

THE LIGHT AT HOME.

The light at home, how bright it bears! When evening shades around us fall; And from the lattice far it gleams, To love, and rest, and comfort all; When wearied with the toils of day, And strive for glory, gold or fame, How sweet to seek the quiet way. Where loving lips will kiss our name Around the light at home!

The light at home—how still and sweet It peeps from yonder cottage door, The weary laborer to greet.

When the rough toils of day are o'er; Sad is the soul that does not know The blessings that its beams impart,

The cheerful hopes and joys that flow, And lighted up the heaviest heart

Around the light at home.

—The Housewife.

HEDWIG'S PUPIL.

Anthony Alexander was a woman hater. He was also a student of philosophy; very comfortably off. A bachelor, of course, and at 40 the despair of determined mothers and dutiful daughters, who, when he came in their way (he did it as little as possible) scarcely had heart for an attack.

Alexander made up his mind to learn German, because he desired to read in the original the works of Kant, Hegel & Co. In a weekly paper he came on the following advertisement:

"The German tongue taught on a new and speedy system. Apply Herr Schwab, 3 May street, Piccadilly."

"Air Squib?" said the short, grimy maid of the tall, grimy lodging house, "Fifth floor; first door to the left. Mind your feet when you get near the top; the carpet's gave."

Alexander climbed to the door indicated, and knocked. A sweet treble voice with a strong foreign accent said:

"Come in."

"What a fool man is!" thought Alexander. "The less he can afford a female appearance, the more sure he is to have one."

He entered. The little room was neatness itself. A girl in a brown dress and black apron stood up to receive him. She had a pretty figure, rosy cheeks, large blue eyes, and an immense quantity of fair hair rolled into a tight ball.

Alexander bowed stiffly, and said that, having seen the advertisement of a Herr Schwab—

"Yes," said the girl quickly; "he is my fader, at all. You want to learn German, sir?"

Alexander replied in the affirmative, and added that he hadn't much time to spare; he would be glad to see Herr Schwab at once. He stood like a tower, one bristling with battlements. The girl gave him an anxious glance.

"My fader cannot titch now," said she. "Since de notice appear he has a complaint. De troat of my fader ill, sir. He mustn't spile."

Alexander said he was sorry, and with a second stiff bow moved toward the door.

"But I, Hedwig Schwab, I know de seestom of my fader," said the girl, with a bright blush. "I can titch. I have titched. It is a great seestom for de adults, at all."

She looked impishly up into the face of the 6 foot 2 black-bearded quadrigenerian. He shook his head.

"I'm much obliged," he said. "Herr Schwab may be better soon. I'll wait."

Hedwig nearly let him go. Pride and filial love made a sad to do with her. As Alexander got to the door he heard a choking voice.

"He will not be better soon if I earn no money to get him what he want. Will you try, sir? I am not young. I am 23, at all."

"At all!" This was one of the first phrases Hedwig had acquired on her arrival in England. She regarded it as an idiom of all work, and brought it in whenever she wanted to be particularly emphatic.

"Look here," she went on. "I shall give you two lessons, and if you are not contented you pay nothing—notting—and I beg your pardon of you; otherwise, I shall persevere ill de troat of my fader is good. Will you try?"

"I don't doubt your ability," said Alexander, "but—"

The expression of his face enlightened Hedwig.

"Is my womanliness an objection?" she cried.

"Er—ash—really—" stammered Alexander, feeling it must be confessed, a bit of an ass.

Hedwig swept on.

"Believe me, you will find no difference. I titch like my fader. I tink not of my womanliness. I titch like her."

From an adjoining bedroom a door was pushed open, and a gaunt, leathery face, with frenzied hair and glaring spectacles, looked through. The girl nodded cheerfully to this apparition, which instantly vanished. The blue eyes sought Alexander's face again. Something glittered in them which was not allowed to fall.

"Oh, well, I don't mind!" said Alexander hurriedly (to himself): "What a lie!" "Will 10 o'clock-to-morrow suit you? And," he added, with more humanity than gallantry, "I trust Herr Schwab will soon be able to take your place."

"I trust," said Hedwig. The rosy face beamed.

Alexander's face, when he got down into the street, did nothing of the kind. "Brasly nuisance!" he said aloud.

Three weeks passed. Herr Schwab seemed nearly well again, but the doctor still forbade him to teach. Hedwig had given Alexander three lessons a week. He was growing strangely resigned to the situation. As long as the

books were open Hedwig was keen, curt, dry; one seemed to see the spectacles of Herr Schwab on her nose. When the books were shut she became a charming girl again; and, the transformation having taken place, Alexander did not, after the first, make a point of leaving directly. On the Saturday morning which brought the tenth lesson, time being up, Hedwig looked gravely at her pupil, and said:

"Don't you think you proceed?"

"I'm astonished at myself," said Alexander.

Herr Schwab nodded blandly from his chair in the corner.

"Ah, I told you my womanliness was nothing," said Hedwig with a triumphant air.

