





What is It All?

What is it all when all is told, This ceaseless tolling for fame and gold, The fleeting joy or bitter tears? We are only here for a few short years...

NOT SEEING.

The blindness of youthful thoughtlessness—a self-sacrificing mother and her frivolous daughter. Ellie Lane danced through life as irresponsible as a petal on a wave...

She was a tiny woman, pale and frail, "just keeping herself going by clear will," her neighbors said. There were plenty of people to comment on Ellie's light-hearted way of shirking responsibility...

"I suppose it must be," said Ellie absentmindedly, but kindly. "You ought to take a tonic; better get something from the doctor, then it will be the right thing. Why did you seem to think you would rather I went to the clubhouse another day? You know I must go out sometimes."

"Very well; I'll just stop long enough to get my bag ready and hurry off, because Molly's going too, and she will be waiting for me. Why don't you get the plasterer to put off this work till another day, when you feel more rested?" said Ellie.

She was discovered in this plight an hour after-wards by an old lady who had been a friend of her mother's and who knew of Ellie's carelessness. "Where's that girl of yours now?" she demanded as Mrs. Lane hastily resumed her work, murmuring something about just having lost herself for a moment and resting for a hard day to-morrow. "Where's Ellie?"

"Well, I never did believe in waiting to send flowers to a funeral," said the old lady decidedly. "I think instead of putting in the papers a notice that it is 'kindly requested that no flowers be sent' the dead, they ought to add to marriage notices: 'It is kindly requested that all the flowers, figurative and literal, that friends ever want to send to either of this couple be sent while they are living the life begun as stated above.'"

"It's all every well to excuse youth by reason of its inexperience, Ellie, and no one wants you to be as old as I am at twenty-three. But love should make you sensitive to feel for your mother what you have not encountered in yourself. You have no right whatever to leave her alone as you do, working for her while you play. Play, of course; it is your right and she wants you to, but open your eyes to see that she is breaking down before it is too late, and share her burdens, you who are young and strong! And pray that you may have time to do this, or you will suffer beyond your actual desert. I have done my best for you, child; now if you don't do your duty you are guilty, for no one can plead ignorance for you again."

Ellie went away frightened, conscience-stricken, yet in the end rebellious against her clutching fear, her new sense of miserable self-disapproval. "Mrs. Lennon exaggerated, there was nothing wrong with her mother! She might be tired and perhaps needed a tonic after the summer's heat; she would see to it that her mother went to the doctor, as she had suggested only yesterday." But there was no quiescing the sense of wrong that her grandmother's friend had aroused; underneath her reassurances lay the fact that her frail little mother had borne all the burdens while she, strong and twenty-three, had left her to go her selfish ways.

As she came into the house its quiet struck her. The ceiling had been repaired, the plasterer was gone, the trace of his passing lay around, flakes of old plastering, powder of new material. Her mother had not tidied the house after his work was done. It was unlike her; Ellie suddenly felt panic-stricken.

"Mother, is anything the matter?" cried Ellie. "I'm so glad you've come," said her mother slowly. "Yes, something's the matter. I can't move my right hand and arm. It's a stroke, Ellie. Don't be frightened."

For Ellie had rushed to her with a cry and had fallen on her knees beside the still little figure and begun frantically to rub her stiffened hand. "It happened just after the man had gone. I know the house looks dreadful, for I hadn't a chance to clean up after—" Mrs. Lane's voice died away. "I'm going to put you to bed and send for the doctor," cried Ellie. "It's just tired nerves; it isn't a stroke."

Ellie waited for the ceasing of the light breathing to which she listened. All these days her every pulse had been a prayer and the prayer had not varied. Only to be allowed another chance! And the prayer was to be denied, Ellie knew, as she waited, that by and by her dull misery would give place to keen torments, and that all her life she would bend beneath the thought that her selfishness had sacrificed her mother.

But frail little women have a strong hold on life and Ellie's mother did not die. There came a Sunday morning when she opened her eyes and smiled out of her long sleep of days, from which she had aroused but partially to take nourishment. And she turned to Ellie and said in her old way: "I'm afraid I've kept you in, dear. I'll be better soon and you must go to see your friends."

"Oh, Mama, who else on earth do you think I want to see?" cried Ellie. The doctor came and confirmed the hope that Ellie hardly dared harbor: her mother was safe, yes. Another stroke? As to that no one could say. There might be another, soon, yes, or some years hence; there might never come one again. With care and ease Mrs. Lane might live to be the dear little old lady that one could foresee her growing into.

Rubber Roads.

In spite of all the advance of the last five years it is still the great problem of road-builders to construct a road suitable for both automobiles and teams which will give a long life of wear. A French engineer has in desperation turned to steel. He has developed a material which he calls iron straw, a wiry fibrous mass of iron or steel, in appearance something like the bunches of coarse hair used by plasterers to mix in plaster for walls and ceilings. This iron straw he mixes in concrete, and then builds concrete roads much after the accepted methods. Much of the iron straw appears on the surface of the concrete, embedded so that it will not tear tires, but is still able to take much of the wear and to bind the concrete.

