

BANISTER HILL.

Up Banister Hill did you ever go? Sometimes I go fast, sometimes I go slow. But whether I like it or not, each night I have surely to go, at candle-light.

Oh, how can a little boy like to go Up Banister Hill? But it's fine, I know. When morning comes, and I'm washed and dressed.

To play I'm on horseback and riding my best Down Banister Hill!

I stand by the side of my shining horse, Take one look ahead on the long straight course—

And then up I jump! I slip and I slide And off like a flash of lightning I glide Down Banister Hill!

—Lilla Thomas Elder, in Children's Magazine.

THE AUTHOR.

Ralph Drayton watched with lazy satisfaction the motions of his hostess's competent hands as they strayed among after-noon teacups and the other paraphernalia of a *tea-a-lete* refreshment upon which the young man found himself growing daily more dependent, both in body and spirit.

"It is not very flattering of you to keep trying to goad me into matrimony, particularly when it is on your account that I remain single," he observed, trying to look sentimental with his mouth full of bread and butter.

"Oh, pray don't refrain from marrying on my account," Maida Tresham replied with some spirit. "I merely thought I should like to see you as happy as—"

she paused on the threshold of the "I," and humorously substituted "as my husband is."

"Ah, no one could be so happy as your husband!" he declared.

"How obvious? Yes, they could, your wife might be even happier," she maintained with a seriousness which he interpreted as a phase of her coquetry. "You see, she continued, 'you are self-deceived like most of you. You think you do not fall in love because you are not romantic. Now I maintain that you do not fall in love because you are romantic. That sounds like Chesterton, but time will justify my paradox. Some day I will arrange things for you—the time, the place, and the loved one all together—you'll see.'

"But you must have some deeper motive than pure selfishness," he insisted.

"Perhaps there is some pure selfishness mixed with it," she rejoined emphatically. "Possibly it disturbs me to see you so much, and you know how little I like to be inwardly disquieted." He could not interrupt her affectionate smile, devoid of flirtatiousness, so he took refuge in his previous remark. "I should think that a woman would be rather flattered by having a man remain single on her account," he maintained.

Mrs. Tresham flushed. "Don't insult me with pretty speeches," she commanded. "I care a great deal too much about you to wish to hear such banalities. It is because I am really fond of you, Ralph, that I want you to find happiness in legitimate channels."

"You give me all that I want," the young man murmured. "Why should I look for anything different?"

"Because you are just in the state to fall in love, and you don't know it," Mrs. Tresham said with an insight almost maternal. "Which being the case you see you must look out for me."

"Ah, you are not clever!" he sighed.

"No, I am not clever, but I sometimes think I am very good," she said in a tremulous voice.

The door opened and a middle-aged man came in. He had a kind and absent-minded expression, and his shoulders were prematurely rounded. "Well, Maida," he remarked vaguely, with the affectionate cadence of a doting husband. Mrs. Tresham smiled at him in quiet welcome.

"I am glad you are at home in time for tea, Charles," she said in a certain impersonal sweetness, and with perfect unobtrusiveness of manner. Then she continued frankly, "I was just telling Ralph that I am more good than clever. Won't you uphold me in that statement? You ought to know."

Mr. Tresham shook his head in doubt, but smiled in certainty. "I know, but I'll never tell," he declared.

A year passed by and left Ralph Drayton as it had found him. His friendship with Mrs. Tresham had gone through an indefinable change. He continued to see her often, but in a less intimate and personal way. She went out in society considerably, besides entertaining in her own house with pleasant informality. Her husband, although a scientist more interested in microbes than in human souls, was yet sufficiently devoted to his own wife to accompany her willingly into the world where she shone so brilliantly, casting about her a radiance in which he was proud to bask. She in her turn admired him for his erudition, and was fond of him for being so much fonder of her.

Ralph Drayton had always sauntered through the rosebud garden of girls, admiring here a blossom and there a bud, stooping to inhale their sweetness and enjoy their freshness, but never feeling an uncontrollable impulse to pluck a flower from the parent stem.

