a peculiar perfume, faint, sweet and refreshing; but the silence—the deep, brooding stillness which nothing broke except the rushing of the river, and the chirping of the birds—was strange, deep, wonderful. If any doors opened or closed, I never heard them; if servants moved, they must have been shod in velvet.

Presently Jane Lewis came in. She looked pale and worn, yet seemed pleasant to me.

"Have broken my promise, Jane," I said. "The truth is that I feel sure Miss Vane is very ill, and I want to help her."

"My mistress has been very ill," was the grave reply. "She is recovering slowly now; but, as I told you before, Mrs. Neville, you cannot help her."

"At least, let me try," I said, persistently.

"It is quite useless. You do not understand. You are very kind; but, if I were to kneel for an hour begging of Miss Vane to see you, you should not. She would simply be very angry with me."

"Then let me help her, unknown to her, in some fashion or other."

"You cannot. You do not understand, Mrs. Neville. You are very good and kind, but help is out of the question. I laid my hand on the woman's arm. "Jane Lewis," I said, solemnly, "I do not know whether your mistress is old or young, but I do know that it is wrong of her to shut herself out of the pale of all human sympathy and kindness."

"So do I," was the pathetic rejoinder; "but as a servant, it is not my place either to criticize or disobey my mistress."

"You are right; but has it never occurred to you that you share the wrong in aiding and abetting her?"

"It has, Mrs. Neville. I cannot say I only know that while I am in Miss Vane's service I must obey her orders. Suppose I disobeyed her and did what she has forbidden me to do—brought her into communication with the outer world—do you imagine it would influence her? She would change neither her resolutions nor her ways, but she would dismiss me, and find some one more obedient in my place. I love my mistress, Mrs. Neville," she continued, with a flush on her face, "and I have every reason to love her. I nursed her when she was a baby."

She stopped suddenly, as though frightened at what she said. It occurred to me immediately that, if she spoke truly, Miss Vane must still be quite young. I felt for the woman's embarrassment.

"Never mind. You are regretting what you said, but you need not do so. There is no cause. I shall not repeat it. I can see that your position is a delicate one. I am desirous of helping, not injuring you."

"Thank you, Mrs. Neville," she said. "You are, indeed, kind. I ought not to have said that. My mistress would not like it, I am sure."

"Then we will consider it unsaid, and if I can really be of no use to you, I will not detain you."

So I went away, having learned nothing of the secret of the house. I had, indeed, gathered one fact. Miss Vane was young; she could not possibly be more than twenty-two or thirty-three if Jane Lewis had been her nurse.

Old, and tired of the world, I could have understood her desire for retirement, her seclusion from mankind—but young! What could it all mean?

CHAPTER III.

I did not go to the River House again—it seemed perfectly useless—and I heard no more for some time of Miss Vane. I concluded that she had recovered. Surely Mrs. Lewis would have told me if anything had gone wrong.

Just then strange circumstances happened in the parish of Daintree. Dr. Johnson called on me one morning, his manner more than usually excited.

"My dear Mrs. Neville, such a strange thing has happened. You remember, perhaps, last Sunday, in my sermon, I said something about my earnest wish to restore the eastern window of the church; at the same time I said that I

did not wish to divert from the poor the money usually given in charity."

"I remember it perfectly well, Doctor Rawson."

"This morning I received an envelope, directed to myself, containing four bank-notes for fifty pounds each. The envelope contained only these words: 'for the poor, one hundred pounds; toward the eastern window fund, one hundred pounds.' Who can my unknown benefactor be, Mrs. Neville?"

I could not tell him. Another singular circumstance happened. Outside Daintree stood a small cottage, inhabited by a landlady, a widow, with a family of little children. How it happened no one seemed to know, but one summer night the cottage was burned to the ground. We proposed a subscription for her; but, before anything was even decided upon, the rector came over to Neville's Cross. "This parish of mine must be blessed with some unknown saint," he said; "look at these, Mrs. Neville."

He showed me an envelope containing bank-notes to the amount of three hundred pounds, the sender merely requesting that they might be used to supply the poor woman's loss.

In the month of September I was at Neville's Cross alone, without any visitors. I had just indulged in the purchase of a light boat, for I was passionately fond of rowing on the river. One evening the idea came to me to row up the stream and let the boat float back with the tide. I should pass the River House, and perhaps in the gathering gloom I might see something of its strange occupant.

