A BLIGHT

By ELIZABETH WEED

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Edith Wilton combined two marked contradictions She possessed a lovable disposition, but when she was a baby, through the carelessness of a nurse, she fell and cut her lip, producing a wound that in healing left a scar, giving a very disagreeable expression to her face

Edith could see in the faces of those she met a repugnance occasioned by her expression At first she tried to obviate this effect by smiling, but she saw at once by the further recoil of the one looking at her that she was only heightening the disagreeable impression Such physical blights usually have one of two effects, either the blighted person is unconscious of the defect or becomes painfully sensitive concerning it. Edith was of the latter class She would not go to the social gatherings of her own age More and more she shrank within herself Then, becoming conscious that in being a recluse she would be forced into a life of selfishness, she began to devote herself to the poor

She had friends, girl friends, who sought to draw her out socially Confidence between young girls is close, while that between opposite sexes, especially at that age, is distant The young men who met Edith looked upon the expression on her face and turned away with a shrug. Her girl friends had a better opportunity to learn what there was under the misleading expression When one of her chums was married she insisted on Edith being her bridesmaid Edith demurred, but her friend would not excuse her.

At the wedding the bridesmaid, looking up suddenly, saw the eyes of a young man she had never seen riveted upon her and without that repelled expression she was accustomed to see. The man was a recent graduate of a medical school. The reason why his face did not reflect any disagreeable expression at her defect was because, being a practitioner, he was used to controlling his features when treating his patients.

But Edith did not know this. She knew only that a man with a kindly face was looking at her without any reference to her defect. And when Dr. Allan Emerson requested an introduction and was presented to her her heart fairly bounded within her Not for an instant while he chatted with her did he seem conscious of her blight. And she, being made to feel that it was inconsequential, rose above it so far as to display the real attractiveness and worth that were in her

And yet the reason of the young doctor's desire to make her acquaintance was that very defect He had been observing her before she had noticed him and with a professional eye had been watching the effect of her scar upon the various expressions that flitted across her face. Some physicians, rough in manner, though they may be invaluable helpers to the afflicted, would not have scrupled to betray the real object of their interest. Emerson was of a different kind. He not only concealed his own thoughts for professional reasons, but from an innate sense of delicacy

Whatever be the exact analysis of his feelings, the act produced a marked impression upon Edith Wilton. A man whose personnel, whose bearing, was far above the average had not only failed to show any repugnance at her defect, but had asked to be introduced to her and chatted with her, displaying unusual interest in her without seeming to be conscious that there was any difference between her and other girls, unless to her advantage. But when he asked her if he might not call upon her the cup of her delight was full.

A few months after the meeting Dr. Emerson asked Edith to be his wife. When she had accepted him he mentioned for the first time her defect, letting her know that he believed he could remove at least its effects.

"Why," said Edith, "didn't you remove it before proposing to me?"

"Because, sweetheart," he replied, "these stupid men who have been passing you by would have learned of your real worth, and the field would have been full of rivals."

There was more in her eyes than in her words when she replied, "You know very well that none of them were to be feared by you."

But Edith dreaded lest in case an operation were not successful her lover might find himself tied through life to a blighted woman and unhappiness for both would result. She therefore insisted on having the operation performed and if the trouble were removed the marriage to take place afterward. Dr. Emerson demurred to this, saying that whether the operation were or were not a success he would not give her up. Both stood firmly on the ground that they had taken, but the man, since the result would be the same to him in any event, finally yielded.

The operation was merely a matter of delicate handling, its only object being to produce a certain result of facial expression. Dr. Emerson performed it himself, covering the wound he made with a piece of skin from the arm of another person. When the whole had healed and the bandages were removed, though the scar remained, the expression on the face had entirely changed.

Dr. Emerson is facetious in his remarks upon how he kept rivals from the girl he wanted and whom as his wife he considers a treasure.

The Historic City of Delhi.

