# The Times, New Bloomfield, Pa.



66 W HO is this Mr. Stuart, who is to deliver the lecture to-night?" asked Ella Jarvis of her friend, Flora Lawton, as they rode together in the latter's splendid carriage to the lecture hall.

"I scarcely know much about him." returned Flora." "I only heard father say he was once a professor, in some college, and is on a lecturing tour for the sake of diver-We do not know him at all-in fact, sion. I think father said he never saw him ; but he has invited him to stay at our house. What a bore it will be to have to entertain an entire stranger ! I do wish father wouldn't take so many things upon himself when there is no occasion for it !"

"Al, my dear, don't pont those pretty lips so; who knows but what he may be a very elegant gentleman, who will open to you a new view of life !"

"You needn't think he can do it in the way you indirectly hint ;" returned Flora petulantly. "If he can do it any other way he is welcome to. But here we are at the hall, and there is brother George waiting for us. Hallo ! George ; has the lecturer arrived ;" she said from the carriage window.

"Yes ;" replied the young man she addressed. "Father and I met him at the station, and they are in the ante-room now. And how is my darling ?" he added, as he helped Miss Ella, his promised wife to alight.

"Nicely ; but tell me what kind of a looking man Mr. Stuart is. Is he handsome and young ?"

"Both ;" said George, "Flo has held out pretty long ; but now her time has come. Her heart is in great danger !"

"Nohsense. Pray don't be extremely absurd George I'' replied his sister with a toss of her pretty head. "You men are so vain : you all think you are perfectly irresistable, and that a lady has nothing to do but to fall in love with you at first sight."

"Come now, stop; wait till you see the lecturer, and yon'll take all that back."

By this time the trio had reached the iuner door of the brilliantly lighted hall, and George Lawton led the way to their seats.

The Lawton's were one of the wealthiest and proudest families in the town. No one knew, and perhaps never cared to inquire, into Mr. Lawton's past history. He had long been a resident of the place-was identified with all matters of importance, and occupied the highest places as a matter of course. His only daughther, Flora, was a dashing young lady about twenty-three years old, who had had many lovers, but was never successful in keeping them ; and was not a particulrr favorite among the other young ladies. Her most intimate friend was Ella Jarvis, who had recently become engaged with her idolized brother ; and thus the bond of their long friendship seemed irrevocably sealed. George Lawton was a young lawyer of great promise ; a young man of great good sense ; and he had found a fit companion in the one he had chosen to share his fortunes.

As the hands of the clock indicated halfpast seven, the lecturer, accompanied by Mr. Lawton, entered and went up to the platform. For a moment a perfect silence reigned, and then a loud buzz as each person turned to the next neighbor, and with curious and comical expressions on their faces, whispered, and then turned towards the lecturer again. Mr. Lawton in a very few words introduced the orator of the evening, who he said would speak for himself. Mr. Stuart then rose and came to the very edge of the platform, where he stood a moment gazing intently at his audience, who returned the gaze with interest. He was a man once seen, not to be forgotten. He was very short, very thin, very roundshouldered ; and upon the forward part of his shoulders his head was set, protruding in a manner which gave one the uncomfortable feeling that it might once have been amputated, and then put on again in too great haste ; his hair was of the rusty, craggy sort, and evidently was accustomed to have its own way, causing the owner very little trouble or thought. But the most striking feature was the eye. At first, the impression would be, that he had only one-and such a little keen one; it turned every way and saw everything ; and while one was painfully conscious of its power, the impression would gain ground that the other, although half shut, was not less bright, but was doing good active service, occasionly opening to its full extent, and penetrating as few eyes could penetrate.