So, in my little boat, feeling happy and completely at my ease, I watched the sun set and great floods of crimson light die over the waters, and then, when the crimson had become grey, I let the boat drift idly down the stream. It was quite dusk when I reached the River House. I rested on the smooth, green lawn, and then I saw something at last.

A tall, slender, graceful figure moved swiftly and gently between the trees, and then sank to the foot of one with a tired, weary look. I could distinguish only the graceful outline and the black, flowing garment, but lying listlessly on the black dress were the whitest and most beautiful hands I had ever seen—perfect as though carved by the most skillful sculptor.

I sat looking at them in silence. The face and head of the owner were hidden by a veil worn in the Spanish fashion, but the hands were eloquent enough. They never moved; they were neither clasped in thought, nor folded in patience, nor wrung in despair; but they lay listless and motionless, as the hands of a dead woman might.

The shades of night were falling quickly; it was time to go. The faint sound of the sculls in the water did not reach my neighbor, and I hastened away. It never struck me that in thus watching my mysterious tenant I was doing anything in the least degree unlawful or dishonorable. There could be no doubt but that at last I had seen Miss Vane. She was young and graceful, and had hands of marvellous whiteness and beauty. I knew no more.

I think from that evening a spell was laid upon me. I could never forget her. What was she doing, young and fair, alone in that solitary house? I passed and repassed, but never saw her again. Some weeks afterward I went for a long ramble in Daintree Woods. There is to me no sight in the wide world so beautiful as the woods in autumn, with their variety of foliage, and splendor of autumn coloring. I took a great liberty and went into the pine woods, saying to myself that even should I meet anyone from the River House, it would be very easy to hide.

While walking slowly along, very busy gathering a peculiar kind of berry that ripens in September, I saw the same graceful figure, with the long, trailing, black garments, and the white marvellous hands. I stood quite still, and in a few minutes she sat down in the same attitude as before, at the foot of a tall tree, her head leaning against the huge trunk, the white restless hands lying on her black dress.

I looked at her in silence. I would have given the world for courage to speak to her, but I dared not intrude—indeed, I hurried behind the clump of trees when I saw Lewis advancing toward her. I did not want her to see me. After all, my being there was an accident, and she would have thought I was spying. She came up to Miss Vane, and stood at a respectful distance from her.

"I hope you will not think me tiresome, Miss Vane," she said; "but I thought you were coming to sit in this wood. You would be quite content to sit here until the sun has set, but I cannot allow it. Miss Vane. You may be angry if you will—remember what Sir John said."

From under the veil came a low, sweet musical sound. It was not a laugh—

nothing that could possibly be called a laugh.

"I am quite indifferent, Lewis, to all that Sir John may say."

"Well, Miss, that is an old subject of dispute between us. Whether it is right to be so utterly indifferent to life is another matter. I must do my duty, as of that is to take care of you."

"You do take care of me," said the same sweet voice.

It was certainly Miss Vane speaking, but all attempts at describing her voice would be vain. It was low and soft, and there was something clear and vibrating, yet hopeless in it. It produced a strange impression on me, making me think of many things sweet and sad.

"You sat on the lawn until past midnight not long ago, Miss Vane—that was bad enough; but this wood must be damp. The autumn mists will soon rise from the river and pass over it and then you will take cold and be in danger again."

"Lewis," said the young voice, "you pretend to be very fond of me."

"I am fond of you, Miss Vane," was the dignified rejoinder—"there is no pretence. I beg of you to leave the woods, at least before the mist rises."

"I will. Now leave me in peace."

"Miss Vane," continued the maid, after a short pause, "you told me that you wished to be made acquainted with all the cases of distress that should come to my knowledge."

"I know of one now—that of an elderly woman, whose living is derived from the produce of a small garden and from the sale of milk. Her cow has died, and she is asking for help toward buying another."

"How much does a cow cost, Lewis?"

"I do not know, Miss Vane—fifteen pounds, I should imagine."

"Fifteen pounds," repeated the sweet voice—"that is not much. Is it possible that one's happiness or misery may depend on fifteen pounds?"

"Here does, Miss Vane; it seems a trifle to you—it is everything to her. Shall I do anything toward assisting her?"

"Certainly—give her the money."

"All of it?"

"Yes, but remember, it must be sent to her secretly, quite secretly—I do not wish anyone to know what I waste."

"It is not waste, Miss Vane—it makes people happy."

