

The House on the Hudson.

BY FRANCES POWELL.

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CHAPTER I.

"Do you see this ring?"
"What of it?" "It's a figure, a symbol, say."
"Some lapidary, in a narrow home of European cities, had perhaps spent his prime upon the precious stone, cutting it, by dawn and sunset, and re-touching it at starlight."

"I repeat it, Mrs. Derohan, I repeat it!" cried Lord Ebbrides, his usually well modulated voice high and harsh through irritation. "Every man, woman and child has their price!"

"Bad grammar—and a false creed," said my mother.

Lord Ebbrides's angry tones attracted the attention of my mother's other guests, who filled almost to overflowing the narrow strip of garden in front of our tall French villa, and they ceased their own gay chatter to listen.

"I'll back my opinion to any amount, Mrs. Derohan. You can buy."

But he was interrupted by a clamor of voices. Everybody had an opinion and gave it loudly. Everybody talked, nobody listened. I, least of the company, was unconscious that I did either, being absorbed in watching my fat puppy, Prince Hal, gobble up a saucerful of bread and cream; but, after the odd manner of children, I later remembered what had been said.

Presently the pretty girl who presided over the tea table made her shrill voice dominate all others. "Grown people may be as horrid as that," she cried, "but not children."

The tumult died away, and the Viscount Ebbrides was heard to say that children were a rotten lot; greedy, time serving, deceitful; as bad as their elders and as easily bought. Another label followed this trenchant announcement; then I heard my name.

"Look at little Athena! Look at the little golden haired angel's great, steadfast gray eyes, and dare to say!"

I gathered up my overfed pup and walked away to the end of the garden. There, in the tall trees of our boundary line, I found another house party engaged in shrill discussion. These were magpies, in quaint suits of pepper-and-salt. They did not talk of my looks—a tiresome, never ending topic—but politely ignored my existence and turned a deaf ear to the sharp yaps of Prince Hal.

Although it was but May, splendid roses clambered up the brick walls of the villa, and summer had come. The villa had been rented for a month, that my mother might rest before the London season, but it was crammed with people, as she disliked being gull. The French coast pleased her near Dinard. Its fields of cardinal colored clover against a background of blue sky, the little waves dancing about the myriads of golden brown islets off shore, the days of brilliant sunshine, suited her. She found the place gay and she loved gayety—of every kind. We had no settled home, but flitted from place to place, rarely pitching our tent anywhere for longer than two months. My mother had had but a dreary girlhood—teaching music all the year round in a country town—and after her marriage she indulged her fancy for society and for constant change. My father shared her tastes, and was equally fond of living in Europe, until the Civil War began. Then he wished to return home and fight for the preservation of the Union—the question of slavery did not interest him—but my mother would not let him go. This was very natural. She was not only delicate and tender hearted, dreading the horrors of war, but quite alone in the world—an orphan, with the memory of relatives who had snubbed her when she was poor.

So my father remained abroad, and they wandered far afield, perhaps to be out of hearing of home echoes. When they were in Athens I was born, and they named me for that city and its tutelary goddess. During my childhood I heard nothing of home politics, but much of Athens; nothing of the rights and wrongs of North and South, or of the miseries arising out of the negro question, but much of the wisdom and strength that must be acquired by a little girl who bore the name of a great and good goddess. Unfortunately, I was but a humdrum child.

My poor mother declared that I had a taste for the commonplace, even preferring plain looking, commonplace people. This was because of my affection for Percy Stuart, a good tempered young Englishman, who like his cousin, Lord Ebbrides, spent most of his time in our ever changing homes. Although he was over twenty and I but eight years old that May, he never teased me, but always treated me with the consideration due a sensible and much liked companion. So I was much pleased on that May afternoon when he joined me in my end of the garden.

"Have you been to St. Malo, Percy?"
"No, Athena."

"Then where have you been? Listen to the sea; how it is singing!"

He paid no attention. I stared at him, wondering.

"Athena," he burst out after a moment, "is there anything that you want most awfully?"

"Yes," I said without hesitation, "I want a doll."

I had never had a doll. Even the iron make-shift of a towel with a string tied around its middle, and pencilled face, was denied me. I possessed but two toys—a racing stable with its stud, and a beautifully rigged schooner yacht. With these I seldom cared to play; indeed, I had but little time for playing. What with studying wise books all the mornings of the year, and learning to ride, swim, box, fence, or shoot every afternoon, playtime was crowded out. Yet I wanted a doll, and fearing Percy had not heard me, I repeated what I had said.

"Yes, Percy, I do wish for a doll most awfully."

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"N-o; I suppose you may try. It can do no harm."

Two days passed. On the evening of the third Lord Ebbrides, a hard featured, soft hearted old Scotch body, had just tucked me in bed when my mother came in. She was wrapped in a white peignoir and evidently about to dress for dinner. Her hair, already arranged, was ornamented with a spray of fine emeralds. As she came toward me, smiling, her splendid eyes and the great jewels in her fair curls seemed to flash and sparkle in unison. I gazed adoringly up at her as she bent above me, but, as usual, said nothing. Words came to my lips with no more readiness when I am deeply moved than at any other time.

My mother bade me say my prayers and I obeyed, repeating the same prayer in Greek, Latin, German, French and Italian. She was pleased, while I, I wondered if the Lord God were not a-weary of these "vain repetitions." Did He think me a very tiresome child?