Family Secret. tones issued from his mouth, the surprise not his permanent one, however. As he proceeded in his discourse, he at times reached a very high key, and again his sounds would die away in a distinct dismal hiss, which brought an unaccountable shudder over his hearers. Shaking his long finger, first to one part of the hall and then to another, he began :

"Who do I see before me? The same, same family of deceived, deluded mortals ! Ah ! I pity you. I've travelled far ; I've lectured often ; I've seen many assemblies of people, but they are all the same; all the same. You appear to be the best of friends -but you are at heart something else, or you soon enough ; own up now-come, you are friends only from one selfish motive. Many a man who sits so peaceably by another, distrusts him ; and while he smiles upon him, is inwardly thinking how he may circumvent him. You don't like to hear me say this? But it's the truth. I'm going to prove it to be the truth, whether you stay to hear me or not. So much for my prologue, now for some plain talk about-Man as a failure, except in villany-for that is my subject now and ever.

To say there was a commotion in the audience would hardly express the true state. Many were inclined to leave without hearing more, but were restrained by intense curiosity. Many men hissed ; oth ers laughed and prepared to listen, in anticipation of rare sport.

It is not the intention to give a report of the lecture ; that being foreign to the main narrative ; but it was a lecture which pleased few and disgusted many. It was simply what might have been expected from any misanthrope ; and towards the close threefourths of the people had left the hall.

"To think that we have got to put up with that detestable creature ;" exclaimed Flora Lawton, as she rode home with Ella and George, and then addressing herself to the latter, said : "How in the world did that man get invited to lecture in the course !"

"I don't think he was invited," was the reply. "I believe he applied for the privilege, and got it. He will go in the morning, and that will be the end of him, I hope,"

Flora went directly to her room, and saw nothing of Mr. Stuart that night ; she also intended to be late for breakfast in the morning, and thus escape him. Accordingly she was very late in the morning, sending word to her father that she was too much fatigued to rise, and when she finally descended to the breakfast-room, it was empty. Her first act was to inquire of a servant if Mr. Stuart had gone ; but to her chagrin he had not.

She took a light breakfast, and then was thinking what was to be done next, when Mr. Lawton came ; in, saying that Mr. Stuart particularly desired to see her before he went.

"Well, if he is really going, I suppose I can endure a short interview," said Flora, and went in to be introduced.

The lecturer treated her politely, but irony and sarcasm were in every look and tone. He was incredulous, and doubting everything that was said, even the most evident assertions. It got to be nearly noon ; but Mr. Stuart showed no inclination or intention to go. He had made himself perfectly at home in a luxurious easy

head a little to one side as if to listen intently for the answer.

"If you believe such sentiments as you uttered in your lecture, I pity you, and that is all I have to say about it. You shall stay in this house no longer than to-night, and-

"Well! and what?" asked the other. "Finish the sentence ; do, by all means." Mr. Lawton trembled violently and seemed inclined to spring upon his guest, but the latter quietly laughed at him, and continued ;

"Come, Lawton, it is of no use for you to pretend you don't know me. You do ; you know you do ; if you don't I can make quick ?"

"Well," stammered the other; I have suspected that-'

"Oh, nonsense ;" interrupted Stuart. "You don't suspect; you know; like a man. But stop ; you couldn't do that ; there is no part of a man's character about you?" "Well, then ; I suppose I know who you

are. But why do you come to torment me now ?" pleaded the timid man.

"Ah 1 sure enough, why do 1? You have no suspicion, probably ?" mocked the tormenter.

"But now I'll give you something more than a suspicion. Listen to me: You gambled with me, before you was married ; you have been in this town twenty years. When you came here you were not worth anything to speak of. For the past fifteen years you have not done a day's work, and yet you are now living in a style which could not be maintained with a less income than ten thousand dollars a year. You think its a big story, do you? Well, I'll make it bigger before I am through, and give you a chance to deny it if you can. Now, I'll tell you how you got rich ; it will be like sweet music in your ears, won't it? ha, ha ! Your wife died soon after you came here. Previous to her death, her bachelor brother who had always idolized her, died in a foreign land, leaving her a large fortune of which she never knew, as she died before the news came. In the event of her death this fortune was to go to her children, and you were appointed to see the will executed. These children are today utterly ignorant of all this, and do not dream of all they rightfully possess. You have appropriated the whole to yourself. I am not going to moralize upon what the heart of a father must be, who can act thus by his children-but I will go on to delight you with more solid truth."