"Happy?" she repeated, and in the emphasis she laid on the word there was a volume of meaning; it indicated a dreary sadness and hopelessness which impressed me strongly. "Happiness! Is there such a word, Lewis?"

"I cannot discuss such matters with you, Miss Vane. I will send the money as you wish, quite privately, to-night or to-morrow."

"You have only to take care that the woman does not know from whom it comes. I should never expect thanks or gratitude—rather a curse than otherwise. Who is always the first to prove treacherous and ungrateful? The one who has most warmly befriended. Who is first in the ranks of your bitterest foes? The one you have loved best."

"Heaven help you, my dear!" said the patient woman. "That is a bitter view to take of everything. I wonder if you will ever recognize the merciful goodness of heaven again."

"I fear not. There is a funeral pall about me—one that grows thicker, and deeper, and darker as time goes on. Now go away, Lewis. I shall be at home long before the sun sets."

The woman turned away obediently, and the graceful head drooped against the tree, while once more the white hands lay listlessly on the black dress. "I must steal away in silence," I said to myself.

I knew now who had sent money to the rector. What else should I learn of this strange, eccentric Huldah Vane?

CHAPTER IV.

For many long months after my last glimpse of the tenant of the River House I haunted the banks of the stream in vain.

Huldah Vane was again lost to sight. Our neighbors had ceased to discuss her. In the spring of the fourth year of her residence at the River House I was destined to see more of her. I went one morning for a row on the river. What a morning it was—the air clear, sweet, balmy, filled with the odor of spring flowers, the hedges all blooming with pink and white hawthorn, the trees a tender green!

I rowed down the stream, past the River House, to a favorite nook of mine—a bank that was literally covered with wild hyacinths. I sat on one of the stones, looking at the picturesque waters, when I heard a faint sound, as of some one moaning in pain. I listened attentively, although thinking that I must be mistaken, and I presently heard it again quite plainly. Was it a wounded animal, or had some child fallen over the huge stones?

I stood up and looked around. At first I could distinguish nothing, but, shading my eyes from the bright sunshine, I soon discovered, close to the water, what in the distance looked like a heap of black drapery. I hastened toward it. My heart beat fast when I saw a white hand clenching a portion of the dress. I knew the hand—I recognized the drapery. It was Huldah Vane. I stood quite still for a second or two, and then hastened to her. The graceful figure was bent as though in deadly pain—her face was turned from me, and drooped toward the ground.

I knelt down by her side and touched her gently—the feeble moan changed into a startled cry. "Are you hurt? Are you ill?" I asked, gently. To my surprise she turned from me and made no reply.

"Do not turn from me, my dear child," I said. "I may call you 'dear child,' for I am many years older than you." Still no answer came. "I do not wish to distress you, but common humanity will not allow me to go away and leave you here."

Still there was no word. Such a strange, constrained silence it was that I raised her head, and saw that she had fainted and lay in a deadly swoon. I threw back the black veil that covered her face, and was compelled to cry aloud in wonder at its marvellous loveliness. Great heaven! what did it all mean? This child, so young, so tender, so lovely, living alone, shut out from her kind, talking as I had once heard her talk of preferring death to life—what did it mean? She looked about twenty, certainly no more; and she was beautiful as a dream.

I took off the bonnet with its long,

disfiguring black veil, and then I laid the beautiful head, with its wealth of shining dark hair, on the cool grass. Presently I raised it again, and pillowed it on my breast. I kissed the lovely face in a perfect passion of yearning pity, and then dipped my handkerchief in the flowing water and moistened her brow. It revived her, and soon afterward two dark eyes were looking mournfully into mine. To dark, so sweet, at once so proud and tender, with such deep sadness in their rich depths, that they haunted me with their sweet imperiousness and proud beauty for days afterward.

They were looking into mine for some moments before I quite recovered myself. I saw by their vague, dreamy expression that Miss Vane was only half conscious. "Was I almost dead?" she asked, in a strange whisper.

"Not quite," I replied, hardly knowing what to answer.

"Lay me down, turn my face to the river, and let me die," she said, and then fuller consciousness returned to her. "Who are you?" she asked.

"I am Mrs. Neville, of Neville's Cross, and you are my tenant." She lay quite still for a few minutes, and then she said to herself: "It cannot be helped." "Miss Vane," I interrupted, "we will speak of your never mind me. Have you hurt yourself?" I saw that all at once she had awoke to a full knowledge of where she was and what had happened.

