



SYNOPSIS.

Fran arrives at Hamilton Gregory's home in Littleburg, but finds him absent conducting the choir at a camp meeting. She repairs thither in search of him, laughs during the service and is asked to leave. Abbott Ashdon, superintendent of schools, escorts Fran from the tent. He tells her Gregory is a wealthy man, deeply interested in charity work, and a pillar of the church. Ashdon becomes greatly interested in Fran and while taking leave of her, holds her hand and is asked by Stephen Child, sister of Robert Clinton, chairman of the school board, to take Gregory's place as a home secretary, takes a violent dislike to Fran and advises her to go away at once. Gregory in agitation asks Grace to leave the room. Fran relates the story of how Gregory married a young girl at Springfield while attending school, and then deserted her. Fran is the child of that marriage.

CHAPTER V.—Continued.  
Fran regarded him with somber intensity. "I've asked for a home with you on the grounds that I am lonely, and because I am homeless. You refuse. I suppose that's natural. I have to guess at your feelings because I haven't been raised among 'respectable' people. I'm sorry you don't like it, but you're going to provide for me right here. For a girl, I'm pretty independent; folks that don't like me are welcome to all the enjoyment they get out of their dislike. I'm here to stay. Suppose you look me over as a sort of summer crop. I enjoyed hearing you sing, tonight—

"We reap what we sow."  
"We reap what we sow."

I see you remember.  
"He shuddered at her looking holy things. 'Hush! What are you saying? The past is cut off from my life. I have been pardoned, and I will not have anybody forcing that past upon me.'"

Her words came blithely: "You can't help it. You sowed. You can't pardon a seed from growing."

"I can help it, and I will. The past is no more mine than here—our marriage was legal, but it bound me no more than it bound her. She chose her own companions. I have been building up a respectable life in Littleburg. You shall not overturn the labor of the last ten years. You can go. My will is unalterable. Go—and do what you can!"

Instead of anger, Fran showed sorrow. "How long have you been married to the second Mrs. Gregory—the present one?"

He turned his back upon her as if to go to the door, but he wheeled about. "Ten years. You understand? Ten years of the best work of my life that you want to destroy."

"For lady," murmured Fran. "The first Mrs. Gregory—my friend—has been dead three years. You and she were never divorced. The lady that you call Mrs. Gregory—she isn't your wife, is she?"

"I thought—" he was suddenly aghast pale—"but I thought that she—I believed her dead long ago—I was sure of it—positive. What you say is impossible."

"But no one can sow without reap."



"Am Mrs. Gregory."

"Then you said, still pitying, 'When you sang those words, it was only a song to you, but mine was just a bit of life's embroidery while you think it life itself. You don't sow, or reap in a choir lot. You can't sow deeds and reap words.'"



"No, I'm just here to have a home." "Don't they say that the Kingdom of God may be taken by force? But you know more about the Kingdom than I. Let them believe me the daughter of some old boyhood friend—that'll make it easy. As the daughter of that friend, you'll give me a home. I'll keep out of your way, and be pleasant—a nice little girl, of any age you please." She smiled remotely. He spoke dully: "But they'll want to know all about that old college friend."

"Will you enjoy a home that you seize by force?" "Naturally. Well, just invent some story—I'll stand by you." "You don't know me," he returned, drawing himself up. "What do you imagine would I do to them?" "I think," Fran remarked impersonally, "that to a person in your position—a person beginning to reap what he has sown, lying in always the next haven—been raised among 'respectable' people. You may be sure that if you decide to tell the truth, I'll certainly stand by you in that."

Helplessly driven to bay, he flashed out violently. "Unnatural girl—or woman—or whatever you are—there is no spirit of girlhood or womanhood in you."