Mr. Lawton would have spoken, but Stuart kept on.

"Your wife's father disowned his other daughter because her marriage displeased him. After the death of your wife this daughter made an attempt at reconciliation, but without success. Sick and starving, and divorced from her husband, who ill-treated her, she came to you for aid. With great kindness of heart you put her in the almshouse, where she has been many years. At that time, too, grief at the almost simultaneous loss of his children hastened are always allied, or rather meekness grows the death of the father ; but his will proved that he had forgiven his daughter, and left her a fortune, if she could be found ; which, at her death, was to be equally divided between all his grandchildren ; but yielding, as far as principle will allow .-if not found after a certain time, it was to be the property of your wife's children. You were also appointed executor in this case. How well you have filled the trust ! You have secured the property to your children, while the rightful possessor is at this very moment an inmate of the poorhouse, represented by you as unsound in mind. Of course your word for it is sufficient, for you are of irreproachable character in this town. Suppose you were to make just restitution in those cases, where would you be? Not only without a cent in from it; but where these are involved, and the world, but in debt for nearly as much as you have now, judging from the rate you have lived. And as to your good character -oh, dear, what shall I say about that? The less the better. Now, sir you haven't seen me since your wedding day, and probably thought me dead, as you had almost certain proof of it. But you see I am not, and I have a few little matters to attend to before I die. As to our former acquaintance, and that gambling debt you owe me, and what else occurred between us before your marriage, is not the point now ; your memory is as good as mine no doubt. I am no saint myself, and had a bad record once, but I propose to right some matters if I can. Now, my dear friend, you have a chance to deny and explain if you wish and can. So speak out." Mr. Stuart here placed himself in an attitude of listening, while Mr. Lawton had sank back in his chair, deathly pale, and trembling so that he could scarcely say in a feeble voice "I don't see what business all this is of yours ; or why you are so interested in following me about. I can manage my own affairs without your assistance." Then he seemed to recover a little more confidence, and continued in a louder tone: "Supposing all to be true, which you have said (and you can't prove it); you cannot hurt me; I am well known here and you are despised for your miserable lecture, and no one would listen to you."

"I don't care how you understand it !" replied Mr. Lawton, with a fresh assumption of bravery.

"Do you defy me?" asked the other, calmly, looking straight into his face. "I do ;" answered Mr. Lawton.

The next morning Mr. Stuart made a call upon George Lawton at his office, George received him very coldly, and Mr. Stuart had no other way but to go straight to his business. He, related all connected with the death of the uncle, and that the property instead of being duly delivered to the rightful owners, was still in the hands of their father, and appropriated to his own use.

When he had ended his narrative he looked exultingly towards the young lawyer, watching for some sign of indignation or rage. But he saw none. George was very calm. He had not moved during the recital, and after a few moments silence, looked quietly over to his visitor and inquired : (Concluded next week.)

# SUNDAY READING.

### Stray Thoughts.

As a contemplative and learned man was strolling one day by the banks of a river he came to a fall and stately elder tree, which suggested the following thoughts to him:

"This tree supplies us with the softest kind of timber, as well as that which is the most easily split, and yet experience shows us that in the water it is the most enduring of all. But soft as it is, it sustains the greater part of the city of Venice, for the beautiful and massive buildings stand upon piles of elder, which have been for ages sunk in the sea. No other timber could have endured so long under the great burden and the rotting power of the water, and formed such a sure and lasting foundation for that noble city. It is just the same with meek hearts, which we are told in Scripture are of great price in the sight o God. It is on them that the most enduring monuments of His grace and truth are built. Moses was the meekest man that had been upon the earth up to his day, and Christ has left us a pattern of meekness that has not been since successfully imitated. It is also to the meekest and most patient minds that we are most indebted for civilization, scientific progress, and moral science ; for the greatest minds of the Pagan, as well as the Christian world, have been noted for meekness and patience. Socrates, with his spirit sorely tried by a scolding wife has done his share. Columbus owes his fame to his patience and meekness; Sir Isaac Newton was so meek, that when his dog destroyed a manuscript upon which he had labored for years, he merely said, 'Poor creature, you cannot know how much harm you have done." And who in the history of our country has left a nobler example of meekness and gentleness than its father? There can, therefore, be no better foundation for a life of usefulness and success than a meek and modest spirit; for these two from the roots of modesty. No great undertaking of private or public importance can be successfully accomplished without that intelligent modesty which is meek and Weak and vain minds are never meek : their self-will and conceit will assert themselves in everything; they will quarrel over trifles every hour in the day, and consider having their own way in all things a matter of primary importance. With great minds it is not so; they meekly yield in everything that conscience will permit them; they do not consider it of any importance whether another shall seem to dictated to them or not, so long as the final result will be the same, and truth and principle do not suffer they feel that there is a responsibility resting upon them, they are as firm as the mountains, and continue sound and stable against all the floods of opposition.'