"Yes, I have injured my arm. I was sitting on one of those stones, and did not notice that those above me were loose. I moved carelessly, and one of them fell on my arm. I managed to creep to the river-side, thinking that cold water would ease the pain."

"Will you let me see it?" I asked. She looked half timidly into my face.

"I need not trouble you," she said, shyly. "If you would go to the River House and tell my maid, Jane Lewis, that would be the greatest kindness you could do for me."

"My dear young lady, I am sorry to refuse you, but I cannot do any such thing; I cannot leave you here in this state. Do not be afraid of me; I am Mrs. Neville. You have been my tenant now for three years, and you know how I have respected your desire for secrecy. Ask yourself, if it is my wish to intrude on you now. Let me see your arm, and then when there is no more left for me to do, we can be strangers again."

Her face flushed, and she looked wistfully at me. "You do not know," she said, slowly.

"Nor do I want to know. I want to help you—nothing more. Let me look at your arm."

"So you are Mrs. Neville," she said, wonderingly, and with somewhat of the simplicity of a child. "I have tried sometimes to think what you were like. Is that the sunshine on your hair, or is it the natural color?"

Though she talked lightly, I saw that her lip was white, and quivering with pain. "It is the natural color," I replied.

"Yet you wear a widow's cap," she continued. "You have a buried love; but when I think of the dark grave, I think also of the blue sky smiling over it."

"How can people think death the greatest pain?" she said, musingly. "I fancy no one could be quite lonely who had a grave to weep over."

"These are morbid fancies for one so young as you are. Now, Miss Vane, let me see your arm."

"How did you learn my name?" she asked.

"You forget that you are my tenant. How many documents have I seen signed by Huldah Vane? Now for your arm."

"I cannot move it," she said, and her lips grew so white that I feared she was going to faint again.

I went to the other side—she was lying on her arm—and tried to raise her gently. I found that the limb was not only terribly bruised, but that it was also broken.

(To be continued.)

The Navel Orange.

The first we know of the navel orange, which is very valuable not only on account of its fine quality and taste, but also because of its being seedless, is of a single tree that was found growing on the northern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. This was about the year 1563, or nearly 350 years ago.

A monk in a monastery in that far-away country painted a picture of the fruit and wrote a description of it, both of which may be seen in the library of the Roman Catholic University at Washington, D. C. Grafts of this tree were taken to Spain by the Moors several hundred years ago, and from Spain the trees were carried to South America by the Spaniards. From "Nature and Science," in October St. Nicholas.

Miss Stella Josephine Feiler, of Harris county, Texas, who has developed remarkable ability to locate oil and sulphur lands, recently earned a fee of \$150,000 paid by ten land owners upon whose property two productive wells were struck after Miss Feiler had located oil not far from the Humble field. Miss Feiler, it is said, has accumulated a fund of over \$500,000, and is erecting an orphan asylum in Beaumont with the money she received from locating oil and minerals.

CORNS CURED

You can probably find many corns, blisters, warts, etc., on your feet, but you cannot find them on your face. Putnam's Painless Corn Extractor is the only remedy that will remove them without pain. It is a perfect passion of yearning pity, and then dipped my handkerchief in the flowing water and moistened her brow. It revived her, and soon afterward two dark eyes were looking mournfully into mine. To dark, so sweet, at once so proud and tender, with such deep sadness in their rich depths, that they haunted me with their sweet imperiousness and proud beauty for days afterward.

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Upset By Constipation

Distressing Indigestion, Stomach Gas, Painful Constant Headaches.

When Subject of Stomach and Bowels, and Suffering from Constipation, Headaches, and General Ill Health, Dr. Hamilton's Pills Cure.

It is with intense satisfaction that I am able to relate how I was cured by Dr. Hamilton's Pills from my bad of sickness, writes H. H. Sargent, a well-known hardware traveler, residing at Charleston. So many changes of diet brought on a fit of indigestion and liver complaint, but being very busy I didn't give the matter much attention. Headaches, awful dizzy spells, and constant tiredness soon made it impossible for me to attend properly to business. My appetite faded away, I became thin and looked yellow and jaundiced. I used three different prescriptions which physicians said would tone up my liver and regulate my bowels—but I got no relief at all till I started to use Dr. Hamilton's Pills. After taking them for a few days I was surprised at the energy and force I obtained; the old feeling of tiredness and lack of desire to work disappeared. I became cheerful and vigorous, energy, ambition, good color and good digestion. I take Dr. Hamilton's Pills three times a week and ever since have enjoyed the best of health."