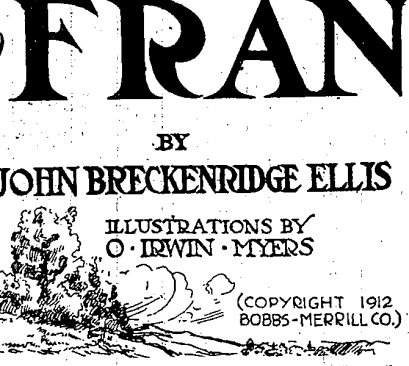
Fran returned in a low, concentrated voice, "If I'm unnatural, what were you in the Springfield days? Was it natural for you to be married secretly when the marriage might have been public? When you went away to break the news to your father, wasn't that rather unnatural for you to hide three years before coming back? When you came back and heard that your wife had gone away to be supported by people who were not respectable, was it natural for you to be satisfied with the first rumors you heard, and disappear for good and all? As for me, yes, I have neither the spirit of girlhood nor womanhood, for I'm neither a girl, nor a woman. I'm nothing." Her voice trembled. "Don't rouse my anger—when I lose grip on myself, I'm pretty hard to stop. If I let everything rush on my mind—how she—my friend—my sweet darling friend—how she drenched for you all the years till she died—and how even on her death-bed she thought maybe you'd come—"

Fran choked back the words. "Don't," she gasped. "Don't reproach me, or I'll reproach you, and I mustn't do that. I want to hide my real heart from you—from all the world. I want to smile, and be like respectable people."

"For God's sake," whispered the other frantically, "hush! I hear my wife coming. Yes, yes, tell me everything you see and hear. You shall have a home with me, you shall have everything, everything." "Except a welcome," Fran faltered, frightened at the emphasis she had placed on the word. "Can you show me to a room—quick—before your wife comes? I don't want to meet her now, I'm terribly tired. I've come all the way from New York to do you a wrong. I reached Littleburg only at dusk—and I've been pretty busy ever since!"

"Come, then," he said hastily. "This will show you a room she had been lighting suggested a gathering of the family in the reception hall, where, according to tradition, there was 'less danger'; and as the unknown lady opened the door of the front room, Fran heard footsteps upon the stairs, and caught a glimpse of Grace Noir descending. The lady closed the door behind her before she perceived Fran, so intent was she upon securing from threatening rain some unfinished silk-work lying on the window-sill. She paused abruptly, her honest brown eyes opened wide. The perspiration shone on Hamilton Gregory's forehead. "Just a moment," he uttered incoherently, "just a moment, when I can make sure my library back door is closed." He left the room, his brain in an agony of indecision. How much must be told? And how would they regard him after the telling?

"Who are you?" asked the lady of thirty-five, mildly, but with gathering wonder.



"The tired spirit was bracing itself for battle. The lady wore her wavy hair parted in the middle after that fashion which perhaps was never new; and no impediment ribbon or elegant bouffant stole one's attention from the mouth that was just sincere and sweet. It was a face one wanted to look at because—well, Fran didn't know why. She's no prettier than I," was Fran's decision, measuring from the natural standard—the standard every woman hides in her own breast. And who is Fran? asked the mild lady. The lady smiled so tenderly, it was like a mellow light stealing from a fairy rose-garden of thoughtless souls.

Fran caught her breath while not against the other. She felt something like holy wrath as her presentment sounded forth protestingly. "But who are you?" "I am Mrs. Gregory."

"Oh, no," cried Fran, with violence.



Fran suggested honor. "No!" She added rather wildly, "I can't be—I mean—but say, you are not Mrs. Gregory?" "I am Mrs. Gregory," the other repeated, mystified. Fran tried to hide her emotion with a smile, but it would have been easier for her to cry, just because she of the patient brown eyes was Mrs. Gregory. At that moment Hamilton Gregory's repressed, the room, brought back by the fear that Fran might tell all during his absence. How different life would have been if he could have found her down!—but he had in her face no promise of departure.

His wife was not surprised at his haggard face, for he was always working too hard, worrying over his extensive charities, planning editorials for his philanthropic journal, devising means to better the condition of the local church. But the presence of this stranger—doubtless one of his countless objects of charity—demanded explanation. "Come," he said brusquely, addressing neither directly, "we need a stop here. I have some explanations to make, and they might as well be made before everybody, once and for all. . . . He paused wretchedly, feeling no doubt, no possible escape. Something must be told—not a lie, but possibly not all the truth; that would rest with Fran. He was as much in her power as she, herself, had been the effect of his sin.