One evening he sat in his cozy library, "looking like the design for a book plate," as Maida Tresham had once told him when she had found him reveling in his literary possessions. He had brought home with him a small volume concerning which there had been many and varied opinions expressed by the press and by society. It was called "The Book of Revelations," its author was anonymous, and it was published by a prominent New York house. Ralph Drayton turned over its pages with the familiar and fastidious touch of a critical amateur. After nibbling here and there to enjoy a taste of the book's flavor, he turned back to the first page and began to read attentively, consecutively, and with complete absorption. An hour passed, two hours, three, and midnight struck before the young man laid down the book with a mixture of excitement and sadness in his eyes. He had seldom read a book which seemed to speak to him with so personal a note, nor did he often feel so keen a sympathy,

amounting almost to a sense of some psychic bond, with the writer. The little book was easier to define by negatives than positives. It was not an autobiography, not a volume of essays, not fiction, yet far more suggestive than fact. It was a book of revelations, but also a book of reserve, and a book of appreciation. It was a book of revelations, but also a book of reserve, and a book of appreciation. It was a book of revelations, but also a book of reserve, and a book of appreciation.

"DEAR MADAM.—If I had written a book that could give even to an obscure and unknown reader such a quality of pleasure as I have ever experienced in reading your remarkable little volume, I could not think it impertinent in such an admirer to wish to tell me so."

"I never before realized what my own opinions on many subjects were, but I have just seen them formulated with comprehension and charm which I selfishly find myself wishing were for me alone. I believe that my enthusiasm for you there is a strange sense of understanding and sympathy with the unknown author which is stimulating and even inspiring. I suppose I don't know who you are—somehow I feel that the writer of these revelations has taken more than the usual precautions to preserve her anonymity. I am not sure that I should wish to know your name and your way of life—but I am going to take a curious satisfaction in the thought that there is somewhere a wonderful woman who can so marvelously express what a commonplace idea clumsily felt. Don't think me a fresh young fool who thinks that he is adding a single leaf to your laurels by his praise, but I believe that an aged lawyer who has seldom acted so impulsively as in sending you these words of genuine and permanent gratitude. Please believe me to be, with respect and admiration, yours sincerely,

RALPH DRAYTON."

He dated the letter, added his street and number, then addressed the envelope to the author of "The Book of Revelations," care of the publishers, and leaned back flushed with the unwonted excitement of having had an impulse and acted upon it.

"If I don't mail my letter now, I'll destroy it in the morning," he assured himself. "Perhaps she is an ugly old woman with false teeth and a dog on a crimped leash. Never mind. I adore any one so like myself as she must be."

He waited three days for an answer, assuring himself that he did not expect to hear, yet finding himself strangely impatient with the quality of his daily mail. He read the book over again by the garish light of morning and reread its sentiments and his own. Four days after his nocturnal visit to the post-box he received a typewritten letter which at first he cursed as a bill and then blessed as a communication from his anonymous twin-soul. The note ran as follows:

"MY DEAR MR. DRAYTON.—Of course your letter pleased me, and I know a great deal more about you than you fancy. If you want to give me some amusement, and yourself too, promise me solemnly that you will make no effort to discover my identity, now or ever, and that if you ever should find me out you will not let any one know—least of all myself. You are right in thinking that I have hidden myself inside an impenetrable forest. Not a human being knows where I live, and I know that I wrote 'The Book of Revelations' (of course, except the publishers, but publishers are not human beings.) If you write and promise what I ask, you'll hear from me again, and I'll tell you a great many interesting things about myself—true—but if you would rather try to work things out for yourself—why, farewell—no fare ill, for I don't much care what becomes of you, as you'll never find me in my forest."

Yours truly,

Ralph Drayton snatched up his pen, and instantly flashed off the following reply:

"I promise solemnly never to try to find out anything about you, nor to tell to any one else if I should ever guess your identity. I can easily believe that the author of 'The Book of Revelations' does not wish to stand revealed, and I respect your desire for secrecy. But write to me again—tell me more. You must write to me, and I like the idea of penetrating into the mysterious forest and perhaps finding a sleeping beauty. Excuse my levity and believe me,

Yours sincerely,

RALPH DRAYTON."