What's the use of feeling so languid, so stupid and dull, when Dr. Hamilton's Pills will give you such robust, joyous health. For all disorders of the stomach, kidneys, liver and bowels, no medicine compares with Dr. Hamilton's Pills. 25¢ per box, or five boxes for \$1.00, at all dealers or the Cattaraugus Company, Kingston, Ont.

FULL FOR A MONTH.

The No-Tip Hotel a Success Before It Opens.

To-day London's latest lounge of luxury, the Strand Palace Hotel, through open its hospitable doors, and, such is already the fame of Lyons' latest, that every one of the 740 bedrooms will be occupied to-night.

No tips, no mysterious, irritating extras, and for bed, table d'hôte breakfast, bath, light, attendance, and the use of many noble rooms, this programme has captivated all England and a good deal of the continent.

"Everything ready? Yes, indeed," said bustling Mr. Joseph Lyons to the Daily Sketch. "We could have opened a week ago, and could have filled the place more than twice over."

"Does this striking success suggest to your mind the desirability of putting up your prices a trifle?"

Mr. Lyons looked shocked, and cried in alarm. "Goodness, no! I would not dream of such a thing. We have spent a quarter of a million of money upon this venture, and it is going to be a success of its present very moderate tariff."

"Some of the bedrooms have been let to persons who are not residents, others for a number of months, and some for the winter. We can accommodate more visitors for this month, and yet every post brings a big batch of applications."

"The first delivery to-day brought over 400 letters, and I have a staff of twelve people—air of them typists—doing nothing but deal with this mass of correspondence. I think I shall have to put a linkman at the main entrance to tell people not to get out of their cabs unless they have booked a room, as we shall not be able to accommodate them for a time."

Our representative, glancing down the list of places from which yesterday's letters came, noticed that Manchester and the Lancashire district generally were very largely represented, while Scotland, Ireland and Wales were frequently mentioned. Letters had also come from France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Switzerland and Austria.

GOOD BLOOD AND GOOD HEALTH

Is the Result Obtained When Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Are Used

To have good health you must have good blood. It is only when the blood is bad that the health is poor. The blood is the life-giving fluid of the body—it is therefore an absolute necessity that it should be kept free from all impurities and poisons. To do this nothing can equal Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. These Pills make new, rich blood with every dose; they drive out every impurity—every poison—and thus give good health. Concerning this, Miss Bernadette Lapointe, of St. Jerome, Que., says: "For several years my health was very bad—my system was completely run down. I had indigestion almost continually; my heart was weak; I had headaches and backaches, and was generally a wreck. My blood was very poor, and more than once I was in despair. I tried many supposed remedies, but none of them helped me. One day a friend advised me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, telling me that she had found them good in a case similar to mine. I followed her advice and began taking the pills. They soon gave me some slight relief. Encouraged by this I continued their use for several months and they strengthened my whole system. I am to-day in excellent health and always keep Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in the house, for if I feel a little out of sorts I take a box of Pills and am soon all right again."

Thousands of young girls throughout Canada suffer just as Miss Lapointe did. They are sickly all the time and are totally unable to take the enjoyment out of life that every healthy girl should. They need a tonic to build them up—to enable them to withstand the worries of household or business duties; to give them strength to enjoy social life. Such a tonic is Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People. These Pills give blood to bloodless girls; they strengthen the nerves; banish headaches and backaches, cure indigestion, rheumatism, heart palpitation and relieve the many ills of girlhood and womanhood. Sold by all medicine dealers or direct by mail at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

To rid the house of flies quickly, spray into the air oil of lavender diluted with hot water; this will cause the flies to leave and a delightful fragrance will be left.

Screen all doors and windows. If not possible plant mignonette in window and porch boxes. This will keep away both flies and mosquitoes.

Do not leave any food lying around, and do not eat food which has come in contact with flies.

Keep garbage can tightly closed. Spray occasionally to prevent breeding.

Four kerosene in drains occasionally.

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## GILLETTE'S

THE Standard Article

Ready for use in any quantity.

Useful for five hundred purposes.

A one ounce 20 lb. SAL SODA.

Use only the Best.



SOLD EVERYWHERE

For Making Soap.

For Softening Water.

For Removing Paint.

For Disinfecting Sinks, Closets, Drains, etc.

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## DOBBS' KIDNEY PILLS

23 THE