

THE THINGS THAT ARE

By V. H. LANCASTER

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MADISON, coming in abruptly, had asked Daisy for a title and when she pointed silently to the last lines of Lewis' "Highway" he snapped on his glasses, frowning slightly as he read: "But be our haven near or far we put our trust in things that are."

"The things that are," she repeated, significantly.

"You have been thinking it over! To be a deep thing or whimsical?"

"Rather deep—earnest, at any rate."

"To pivot on a man or a woman?"

"Woman. But you had better pivot it on a man, for you don't know a thing in the world about women."

"Nothing; except that there is no telling from what point of view a woman will approach an issue."

"The things that are, are hard on a woman," he muttered, thoughtfully.

"But a man has greater reverence for them."

Madison studied the poem, by his expression neither accepting nor rejecting her assertion. He looked tired—and he was. But, Indian like, had taken up this additional task to convince his flagging energies that they were not so nearly spent as they seemed to be. Had taken it up and carried it across the hall to Daisy Dunbar's den. Being wont to come to her because she had enough common sense to take a man in his mood. Not many women had that much, he fancied. Also he had on several occasions found this practical young person a very present help in a rush. Presently he sunk his lean jaws into his lean palms and said, still staring at the poem spread out before him: "I need not only a title, but a first line and a last line, and a plot."

"You have your last line in the quotation."

"Possibly. We put our trust in things that are." Yes.

"You have your first line in the quotation."

Madison looked dubious, his tired mind not yet reaching to the spring of hers.

"Why, of course you have. A first line should catch the attention. What more strikingly beautiful, or beautifully striking than this?" And slowly she read the lines upside down:

"Go, pipe your song and dream your dream, And feed your soul on things that seem; But be our haven near or far, We put our trust in things that are."

"Oh, yes; that way. Perhaps."

"And you have your plot in the quotation."

"How?"

"In its pathetic perversity isn't it the ever-heard cry of the human bearing witness to the well-nigh futility of Heaven's best planned pleasures for man? If you pivot your story on a man—strike out in a few of your strong strokes a hero gifted beyond the ken of most men, and throw across his path the unusual woman—the woman who can comprehend him in all his moods and phases, then against the high, white light of his love for her paint the story of his struggle against the ascendancy of the things that are, flashing across the gloom of it the fitful flares of a man's inborn horror of ridicule, his abject terror of doing the unusual, and sink him at last to the sullen commonplace of the tangible. Marry him to the widow who wore violets in her bonnet and mourning of the type most approved of man. There's your plot."

Madison had been staring steadily at the poem from under bent brows. When Daisy made an end he pulled out, and showed toward her without speaking, the editor's instructions: "You will understand that we want something with a touch of to-day in it; natural and real."

"There is no touch of to-day in what you have been saying," he grumbled. "Nothing natural, nothing real."

And instead of being exasperated by his disgruntled ingratitude, Daisy only replied in a tone of thoughtful conviction:

"Well, yes, there are several touches," and lay back in her chair contentedly studying the contrasting shades of the blue blotter on the green base while Madison mumbled because the subtle analogies of her sharpened perception were but as blurs to his fagged-out faculties.

"You have been plotting the thing to pivot on a woman," he broke out, fractionally. "A man has no such horror of the unusual as you imagine. In the natural sequence of things he would marry the woman he loved and let the widow and her proper mourning go to the bow-wows. It is only the weak that fear criticism."

"Most men are weak," Daisy murmured, abstractedly. With a scarcely perceptible movement she turned on a tiny gas jet at her elbow, lit a cigarette, turned off the flame, and fell to smoking a quiet continuity of cigarettes that betokened abstraction, certainly, but in no wise hinted at impatience, disappointment or disdain. Her poke provoked Madison. There was enough Adam in him to resent apparent comfort in others when he was himself uncomfortable. He pushed the literary litter about with impatient fingers and cut into the peace of her sixth cigarette with wantonly unapplied disgust:

"Do you believe that smoking is good for a woman?"

Daisy shook her bent head: "I have no cigarette creed." She drew the seventh deeply and asked courteously: "Why, are any of your friends thinking of adopting the practice?"

"They would not be my friends very long if they did."

And still her great patience rested unshaken in its depth and against its

quietude Madison saw grow, with slow shame, the size of his uncalled-for cut. He got up, thrust his hands into his trousers pockets and went whistling around her typewriter with its loaded copy holder, the work his entrance had interrupted.