Delhi is the most historic city in all India. It may not be the oldest, although it lays claim to a respectable middle age, dating from 1000 B. C. At that time the master of Delhi called himself emperor of all the world, and emperors, at least of India, have ruled there almost ever since. Old Delhi, without the walls, is a city of picturesque ruins. Imperial Delhi, the modern city, was created by Shah Jehan, a contemporary of Queen Elizabeth. From the date of the first Mohammedan incursion, A. D 715, perpetual warfare raged round Delhi until at length she yielded to the irresistible power of the Moguls. The city was alternately Mohammedan and Hindu during a great many years and finally, in 1803, was made British by General Lake. Delhi has the finest and largest mosque in India. It took 5,000 men six years to build it. The noble tomb of the Emperor Humayan marks the change of creed which followed the Moslem invasion while the observatory of Jai Singh and the deserted hall of the seventy columns recall the short triumph of Brahmanism.

She Couldn't Fool Him.

"You have a splendid figure," said the tailor "I shall have no trouble in giving you an excellent fit"

Feeling fairly well satisfied, the man went to a shoe store

"Your feet are splendidly shaped and rather small for a man of your size, too," said the clerk "These shoes are just what you ought to have."

He took them and bought a hat at the hatter's, where he was told that he had such a finely shaped head and such splendid features that the hat which he tried on first was just what he needed to make him look his best

Then he passed into a large department store and, finding the glove counter, sat down where a pretty young woman was waiting to serve him.

"Just place your elbow on the counter, please," she said "What a finely shaped hand you have! Let me"—

"Wait" he commanded "By George you can't put that over on me! I used to be the catcher on a baseball team"—Buffalo News.

Could Not Deny It.

"I will ask you," said the lawyer, who was trying to throw doubts on the testimony of a witness, "if you have ever been indicted for any offense against the law?"

"I never have, sir"

"Have you ever been arrested on a charge of any kind?"

"Never"

"Well, have you ever been suspected of committing a crime?"

"I'd rather not answer that question."

"Ha! You would rather not! I thought so I insist upon your answering it. Have you ever been suspected of crime?"

"Yes, sir, often Every time I come home from a trip abroad the customs inspectors at New York city suspect me of being a smuggler"—Chicago Tribune

The Devil of the Desert.

It is not generally known how a devil rides a camel, but Mr Hans Vicher acquired the information and imparts it in his volume, "Through the Sahara" One night a camel suddenly ran amuck. Other camels followed suit and a general panic ensued. "The frightened yells of my escort told me that a ghool, a wicked demon of the desert, had seized the camel I was told how these evil spirits sometimes took a fancy to mount a camel, the camel would then look to see who was digging it in the ribs, and, perceiving no one, fear would grip its heart, for them it knew that the devil was on its back"

Malleable Glass of the Egyptians.

Strabo and Josephus both affirm that the Egyptian glass workers were so well skilled in their art that they imitated the amethyst and other precious stones to perfection. Malleable glass was one of the secret arts of the ancients, the formula for making it being now reckoned as lost. Strabo mentions a cup of glass which could be hammered into any desired shape, the material of which it was composed being as ductile as lead.

How Plants Remain Upright.

If a flowerpot is laid on its side the stalk of the plant growing in it gradually curves upward until it resumes the vertical position. This is called geotropic curvature, and the question is by what means the plant is stimulated to change its direction of growth. One theory avers that movable starch grains in the plant cells fall to the lower side as the position is changed and by their pressure influence the mechanism of growth.

His World.

Pretty Girl (to Charles, her betrothed)—Charley, how far is it around the world? Isn't it 24,000"—

Charles (putting both arms around her)—That's all a mistake, love. It is only about twenty-four inches."

A Legal View.

"The Bible says that no man can serve two masters."

"Yes. That's probably the first law against bigamy ever put down."—Cleveland Leader.

Curious.

Isn't it curious that when it is one minute after 8 o'clock it is past 8, when it is thirty minutes after it is only half past 8?

Be brief, for it is with words as with sunbeams—the more they are condensed the deeper they burn.—Southey.

Why the House Rented Cheap

By WARREN D. BENTON

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Desiring a house and grounds in the country, I scanned the newspapers till I found an advertisement of one that appeared to be what I wanted. Taking my little boy with me for company and to give him a holiday, I went to the place, found the agent who had the rental of the house and signified a desire to look at it. He drove me to it and showed me through the premises When I asked him the price he hemmed and said

"What do you wish to pay?"

I named a price, about half what I thought the place was worth, and was very much astonished that the figure was accepted.