Meanwhile an eminent English chemist has suggested that rubber roads would solve the problem, if it were not for the expense, and that in some places it may be worth while to use this material even before the day when rubber becomes cheap. For years the courtyards of two of the leading hotels in London have been paved with rubber, in order to deaden noise, and also the approach and exit of the Euston Station in London. Slabs of rubber two and a half inches thick, one solid base and the pavement, and ten years' use of this pavement in one hotel and thirteen years in the other hotel have worn the rubber only halfway through. The railroad station approaches were paved with rubber thirty-two years ago, and the only renewal was on part of the ingoing roadway ten years ago. This chemist estimates that at present prices rubber pavement would cost twelve or fourteen times as much as asphalt.

A Fisherman's Alarm.

An Electric device that will get up early in the morning, see which way the wind blows, find out whether it is raining, and then—if the weather conditions are favorable for fishing—will wake up the inventor, has been put into actual use by the Chicago man who constructed it. He likes to go fishing, but has found that fishing in the lake is good only when there is a west or southwest wind. On the other hand, he does not like to fish on a rainy morning. Fishing trips mean getting up very early—much earlier than the customary hour. He found it exasperating to wake up early, dress, and then on going outdoors find that it was raining.

He utilized an ordinary electric-bell circuit for his weather scout, with three breaks in the circuit. One break would be closed with a weather-vane pointed to the west or southwest, a simple contact being used. A pall balanced on a pivoted arm was arranged to catch any rain that might fall, and the weight of the rain would then make the second break in the circuit, though no rain in the pall would leave a contact. The third break in the circuit was a small switch, which would be closed by a string pulled from the turnbutton of the alarm on an alarm clock.

When the alarm went off in the morning this closed the switch. If there was no rain in the pall current was not interrupted at that point, and if the wind was in the west the circuit was completed there—thus making a complete circuit for an electric bell.

Bad Example at Home.

The cause of total abstinence should be dear to the hearts of all, says Catholic Universe. We do not need to insist upon the evils that spring from the vice of intemperance. Very often the young have been burdened by the sad example of the home circle. Example is stronger than precept. It is well for those who have charge of the young to inculcate the lesson of good example. Young men go out in the world often burdened with habits and customs which they first contracted in the home circle.—C Bulletin.

One way of saving money is to lend a man five dollars when he strikes you for ten.

Don't lose sight of the fact that the man who won't listen to reason may be thinking the same thing about you. Some men are almost as good guessers as the prescription clerks in the drug stores.

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Joan of Arc.

One of the events of the week has been Mr. Raymond Rose's production of "Joan of Arc," his new opera. An English of the scenic glories of the work, particularly the tableaux which include the coronation scene in Rheims Cathedral, there is only one opinion, that they are stately or superb. But when it comes to the musical portion we nris the appreciation of Joans nature and objects which perhaps intimacy with the faith which inspired her could alone give. Given so, one of the most charming numbers in the work, and one which is likely to live, is the Maids "Ave Maria." The opera is drawing crowded audiences and is another proof that catholic subjects are agreeable to the general public.

Cured at Lourdes.

Among the cures at Lourdes certified by reputable physicians at Dublin are the following, who participated in the Irish pilgrimage: Patrick Casey, Longford, total cripple for many years; Ellen Reddin, King's County, blindness; Jane McDonagh, Sligo, caries and ulcers; Michael Downey, Belfast, cripple in both legs for twenty-three years; Thomas Downey, Belfast, tubercular disease of the hip with discharging sinus since his second year; James McAlister, Belfast, hip disease since infancy; Agnes McGuire, chronic tubercular knee; Father Lynch, Kilmessan, and Father Kiernan, Enfield, County Meath, of deafness; Grace Maloney, Clare, of a tubercular knee with discharging cavity of nine years' standing.

Filth on the Stage.

The theatrical season has but just got under way and already the standards of ordinary decency and honest art have been outraged by the mercenary playwright and producer. "We are now witnessing a competitive struggle in the theatre," says the New York Evening Post, (Sept. 6), "tending towards the survival of the nastiest. Under the guise of contributions towards the study of the social evil, plays have been thrown on the stage which are abominable in their theme and still more abominable in their intention."

The duty of Catholics is plain. We must stay away from these nasty plays. Pulpit and press must unite in condemning them. Our Catholic societies must use all the influence they can bring to bear in order to have them suppressed. We owe this not only to our holy religion and the spiritual welfare of ourselves and our children, but to our country as well.

A corrupt stage undermines public morality, and whatever destroys the morals of a nation leads to its ultimate destruction. —Fortnightly Review.

The Common School.

The theory of our common school system in effect is that while religion is all very well in its way, and makes a man respectable in the eyes of the world it must not sit too heavily on us, much less clog our progress toward wealth and worldly eminence. In view of this tendency to ignore religion, and the trend of education in a worldly and pagan direction, is it any wonder that we have the results deplorable by Mrs. Young, and that those who have faith and place the proper value upon the salvation of the souls of their children, fight shy of the public schools.—New World.

You'll always have a dull ax if you wait for a volunteer to turn the grindstone.

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