Again an answer came, promptly enough to prove the writer was in New York:

"MY DEAR MR. DRAYTON.—I am not a beauty, and I am very wide awake—for both of which reasons I am difficult to find. I will reward you with candor. I expect to see you (through perhaps you'll not see me) at the Stuyvesant's ball next week, and I know that we are to meet at Mrs. Tresham's dinner on the 23rd. Now she is throwing light with a vengeance—but remember, you must not ask questions of me or any one else. It will be an interesting game to hide my identity, when I have practically told you that I am one of four or five! Of course you know I am playing fair. I am not a man putting up a game you, but a woman, rather a young one, and—well, I fancy I have told you enough."

Yours sincerely,

Ralph Drayton enjoyed the sensation of being woven into the meshes of a mystery. He determined to fulfill his promise to the letter, but, being human, he went to call on Maida Tresham, whose invitation to dine three weeks later he had accepted shortly before.

"Sit down, and all shall be forgiven and forgotten," she cried, cozily patting the sofa beside her. "I've got lots to talk to you about."

Drayton stretched out his long legs with a sigh of comfort and smiled down upon his hostess with something of his old sense of satisfaction in her nervous presence—a satisfaction which at one time threatened to grow dangerously absorbing and had lately kept him away from these confidential twilight talks.

"I'm going to have two most delightful and clever English girls visit me week after next," Maida rattled on, and I want you to like them both and if possible marry one—preferably Constance Arnold, who is my particular friend. Have you met them yet? They are making a round of visits here and are now at the Newhalls. They came over just on a spree and have been 'doing the West. I used to go to school with Constance ages ago in Paris when she was one of the young girls and I was one of the old ones. Grace Morton is an intimate friend of hers and perfectly charming. They're not a bit English in the usual sense, but are lively and cosmopolitan and bright and extremely good-looking. I am crazy to hear which you'll like best."

"I haven't met them and I shall very much enjoy doing so," Drayton replied with some constraint: "I suppose I shall meet them at your dinner on the 23rd."

His mind jumped to the conclusion that his anonymous friend was one of the strangers visiting in New York. He tried to put a brake on his own disloyal self-questionings—but he could not fail to realize that a foreign bringing-up would explain a certain quality in the book. It seemed as though Mrs. Tresham read his mind, for she continued:

"Constance Arnold has quite an unusual literary gift, in my opinion. She is absurdly modest about her own performance and always signs an assumed name to her little verses and prose sketches that have come out from time to time in English periodicals."

Drayton moved nervously, but Maida was pouring tea and did not heed him. "Her style has a charm, a certain quality, something poetic and mystical—"

she was continuing, but the young man interrupted her.

"Who are you going to ask to meet them at dinner?" he asked desperately.

Mrs. Tresham looked mildly surprised, but accepted his change of subject. "I am going to ask Alice Brent—she's sprightly and handsome—and Mrs. Livingston Grant, the lovely widow, who you know some people think wrote 'The Book of Revelations'—I don't think so myself—and Winifred Curston, just to give a literary flavor to the occasion. As to the men—"

and Mrs. Tresham strung together a chain of names synonymous with social efficiency and intellectual mediocrity.

"By the way," she suddenly interrupted herself, facing him with keen and comprehending eyes, "have you any idea who did write 'The Revelations'?" It was very strange, I couldn't get you out of my mind all the time I read it. The book was curiously full of your ideas."

He looked confused. "I assure you I didn't write it," he protested. "I wish I had—at least, I wish I could have."

Mrs. Tresham still watched him in a disconcerting way, and he began again: "You really must believe me, Maida—"

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to its mother. Are you a really clever person, Mr. Drayton?"

"Only in eliminating impossibilities," he replied decidedly, striking her from the mental list, which had again limited itself to two possibilities, or, as his heart assured him, to one certainty.

Miss Alice Brent had already known as a robust and ruddy creature, utterly devoid of fancy or romance. Still he consciously asked her for a dance, that he must leave no stone unturned—and indeed a stone seemed when she presently disposed of "The Revelations" in the one all-embracing term "rot."

Having conversed with all the prospective guests at Maida Tresham's dinner, Drayton betook himself to his room, where he instantly dropped into his desk-chair and wrote a hasty note to his innamorata:

"I have talked with you this evening—so much I am making no excuses, and what I know I shall tell myself. I shall surely see you again on the 23rd, and I shall find it hard to be patient till then. Perhaps I may see you sooner. It is still about the 23rd, I suppose, that you will be here—for it is the author whom I know best. Yours faithfully,

R. D."

A brief line came in two days:

"I like you, Mr. Drayton, and I hope we may be friends. Do not forget your promise."