I resolved to remain in the town near which the house was located to make inquiries as to why it rented so cheap At the hotel where we stopped while eating supper I engaged the landlord in conversation and told him that I had come to look at the Rand premises, as they were called, with a view to renting them. At the mention of the place he cast a quick glance at me, then busied himself at a side table where the meats were served, as though he did not wish to continue the subject. I did all I could to draw him out, but failed signally

After supper, taking my boy with me, I went to a garden decorated with Chinese lanterns and, seating myself at a table, ordered a glass of wine. A man sat at the same table, and I addressed him.

"Do you reside in this town, sir?"

"I do," he replied.

"Do you know anything about the Rand place?" I asked, looking at him knowingly

"You refer to the old gentleman who is interested in the hedge?"

"Yes."

I had never heard of an old gentleman near the stable, but suspected that I had struck what I was looking for, and this was the reason for my affirmative reply. I waited for him to speak again, but he did not So to lead him on I said

"Have you ever seen him?"

"I? No How could I see him?"

"Why with your eyes, of course."

"Don't you know" he said looking at me in surprise, "that only a child can see him?"

"A child?" I asked puzzled

"Yes Your boy might, but not you"

"H'm" I said for want of something more indefinite to say and not wishing to give away my ignorance of what he was talking about, then after a pause, "Is he always there?"

"That no one can tell No adult has ever seen him and only a few children."

There was an orchestrion playing in the garden and during this conversation my son had left me and gone to listen to it

"I wonder," I said to the stranger "if my boy would see him?"

"The boy who sat with you when you first came to this table?"

"Yes"

"I should think he might."

"Why so?"

"Oh, it is only a surmise. The little fellow has a spiritual look"

"What is the best time to see the old gentleman?"

"About 5 in the afternoon. That's the time he was killed."

"The time he was killed?"

"Yes. He had ordered his horse, a vicious brute, for his accustomed horseback ride. A new groom had just come to work for him who did not know the animal's tricks, one of which was to refuse to leave the stable, rearing and plunging when expected to do so. The old gentleman went out to see why his horse was not brought round and found the groom struggling with him. The gentleman mounted the beast, gave him the whip and clapped the spurs into his flanks. The horse shot out of the stable, and before he could be turned brushed against the hedge, throwing his rider, who fell on his head and broke his neck. The time was exactly fourteen minutes after 5."

I was tempted to laugh, but resisted the impulse. Nevertheless there is a bit of superstition in all of us, and I determined to take my boy to the place the next afternoon. Besides, I wished to tell my wife the story of why such a bargain was offered and assure her there was nothing in the story. So the next afternoon I went with my boy to the place, arriving there about 5 o'clock. We walked about the grounds for a quarter of an hour, when I said:

"I wish there was some one here of whom to ask some questions about the place."

"There is, papa. Perhaps the old gentleman over there can tell you what you want to know."

I started. I saw no one.

"That old man over there pruning the hedge?" I asked in pretense.

"He isn't pruning it, papa; he's cutting it down with an ax."

"Never mind, my boy. I think we won't take the place after all. Your mother wouldn't like it."

I took my son by the hand and led him away as quickly as he could walk Now and again he turned his head to look back, remarking, "I wonder why he wishes to destroy so well grown a hedge," or, "What a queer looking man he is! Sometimes I can't see him, and I can't hear any sound when the ax strikes the thick wood at the bottom where he is cutting."

I paid no attention to these comments, getting the child away as soon as possible.

A Dream and Its Sequel.

"In one of the East Indian border wars there was engaged an officer of high repute, the member of an ancient county family," says Mrs. Mayo in "Recollections of Fifty Years." One night the laird, in his sleep, started from his sleep, exclaiming:

"'There's the shot that has killed my brother!'

"His wife told him it was but a dream. He must have given an anxious thought to his brothers before going to sleep. Next day the pair were in the garden directing their gardeners when the laird suddenly exclaimed

"'Do you hear the bagpipes?'

"'No' answered the lady 'I can hear nothing. I am sure there is no sound'

"'Strange,' said the laird, 'for I can even hear what is played It is "The Flowers o' the Forest' Are A' Wefe Away"'

"A few hours later came the telegram reporting that the brother had been shot down by some border warrior and over his lonely grave the men of his regiment had played the pathetic air whose mysterious echo seemed to have reached the laird

Shakespeare's Definition of Poetry.