He opened the door, and walked with a heavy step into the hall. Mrs. Gregory followed, wondering, looking rather at Fran than at her husband. Fran's keen eyes searched the apartment for the actual source of Hamilton Gregory's ancient rages. Yes, there stood the secretary.

CHAPTER VII.  
A Family Council.

Of the group, it was the secretary who first claimed Fran's attention. In a way, Grace Noir dominated the place. Perhaps it was because of her splendidly developed body, her beauty, her attitude of unclaimed yet unrecognized authority, that she stood distinctly first. As for Mrs. Gregory, her mild stooping figure, she hardly belonged to the family. Hamilton Gregory found himself instinctively turning to Grace, rather than to his wife. Mrs. Gregory's face did, indeed, ask why Fran was there; but Grace, standing at the foot of the stairs, and looking at Gregory with memory of her recent dismissal, demanded explanation.

Mrs. Gregory's mother, confined by paralysis to a wheel-chair, fastened upon the new-comer eyes, whose brightness shone for years or more had not dimmed. The group was completed, and Mrs. Gregory's behavior brother, older than his sister by fifteen years,



prevented me from paying—from meeting—which I still owe to the memory of that—that of that dead friend. The friend is dead, you understand, yes, dead."

Mrs. Gregory could not understand her husband's unaccustomed hesitancy. She inquired of Fran, "And is your mother dead, too, little girl?" That simple question, innocently preferred, directed the course of future events. Mr. Gregory had not intentionally spoken of his friend in such a way as to throw doubt upon the fact. Now that he realized how his wife's misunderstanding might have hurt him, he had not the courage to undeceive her.

Fran waited for him to speak. The delay had lost him the power to reveal the truth. Would Fran betray him? He wished that the thunder might drown out the sound of her words, but the storm seemed holding its breath to listen.

Fran said quietly, "My mother died three years ago."

Mrs. Gregory asked her husband, "Did you ever tell me about this friend? I'd remember from his name; what was it?"

It seemed impossible for him to utter the name which had sounded from his lips so often in love. He opened his lips, but he could not say "Josephine." Besides, the last name would do. "Derry," he gasped.

"Come here, Fran Derry," said Mrs. Gregory, reaching out her hand, with that sweet smile that somehow made Fran feel the dew of tears.

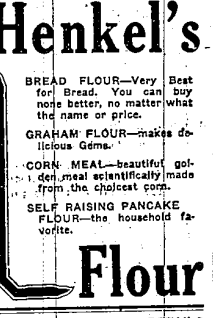
Hamilton Gregory plucked up spirits. "I couldn't turn away the daughter of my old friend. You wouldn't want me to do that. None of you would. Now that I've explained everything, I hope there'll be no objection to her staying here in the house—that is, if she wants to stay. She has come to do it, she says—all the way from New York."

Mrs. Gregory slipped her arm about the independent shoulders, and drew the girl down beside her upon a divan. "Do you know," she said gently, "you are the very first of all my New York friends who has come into my life? Indeed, I am willing, and indeed you shall stay with us, just as long as you will."

Fran asked impulsively, as she clasped her hands, "Do you think you could like me? Could you?" "Dear child"—the answer was accompanied by a gentle pressure, "you are the daughter of my husband's friend. That's enough for me. You need a home, and you shall have one with us. I like you already, dear."

Teardimmed Mrs. Gregory's eyes. "And I just love you," she cried. "My! What a woman you are!" Mrs. Gregory was silent. She liked Fran less than ever, but her look was of a very old friend of mine, she said, saying, "With all this, I have nothing to do. Doubtless, when alone with Hamilton Gregory, she would express her sincere conviction that the girl's presence would interfere with his work—but these others would not understand."

Fran's unconventionality had given to Mrs. Gregory's laugh a girlish note, but almost at once her face resumed its wonted gravity. Perhaps the slight hollows in the cheeks had been pressed by the fingers of care, but it was rather lack of light than presence of shadow, that told Fran something was missing from the woman-heart. (TO BE CONTINUED.)