"What have you got on to-day?" he asked, genially.

She replied promptly and pleasantly: "Nothing of any consequence."

At this reply he turned toward her surprised. Heretofore she had ever been eager to talk to him about her work or his. And he had enjoyed these talks not a little, rather proud of the comprehension that enabled him to cover her skips and understand where most men would have been utterly at fault. Had enjoyed this next to the ready sympathy that comforted all his bothers. So he looked at her carefully as she lay back in her swivel chair, her hands inert upon the arms of it, a cigarette drooping from one corner of her well-made mouth, the serenity of her brow, the fire of her soul-lit eyes, the grim courage of her chin, and asked kindly: "Tired?"

Daisy roused instantly. "Why, did you want anything?"

Madison was too inured to the doctrine that a woman should always be ready to serve a man's purpose to notice the unconscious sarcasm of her response. Besides, he did want something. It had occurred to him many times that it would be well for his work and well for him if Daisy Dunbar should come to be a counterpart of his life, a hand-maiden to keep trimmed and tended the lamps of his genius. But while he craved her comprehension he shrank from the thought of marrying a woman who made such scant sacrifices to the gods of his temples. He shuddered at the thought of introducing as his wife a woman he could not control. A woman who would say what she saw fit to say, and do what she saw fit to do, whether the powers that be approved or disapproved. Hitherto he had counted Daisy Dunbar a hard-headed woman. But her present patience under the first reproach he had ever administered quickened Madison to sweeter dreams. If she loved him she would be eager to bow her high head beneath his caressing hand; to forego her cigarettes for the deep kisses of a man's great love; to yield her splendid spirit to his moulding. He would be ever so patient and gentle, he promised himself in a glow of tenderness. He would make submission sweet to her. He would condone her bad breaks and forgive them. He would not expect her to change instantly from the untamed thing to the tamed. But he would teach her—ah, how tenderly. A pleasant moisture welled to his lids. His lips trembled. He took his hands nervously from his trouser pockets and turned to her. She was still absorbed in that study of green and blue, and the tenth hung half-forgotten from her fingers.

"What are you thinking of?" he asked, tenderly.

"Of the deep joys of moving."

"Moving! You are not going to move?"

Daisy bethought herself of the cigarette and coaxed it gently. "Aye," she said through the smoke, "I move out to-morrow."

"But Daisy, you mustn't do that."

"Excuse me, Mr. Madison, but when did I give you the right to my first name?"

"Won't you give me the right to your first name if I give you the right to my first one? Won't that be a fair trade? Dear, did it never occur to you that you and I were made for each other?"

"Why, yes. In a way, we are."

"Don't you think we would be very happy if we belonged to one another?"

"Do you think it would be pleasant to belong to somebody else?"

"I think it would be very pleasant to belong to you, dear."

"Do you? Do you know what 'belonging' means? To be bridled and bitted, to come at a call and go at a touch. If you belonged to me I should require you to do as I did; to accept my judgments and bow to my decisions. Do you think that would be so pleasant?"

"But, dear, I used the term in a deeper, more sacred sense."

"Rather, you used it in a more feminine sense, I fancy. It was I that was to do most of the belonging, wasn't it?" She got up, negligently dusting the ashes from her long tie and smiling at him in good-natured amusement. Too strong for bitterness; too fearless for falsity; her words came quiet to gentleness: "Well, dear sir, the chances are that 24—or even one hour ago, I should have been glad and proud to do the belonging—I've dreamed my dream and fed my soul on things that seemed, for quite an infatuated while. Luckily your wanton insult waked me from my dreaming; and albeit the waking was rather rude, I thank you for it in that it was so timely. So I fancy now, that I will, as I said, move out to-morrow—her-after pin my faith to the things that are."

Madison forgot how he was to teach her in all tenderness and with great gentleness. His voice rang rude with impatience:

"But, Daisy—"

"Miss Dunbar, you mean?"

Whereupon Madison whirled upon his heel and went out, slamming the door after the senseless, explosive manner of men. "If she was so dead set on the things that are she might have them on broken hinges for all he cared."

But he never knew that it was indeed thus she had them. That because of his weak indulgence in a silly spleen a strong woman's life swung through all the lacings and outcroppings of her after years.

Much Worse Than.

