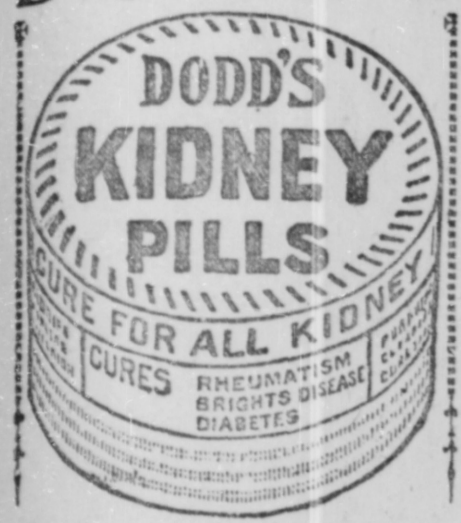


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Thomas Campbell

A LOVER AT LARGE.

This girl, for instance, died a good deal over her carelessness and heartlessness. She felt deeply remorseful for what she had done. But Gerald bore the blow with composure and without any bitterness whatever.

Of course he did not go to Mrs. Millicent's so often until after her guests had departed; but then he fell into his old ways of dropping in to see her, of listening to her singing, of taking her to drive. She soothed him and rested him. She began to seem to him the one woman in the world who never exasperated.

One night he told her he loved her. He made the confession a little shyly, for she had always treated him with a certain matronly kindness, as if she were very much older than he.

She did not answer for some time—so long, in fact, that he became very uncomfortable. Then she said slowly: "How long have you cared for me, Gerald?"

"Ever since I have known you," he answered promptly.

She looked at him in amazement. "Oh," he added hastily, "I suppose you are thinking of Miss Sherlock. Yes, I did like her."

"And told her so?"

"Yes, I told her so."

"But that was only a month ago."

"I know it."

Their eyes met in the silence that followed, and then they both laughed.

"But, Gerald," she said, looking at him straight from under those level eyebrows, "this is not a laughing matter."

"I know it's not," he said penitently.

"Before you met Miss Sherlock were you fond of some one else?"

"Yes; that was Kittie. I was engaged to her."

"And before Kittie?"

"I don't think this is fair, Mrs. Millicent. Yes, there were others before Kittie."

He was red and defiant now, but truthful in the depths of his embarrassment. Her eyes twinkled a little as she asked him gravely:

"Have you ever been called fickle?"

"I say, Mrs. Millicent, this isn't fair a bit. I'm in dead earnest, and you do nothing but chaff me. I know I've liked other girls. I've been a fool, if you choose to call me so, but this is different."

"Is it, Gerald? Suppose I should accept this omnibus affection of yours. How long before you'd be offering it to some one else?"

He flushed indignantly. "If you would let me love you, I would never look at another woman in my life."

"Do you know, Gerald, strange as it may seem, I believe you."

"Thank you," he said a little stiffly.

"Do you know I think your fickleness is only a sign of great fidelity? No; I'm not laughing at you. I mean it. You have loved 'the eternal womanly'; that is all. Whenever you have met a woman who seemed sweet and lovable and attractive you have been drawn toward her like a piece of iron to a magnet. When you were detached, the next magnet drew you in the same way, but it wouldn't have moved you at all if you'd been firmly fastened to the first one."

She smiled as she watched his eager, attentive face.

"I believe," she went on, "that you would make the most faithful of lovers."

To be idle is the hardest of all tasks. Our grandmothers understood this and even in their leisure moments were never found without some little task in their hands, if it were only knitting, tatting or crocheting. There was a reason for this that does not appear upon the surface. Our grandmothers were healthy women, imbued with a spirit of ambition and activity that would not permit them to be idle.

If many modern women are much less active and more given to idleness than the stately dames of yore, it is because they enjoy a smaller measure of good health. A woman who suffers from weakness and disease of the distinctly feminine organs, who is racked with pain, and tortured with headaches and nervousness, cannot be active and helpful. Idleness and invalidism are the natural results of suffering of this description. The poor invalid woman is not at fault, save in her ignorance of her own physical make-up or neglect of her womanly health.

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ers, the most loyal of husbands, it once your love and tenderness were centered somewhere where they were treasured and returned.

"I know I would," he said enthusiastically. "I know I would."

"I even believe that I could make you happy if I tried, Gerald."

"Oh, Mrs. Millicent!"

"I am older than you—oh, not in years, I know—but I have suffered, and even without that mine is the older nature. I know, as a young girl cannot know, how great and beautiful a thing an honest man's love is. I should be so careful of it; I would never trifle with it, never hold it lightly; it is beyond all price." She stopped, her voice choking a little.

He rose and stood in front of her. "And will you take mine?" he said.

"Oh, indeed it will last! I am sure—I never felt like this before!"

She put her hands before her face a minute. Then she said:

"Is it quite fair to you? I shall love your love. I shall revel in your devotion, but it will be a little different. A younger woman would meet you more fairly, more equally. She would love and quarrel and make up. I shall manage you. You will be very comfortable, and you won't know it, but do you want to be managed?"

"Always," he said fervidly, "if you will do it."

She smiled at him, but he hesitated now.

He looked like a thirsty man who, traveling over an arid plain, comes unexpectedly upon a sparkling spring, yet who will not touch its waters until he is sure of their purity.

"You have been so frank," he began awkwardly, "and I can't talk as you do and express things, but I want to say something. I know I will be happy with you because I love you so, but if it's only my love you care for and the managing me and making me comfortable—if it's that, I'm afraid you won't be happy. You will have to love me a little bit, just for myself, you know, or the rest won't count. Do you think you could?"

Her eyes had the softest, sweetest look in them that he had ever seen in a

woman's face. There was infinite tenderness shining through a little mist of tears.

"Dear," she said softly, "I think I have loved you all the time."

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fore him. Indeed, even in some of the towns he might find cause to rue his rashness.—Rider Haggard in Longman's Magazine.

Hiram Powers and Young Leighton.

It was on the advice of the American sculptor, Hiram Powers, that as a lad Frederick Leighton was allowed to follow his predilection for an art career. The question was settled in Florence about 1845, when he was about 15 years old. His father showed a portfolio of sketches to Powers and asked if he would recommend him to bring him up as an artist. The sculptor asked for a week to think the matter over. At the end of that time he said, "Mr. Leighton, your son may be as eminent as he pleases." "Shall I make him an artist, then?" asked Mr. Leighton. "That is out of your power," was the reply. "Nature has done it for you." So it was agreed that young Frederick should study to become a painter, but only on condition that he should not neglect any other part of his education in consequence.

—Art Amateur.

Refreshing Sleep.

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