He went several times to visit the English girls who were still visiting the Newhalls. Constance Arnold continued to exert over him an almost hypnotic charm. He found himself looking at her in a sort of trance, till her faint flush of surprise awoke him and he would break into her conversation with some perfectly irrelevant remark. She suggested to him the spirit of Romance. "The Book of Revelations" was scarcely mentioned between them, though she once quoted something from its pages with a curious shy smile which made Drayton feel with a thumping heart-beat that he was on the right trail in the impenetrable forest. He and Miss Morton also speedily became good comrades. They took walks together, laughed, talked, and quarreled, but an inner sense told him that she was not the woman whose soul had seemed to fly from the dry pages of a book to meet his. When the English girls went to their homes, Drayton's afternoon visits began. At her long-expected dinner he sat between his hostess and Miss Morton, and Maida asked him with studied unconsciousness whether he was obeying the wishes she had once expressed to him in regard to her visitors.

"Oh, like the most innocently he exclaimed under cover of Miss Morton's divided absorption in a mushroom on toast and a young man with whom she was at the most interesting stage of a flirtation.

"My neighbor on the left is particularly lively and attractive," he remarked.

"Yes, of course, it is easy to see which you prefer," Maida assented demurely. "I wonder whether it has ever occurred to you that Miss Arnold may have written 'The Revelations'—that is, if you didn't write them yourself?" she queried suddenly.

"Never!" he loyally declared—"and please don't let us discuss that authorship." He laughed nervously. "The fact is, I have quite an absurd and unwarrantable sentiment toward the unknown writer, and I really can't talk about it."

Maida Tresham gave rather a hard little laugh. "My dear Ralph, have you begun to turn into a sentimentalist, as I prophesied you would some day?" she queried a little sarcastically. "Look at Charles. How much happier he is for deserting to the arms of his light of hearts, and she looked rather coldly at her husband, who was at that moment devoting himself to an entree with the fervor he usually reserved for microbes. After dinner Ralph turned with the certainty of a compass toward the star who was fast extinguishing all other lights in his life. He sat beside his divinity and told her in impassioned tones how much he admired Miss Morton. The serene happiness which emanated like a perfume from Constance Arnold filled him with ecstasy, for it told him that she felt toward him the responsibility of a heart which he looked pityingly at the beautiful Cleopatra widow, at the writer of marketable short stories, and at the soulless young animal who had called "The Revelations" "rot." He should not tell Constance tonight that he loved her. She knew it too ready, and his epicurean heart enjoyed the blissful waiting for the inevitable moment. He glanced at Maida Tresham as she laughed and talked with her guests, and he thought pityingly of the Ralph Drayton who had once thought as he was the verge of falling in love with a married woman. That night when he got home he sat down at his desk once more:

"This is the last time I am going to write to the author of 'The Book of Revelations,' but it is to her that I wish to bid farewell, for it is she whom I loved first, she who taught me to love the woman. But do not tell the woman—am coming to tell her myself on the evening she knows of shall be true to my promise never to reveal 'The Revelations' as hers, unless she speaks of it. But she does not tell me now, and I dare to ask the woman to wear a white rose on her breast, which will tell me all I want to know. I am coming through the forest to wake my sleeping beauty."

Ralph Drayton's sense of humor was so completely exiled by the god of romance that he saw nothing incongruous in entrusting the foregoing effusion to the tender care of a publisher, and he mailed it forthwith.

Constance Arnold had told him on the night of Mrs. Tresham's dinner that she had begged off from accompanying her friends to a theatre-party on Saturday evening, and that she would accordingly be at home to see him. He waited for her in Mrs. Tresham's drawing-room, and the beating of his heart was a physical pain. A door closed softly, and Constance Arnold stood before him. She held out her hand with her usual friendly greeting, but all that he saw was a white rose tucked in the face of her dress. All the traditions of good breeding fell from him. He took one stride forward and folded her in a gigantic, primitive hug, crushing the rose petals into a fragrant mass, and crying incoherently: "Constance! My beautiful white rose! Tell me quick that you love me, quick, quick!"