The British museum has a love letter addressed to an Egyptian princess and inscribed on a brick. The Ohio State Journal remarks that it must have been even worse in those days for a married man to have his old love letters thrown up at him.

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MEETS WITH APPROVAL.

Mukden, Oct. 27.—The appointment of Gen. Kuropatkin as commander-in-chief was received with universal approval. It will greatly facilitate the military operations. A Japanese attack is expected shortly. Otherwise all is quiet. The Japanese dead recently found showed by their warm clothing that the Japanese are prepared for a winter campaign, whereas the Russians have not received their winter outfits.

JAPANESE FORTIFYING.

Mukden, Oct. 28.—There was a reconnaissance in force Wednesday night by the Russian western flank, and desultory firing continued till 2 a. m. The Japanese were discovered to be hurriedly fortifying along the whole line, but this does not, of course, preclude the possibility of an attack by them. It is the general opinion here that serious events will not develop for some days, but judging by the hurried manner in which the Chinese are settling their money affairs in Mukden, they are of a different opinion.

Every precaution has been taken by the Russians to deal generously with Chinese who have suffered through the fighting in their territory. Not only has a special commission been created for the purpose of paying for all food and forage seized, but compensation is awarded for houses in villages destroyed.

A GLOOMY OUTLOOK.

Shanghai, Oct. 29.—A private letter from Port Arthur dated October 21 received here yesterday says:

"Gen. Stoessel wired the Russian emperor recently: 'I now bid you good-bye forever. Port Arthur is my grave.'"

"The Japanese shells are inflicting great damage to the Russian fleet in the harbor and to the fortifications. The arsenal with its contents of ammunition and small arms has been destroyed and preparations are being made for the last deadly struggle at close quarters. The water supply having been cut off, wells are being sunk. Provisions are scarce. Only tinned meats being left the soldiers hold gala feasts on horses killed by the shells.

"The field and naval hospitals are crowded and hygienic conditions are becoming desperate. The bombardment at times is so incessant that it is impossible to bury the dead to any depth. Over half of the original garrison is dead, wounded or sick.

"The besiegers are pressing closer daily and it is hard to say how long we can hold out. When the end comes there will be a desperate fight and surprise. Thousands of the enemy will perish, as everything is mined."

Tokio, Oct. 29.—It is reported that the Japanese opened a desperate attack on the eastern forts of the Keckwan group, north of Port Arthur, during the morning of October 26 and silenced the Russian batteries.

Simultaneously the Japanese attacked the forts on Rihlung mountain and Sungachowian mountain, silenced the Russian batteries and stormed and occupied the forts in front of these mountains.

On the night of October 26 there was a conflagration in old Port Arthur and on October 27 a shell hit the Russian battleship Sevastopol and two Russian steamers were sunk.

The main Russian and Japanese forces which confront each other south of Mukden have not yet become engaged, although small affairs continue.

NO DANGER OF WAR NOW.

Court of Inquiry Will Decide the Anglo-Russian Controversy.

London, Oct. 29.—All danger of war between Russia and Great Britain has been averted and the settlement of the only points in dispute regarding the attack by the Russian second Pacific squadron on British trawlers, October 21, has been referred to an international commission under the Hague convention.

Premier Balfour, speaking at Southampton last night, broke that silence which had brought the people of the United Kingdom to a condition of almost desperate irritation and given rise to misconceptions which Mr. Balfour himself exposed.

"The Russian ambassador," said Mr. Balfour, "has authorized a statement to the following effect: The Russian government on hearing of the North Sea incident at once expressed its profound regret and also promised most liberal compensation. The government has ordered the detention at Vigo of that part of the fleet which was concerned in the incident, in order that the naval authorities might ascertain what officers were responsible for it; that those officers and any material witnesses would not proceed on the voyage to the far east; that inquiry would be instituted into the facts by an international commission as provided by the Hague convention.

That, Mr. Balfour said, had nothing to do with arbitration; it was the constitution of the international commission in order to find out the facts.

Parker's First Prediction.

Esopus, N. Y., Oct. 29.—Judge Parker yesterday made his first prediction as to the outcome of the election. In his speech to delegations composed largely of farmers from Orange and Rockland counties, New York, he interpolated the following: "Before taking up the subject I wish to discuss, I want to assure you that if we work hard enough, if we each do our part, we can win this fight. I have not felt like saying so until lately, but we are growing so rapidly that if our people do their best I do believe victory will be ours."

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