Alexander looked at the sweet, modest figure in the shabby brown dress, at the round face, flushed with the July heat and with her pedagogic exertions on his behalf.

Her womanliness nothing? Well, poor little girl!

He asked if she had ever been to Hampton Court. No? Would she like to go? Hedwig's eyes spoke. Would Herr Schwab trust Alexander to take her down on the noonday coach and bring her back by 6 in the evening? Alldings—which meant she might go.

But how long would the fraulein take to get dressed?

Hedwig laughed, ran across the passage, and in five minutes reappeared, having pinned a lace collar on the brown dress, loosened the tight ball of shining hair, and mounted a fresh little like her face, one nest of roses.

A calm, good face looked from under the white band and sable veil.

"Oh, fairy day! happy, happy hours! Who is you," said the nun quietly.

"Who have been advertising to discover the address of Hedwig Schwab?"

His heart sank.

"Yes—yes."

"She is with us."

"Hedwig! A nun?"

She shook her head with a grave air.

"Nuns are not made so quickly. Our Order has a chapel and infirmary near Soho. We work there. Two days ago I found the poor woman lying on the chapel steps. I am Sister Frances. She was ill—insensible; we took her in. Her name is on her clothes; we could not find out anything about her. She has fever—it is on the brain—she doesn't speak sense. But we see she is a good girl, and has been well cared for—innocent, refined. If you are a relative, and wish to see her, you can come with me."

"Not a relative," gasped Alexander, "an old friend."

The nun bent her head.

"I am sorry to have to say it, but there is no time to lose if you want to see her alive!"

"Deer, frantle!" said Alexander. He had forgotten to let go of her hand, and he spoke very gently, and any ignorant intruder, hearing what he said, seeing how close the simple, pretty little Rhine maiden and the woman hater stood together in the alcove of the parlor window, might have fancied—But it was time to go home.

Of course Alexander saw Hedwig safe to the door of 3 May street.

"I can enough tank you never," she said earnestly. "Gute nacht."

Turning away, he ran against an acquaintance—Jones.

Jones surveyed him with a twinkling eye.

"Changed your views?"

"Don't understand."

"I thought, according to you, the best woman that ever breathed was only to be tolerated. You seem a trifle overflowing with toleration just now. Next little article! Made in Germany? Hello! no offence, old chap! Alexander! no offence, I say."

But Alexander, resisting the temptation to knock Jones, who was a small man, into the gutter stalked away.

And, after dinner, in his luxurious study, he sat solitary, and thought—and thought.

He thought of the girl to whom he had given his heart in early days, and who had deceived him.

As soon as she was better, Alexander asked her very timidly if some day she would marry him.

He thought of his forty years.

And the end of these meditations was that he went to his writing table and penned a letter to Hedwig.

He said that he was unexpectedly obliged to go abroad. He thanked Fraulein Schwab for the pains she had taken with him, and begged to enclose the sum due to her for the remaining lessons of the course. He much regretted being unable to receive them. He sent his best compliments to Herr Schwab and remained hers very sincerely, Anthony Alexander.

He went to Switzerland, intending to make a mountain or two. But in ridiculous defiance of the most elementary rules of physical geography mountains proved flat, so did other things when he tried them. A blooming face, under a hat with roses, an old brown dress, a happy girl's voice, followed him everywhere.

At last, leaning dismally over a hotel balcony one fine evening in Chamonix, he heard a German lady below say to a friend, "Gute nacht!"

He couldn't stand it any longer. "Gute nacht." The words called him back to 3 May street, and he packed his traps that night, and to 3 May street he rushed as fast as train, boat, cab would take him.

The same maid, apparently with the same dirt on her face, answered the bell.

"Air Squib? E's dead!"

"Dead?"

"Yes; 'e died. 'E got worse, and then 'e died."

"And—and—the young lady?"

"Left."

"Where's she gone?"

"Don't know."

A sovereign shone in her hand.

"I'm very sorry, sir," she said, staring excited, "but the frowlin never said a word to nobody. She just paid, and left."

"When?"

"Three weeks last to-day."

"Do you think she was going to Germany?"

"I'm sure, sir, I haven't idea. She paid the week, and left. She seemed all of a daze."

Alexander knew what he had done. He had run away from his one chance of happiness—and now—where was Hedwig?

By night London looked to him like a couchant beast, stuck over with cruel eyes—a beast that swallowed lives down, and kept the secret; by day the sunny streets mocked him with passing faces, with trim figures that in the distance looked like hers, with glimpses of yellow hair.

Or was she back in the Fatherland? Safe with friends; with a betrothed lover, perhaps?

If it were but so, and he could but know of it, he thought he should have the manhood to thank heaven.

He had been returned to town four days. As he came in late from a weary stretch of walking, his valet met him.

"A person to see you, sir."

"What sort of a person?"

Alexander's nerves were in a queer state. He turned very pale.

"A woman, sir."

"A lady?"

"I think, sir, she's a nun."

Alexander walked into his study. Amazed, he saw rise before him a figure in black, with flapping sleeves and flowing skirts.

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