When the others got home from the theatre Drayton had gone. Constance had insisted upon being left to tell her friends alone. She waited for Mr. Tresham to go upstairs, then she said shyly: "Well, can't you see that something has happened? I'm engaged!" Grace Morton fell upon her almost with the abruptness of Drayton himself.

"Oh, how perfectly splendid!" she exclaimed. "Only I'd like to have married him myself. He's as good-looking as an Englishman—and almost as stupid," she added under her breath.

Maida Tresham looked tired and her smile of congratulation was rather wan. "I'm awfully pleased, dear," she said sadly. "In fact, I consider that I made the match. You'll never know just how, but

I assure you I am your *deus ex machina*—yours and Ralph's."

"Dear old Maida, you are clever enough to do anything," Constance cried, kissing her warmly.

"No, dear, I'm not very clever," she said, as she had once said to Drayton—"but—with a reminiscent smile—"I sometimes think I'm pretty good."

When Maida Tresham reached her room she locked the door and sat down in front of her desk. Then she took a small pile of letters out of a drawer, laid her face down on them and cried. "He will never know how much I cared for him," she sobbed. She glanced at Ralph's letter to the author of 'Revelations,' and a gleam of triumph lit her unhappy face.

"He loved me first," she told herself excitedly. "Perhaps he'll never know that he has loved two different women; but it doesn't matter now. He will love only one henceforth."

She tore his letters across and tossed them into the fire. Her eyes fell on the thorny stem of a rose clipped from the flower she had fastened in Constance's dress that evening. "Oh, Ralph, Ralph, what a hackneyed device!" she murmured with a cynically affectionate smile, tossing the stem in the fire as the last piece of incriminating evidence *Deus ex machina*, she murmured again. "Not clever, but good—am I good, or am I bad, bad, bad?" There was no one to answer her question, and she sat alone by the dying fire till the night.—By Wilmot Price, in Collier's.

The Profits of the Mines.

In magnitude and importance the mining industry ranks second only to agriculture among the foundation industries of the United States. It now contributes over \$2,000,000,000 annually to the national wealth, as compared with \$7,500,000 from agriculture; but it contributes sixty-five per cent of the freight traffic of the country, as compared with only eight and one-half per cent. from agriculture. Its manufactured products in 1907 amounted to a total of \$4,310,598,861, and the wages paid to the men engaged in such manufacture amounted to \$863,558,487, as against \$735,101,760 paid to those engaged in agriculture.

The mineral industry is increasing in its complexity and importance with relation to the other branches of industry. In addition to its contribution of sixty-five per cent of the total freight traffic of the country, it requires more than 3,000,000 men to do the work connected with the mining, handling, and treatment of the mineral products, 1,000,000 of whom work in the mines; it is the basis of the larger portion of the nation's varied manufactures and interests and its supplies of heat and light.

The production and consumption of mineral products are now increasing so rapidly that the value of the products of the mines for the current decade will be nearly two and one-half times that for the preceding decade.

Health is the vital force of woman's attractiveness. When she loses her health she loses her charm. Nothing can simulate the sparkle health gives to the eye, the mirth it lends to the laugh. The general health of woman is being up with the local health of the delicate womanly organs, and any attempt to re-establish the health of woman must begin by curing the ulceration, inflammation or female weakness, or stop the debilitating drains which sap the strength and destroy the beauty. The use of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription works wonders in restoring the general health. "Friends hardly know me." "I am again robust and rosy checked," are only some of the frequent testimonies to the rejuvenating power of "Favorite Prescription."

Rare Eggs of Familiar Birds.

To one not conversant with ornithology the statement that the eggs and nests of some well known birds remain yet to be discovered must appear surprising. Yet such is the case.

The eggs of the curlew sandpiper, for instance, a bird familiar in Great Britain, were first discovered not so long ago on an island at the mouth of the Siberian river Yenisei.

There are a few other birds whose eggs have not yet been found, since they make their nests in remote regions, although their living part of their lives among civilized men.

An Apple that Sold for Seventy Dollars.

An apple, which is supposed to be the largest grown in England, this year, was sold by public auction at Covent Garden recently. It was presented by Sampson Morgan, of Sevenoaks, and the proceeds of the sale are to