What a pity it is that Shakespeare ever used that phrase "fine frenzy" It has become a fuddlesome factor in the framing of foolish fancies It is to the honor of Shakespeare, however that he came nearer to giving the world the true definition of poetry than has any other man, for he did explain what constitutes the true art of poetry making, and from this we are enabled to know what Shakespeare considered poetry Curiously enough, it is in the very passage where Shakespeare uses that unfortunate phrase "fine frenzy" Let us quote

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling
Doth glance from heaven to earth from earth to heaven,
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name

—Hudson Maxim's "Science of Poetry and Philosophy of Language"

Hard to Understand

Supposing some one should spring this on you rapidly and ask you what it meant "Mare eat oats-deer eat oats, lambs eat ivy, little kids'll eat ivy too"

You would never think it was plain English, but it is. It is simply "Mares eat oats deers eat oats, lambs eat ivy, little kids'll eat ivy too"

You should say this over many times to yourself until you can roll it off very quickly, run the words together and then when you try it on your friends they will have to confess that they can't understand it They will feel quite foolish when you show them that it is common English and that it sounds odd only because the words are spoken fast and run in together It is this running of the words in together which makes it hard for a foreigner to understand our language or us theirs —Omaha World Herald

England's Greatest Mine Fire.

The most serious colliery fire ever known in Britain was undoubtedly that which broke out at the Tawd valley mine, near Preston, in 1872 Thousands of pounds were spent in trying to get the flames under control, but they overcame everything and consumed some millions of tons of coal A wall ten feet in thickness was built round the affected parts, but the heat cracked the masonry and brought it down as fast as it was rebuilt However, in 1897 the river Tawd overflowed its banks and went pouring down into the mine No fire could withstand such an immense volume of water hurled upon it, and, although the flames extended for 500 yards, they were quenched after having raged for a quarter of a century—London Tit-Bits

Preaching Monkeys.

The author of "The History of Brazil" tells of a species of monkey called "preachers." Every morning and evening these monkeys assemble in the woods. One takes a higher position than the rest and makes a signal with his fore paw. At this signal the others sit around him and listen. When they are all seated he begins to utter a series of sounds. When he stops these cries he makes another signal with his paw, and the others cry out until he makes a third signal, upon which they become silent again. This author, Mr. Maregrove, asserts that he was a witness to these preachings.

A Use For Him.

"That horse of yours looks terribly run down."

"Yes," replied Uncle Si Simlin.

"Why do you keep him?"

"Well, it's a kind of comfort to have him around. As long as I've got him I feel that there ain't much danger of my bein' cheated in a hoss trade"—Washington Star.

Not a Good Son.

Necessity turned sharply to invention.

"If I'm your mother," she said, "it's your duty to support me in comfort."

But invention, as we all know, usually dodges his duty.—Chicago Tribune.

Gallant.

Nell—I have to read a paper on "Ideal Woman" at the next meeting of our ladies' club. Jack—Well, all you need to do is to stand up and let them look at you.

More Noticeable.

The more rare a man's qualitys are the more he will be found fault with. Dust on a diamond is alwus more noticeable than dust on a brik.—Josh Billings.

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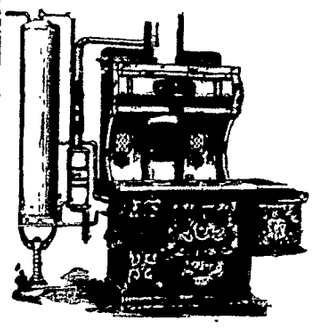

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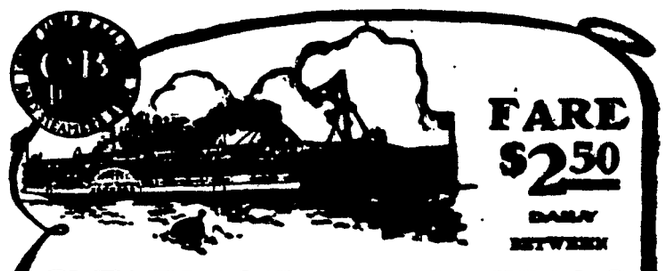

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