WASN'T GOING INTO DETAILS

Four-Year-Old Had His Own Idea of Propriety of Not Airing Strictly Personal Affairs.

One little four-year-old boy who doesn't live far from Central park west, New York, has as his particular playmate a little girl of about the same age. The children frequently spend their evenings together, and the other morning the girl came to the fence and called him.

"Alton," she cried, "come out and play." Alton's mother heard the call and said to him: "Tell her you can't come over just now because you have to take a bath."

So Alton went to the front window. "Elizabeth," he called, "I can't come over now." Then he turned back to his mother and added: "I don't think the rest of it need be said."

Loss an Illusion. James J. McReynolds, who investigated the tobacco trust for the government, thereby bringing on a lot of things, says that just after he started practicing law in a small office downtown Tennessee, a few years ago, a stout billman came into his office one day and announced that he desired to sue a neighbor for \$10,000 damages.

"Two years ago," he stated, "he called me a hippopotamus." "Two years ago?" echoed McReynolds. "Why didn't you sue him sooner?"

"Well, uh," said the injured party, "until that circus came through here last week I thought all the time he was paying me a compliment." Saturday Evening Post.

Whistled for a Liner. After running the whole 800-foot length of the Kronprinz Wilhelm in a heavy suit in each hand just as the big liner pulled out recently, a young man sank down at the end of the pier, exhausted, and gazed a moment after the ship. Then he put his fingers to his lips and whistled long and loud. The ship did not stop.

"She doesn't know your voice," said a sympathetic bystander. "No," replied the whistler, "she is still ignorant of those big ships and she is still ignorant of those big ships and she is still ignorant of those big ships."

His Honor Was Safe. Chief Justice Isaac Russell of the court of special sessions tells how he went to the city hall to call on the mayor on a rainy day, and as he was leaving the building he slipped and bumped all the way down the stone steps. A man rushed up, helped him to his feet and asked:

"Is your honor hurt?" "No," replied the judge; "my honor remains intact, but my spine seems to be jarred."—New York Sun.

Literals. "Walls have ears." "I should say so with all those diagraphs hanging on them."

Breakfast A Pleasure when you have Post Toasties with cream.

A food with snap and zest that wakes up the appetite. Sprinkle crisp Post Toasties over a saucer of fresh strawberries, add some cream and a little sugar—

Appetizing Nourishing Convenient "The Memory Lingers" Sold by Grocers.

COUGH DUE TO NERVOUSNESS

Not Dangerous, but Hard to Distinguish From That Where Bronchial Tubes Are Affected.

It frequently happens that persons hitherto in good health are suddenly seized with fits of coughing, which may have considerable difficulty in overcoming. Due to a general neurasthenic or hysterical nervous condition, this cough, owing to its paroxysmal character, is termed the "nervous cough."

The nervous cough often cannot be distinguished in any way from the cough due to an affection of the respiratory passages. It sometimes occurs in the form of periodical, prolonged and very painful fits of coughing, and sometimes as a continuous, short, dry cough. Its most characteristic symptom is that it ceases during sleep and begins again on waking. The patients, while often a source of anxiety to those around them, are generally otherwise in very good health.

Another peculiarity of this cough is the absence of any secretion, for even after very prolonged fits of coughing there is rarely anything noticeable except a little saliva. Patients may sometimes succeed in checking the

cough, but not for long, and as a rule in such cases the next fit of coughing is all the more severe. The nervous cough is particularly frequent between the ages of twelve and seventeen. It then often assumes the character of a barking cough. It is unattended by any serious danger, and does not induce any appears to have most effect upon it.

English Verse to Change. There is nothing more amusing in all the quaint and curious customs of the English house of commons than the strange ceremony which marks the termination of each session.

The moment the house is adjourned, loud-roared messengers and policemen rush out in the lobbies and corridors: "Who goes home?"

These mysterious words have sounded night after night for centuries through the hall of parliament. The custom dates from a time when it was necessary for members to go home in parties, accompanied by men carrying lilies or torches for common protection against the footpads who infested the streets of London. But though that danger has long since passed away, the question "Who goes home?" is still asked, night after night, during the month of parliament.



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