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When this little wiry man came forward, there was probably not one in the audience that could form an estimation of his age. From his hard face one could not have told whether he had seen sixty years, or only forty; he evidently had not changed for years past, and would not for years to

He had no notes; but after his survey was over, slowly raised his long hand, and pointing at his audience began to speak.

At the first sound of his voice every one started ; some even to their feet, to see who was speaking; very few dreamed it was the lecturer. From the size and the appearance of the man, a corresponding small-

chair, and his slippered feet were viewed by Flora as ill omen.

Two weeks later George and Flora Lawton were spending the evening at Miss Jarvis' house. The main subject of conversation was Mr. Stuart.

"How strange it is that he still stays with you, isn't it?" said Ella. "Can't you get rid of him ?"

"No; father seems to have taken to the man amazingly," replied Flora. "Whenever I express any dissatisfaction, he says: "Don't worry yourself; he will go soon," and what more can I do !"

"If I had my way I would show him the door in a manner he would remember, and not with great joy, either ;" remarked George, with a decided shake of his head. At this time Mr. Stuart sat with Mr. Lawton in the latter's library. Neither had spoken a word for some time, until at length the unwelcome guset, who had been watching his host with a contemptuous leer, remarked :

"So Lawton, my very dear friend, you would like to have me take my leave, would you? You would feel easier if I were out of the way; ha, ha. What time does the next train go?"

"I can't say that I like your dark hints; and do not know why I should tolerate you under my roof in this manner." said the other, in rather a timid tone.

"No ; why should you? Why don't you have me put out ?" sneered Stuart. " Your roof ! did you say? This is your house; your property is it ?" inquired he, pretending to look about him with great interest. "How long has this been your own ?"

"What do you mean, sir?" exclaimed the other. "Explain yourself at once !" "So you didn't like my lecture ?" quietly remarked the visitor, as if he had not heard. "Tell me now what particular point in it displeased you most? Not that relating to fraud, of course ; what was your particular objection?"

As he said this the lecturer turned both ness of voice was expected ; and when deep | eyes full on Mr. Lawton, and turned his | regard and reject what I have said ?"

"Very fine, indeed !" sneered the other. "Am I to understand then that you dis-

#### Curbing the Temper.

Both a philosophy and a moral may be found in the following, which we heard fall from the lips of the very learned Rev. Dr. Schaff, of this city. It was at a meeting of ministers of the Reformed Church, gathered in the lecture room of the church which until recently stood at the corner of William and Fulton streets. There was a running discussion on the delicate point how far we might judge a man's piety .--The learned divine took a sensible ground, viz., that a large margin of charity should be given, as some men, because of different constitutional temperament, might do things that in them would be less sinful than in others more favorably constituted. He said that a certain minister of the Reformed church was presiding at a meeting of the consistory of his church when one of the officers considered it his duty to differ from his minister on a point of church polity. The pastor at this, lost his temper and advancing to the elder delivered himself in violent language, whereat another elder ventured a remonstrance:

"Dominie, you should restrain your temper !"

"Restrain my temper !" reitcrated the old man. "I'd have you to know, sir, that I restrain more temper in five minutes than you do in five years."

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