Meanwhile, my mother continued putting me through my paces.

"When I say, 'The Hand of Douglas is his own,' what do I mean, darling?"

"That my lips belong to me," I answered docilely, charmed to have her with me, "and I need not kiss any one unless I choose, but I must refuse politely, making a civil excuse, even if I tell a fib. Society fibs don't count as sins, being but White Lies, meaning"—Here I broke off. "Shall you wear all your emeralds to-night, mamma?"

"Only a few, Athena." And my mother went on to tell how, some day, I was to have her collection of these green gems—it was said to be unrivalled—some day when I should be a young lady and she—an old one. As she kissed me good night she bade me never to forget the meaning of "The Hand of Douglas."

"When I raise my hand—so—Athena," lifting her hand as she spoke; but a burst of jolly laughter cut her short as my father entered the room. Catching her around the waist he shook her playfully.

"Is this fair play, wicked girl?" he cried. "Creeping into the favorite's stall and slipping a powder in among her oats!"

I sat up in bed, wide awake and eager, but Margaret, asking angrily if they wished to keep "the baln fra' her night's sleep w' their daffin'" turned them out and shut the door.

The following morning, Sunday—when no wearisome lessons were to be learned—my mother told me that I might accept, if I wished, the next doll offered me. Many had I been obliged to decline. I think I never was happier in my life than at that moment. "Perhaps some one might give me a doll on Christmas," I hazarded.

"Perhaps," said my mother, "who can say?"

In every odd moment I thought of that doll. Christmas was a long way off, but the pleasure of anticipation was already mine, and I had a large store of patience to draw upon.

On Friday afternoon of that week I found Percy Stuart waiting to accompany me on my daily ride. As he swung me into my saddle

Lord Ebbrides called to him to wait a moment. My high spirited mare—I had long outgrown her—refused to stand, and I rode on. As Percy rejoined me he called back to his cousin irritably:

"Yes, yes, I said I'd be back in time, but for the rest of your beastly plot manage it yourself—and be hanged to you!"

"You don't like him, either, do you, Percy?" I said, very sorry for my friend because of the countenance.

"Not very much. Why doesn't he please you, Athena?"

I had been taught that Derohans were never tell-tales and that the great Minerva was not a gossiping goddess. But I had been instructed as well that a gentleman was always civil—even greeting Death politely when he called. To be strictly truthful, yet polite, was sometimes, I found—for I disliked white lies—extremely difficult. Percy's question posed me. At last I said:

"He has the Evil Eye."

Percy burst out laughing and exclaimed, "Oh, bosh!"

I thought him rude, and he, realizing that he had been so, quickly apologized. I then explained further. "Some people, Percy, have the Evil Eye and can't help it."

"Like being born with a squint," he suggested.

"Yes. Poor people! It makes them unhappy, Percy. When they find it out they try to live alone."

"Hermits," said Percy. "I've often read about 'em."

"Lord Ebbrides is not that kind," I went on, "but he may not know he has it, Margaret says."

"He certainly is not an old style anchorite." I looked earnestly at my companion. His expression was grave, even solemn.

"Percy?"

"Yes, Athena."

"I think Lord Ebbrides has the Evil Eye, and knows he has, and enjoys having it!"



FRANCES POWELL
Author of "The House on the Hudson."

THE RELIGION OF BABISM AND ITS FOLLOWERS.
REFORMED MAHOMETANISM PERSECUTED IN PERSIA
—DISCIPLES IN THIS COUNTRY.

From Persia comes the story of a massacre which far surpasses in the details of its cruelty the Kishineff tragedy. After butchering hundreds of Babists, who believe the Bab a greater prophet than Mahomet, an infuriated mob finally demanded of the Governor of Yezd that all the survivors of this sect should be brought before him and slaughtered. Like Pilate, this Persian official hesitated long between fear and duty. Not until he heard the roar of the mob beneath his palace windows did he surrender. The Governor well understood the Persian character, and knew that he could avert a general massacre by the promise of a few horrible deaths. Accordingly, he ordered a Babist to be dragged before him, bound hand and foot, and then blown to pieces from the mouth of a cannon. A second victim was publicly executed by having his throat slashed from ear to ear.

The Yezd butchery, though not likely to attract the attention of Washington, as did the Kishineff massacre, has, nevertheless, stricken many Americans apparently with as much grief as if their own relatives had been among the victims. Babists assert that they now number



THE NEW-YORK CITY COUNCIL OF BEHA-BABISTS.

Howard MacNutt, president, sits in the centre. Hooper Harris, associate teacher, stands behind at his right. Anton Haddad, at the left end of those standing, is not a member of the council, but a visiting Babist. He was formerly a Presbyterian missionary to Syria.

five thousand believers in the United States, and that in this city alone more than a thousand regard the Bab as greater than Jesus Christ.

"God bless us and save us!" said a swarthy faced youth at the Educational Alliance, No. 197 East Broadway. "They may persecute us in Persia, as they do the Jews in Russia, but the doctrines of the Bab, and of Beha, his successor, will some time become the world's religion."

"And do you pray each time you wash your hands?" asked a Tribune man.

modest salary that with health and industry at once puts him beyond want. Then there are fascinations in the sense of influence, in the power to reach the public attention or shape public opinion, even in the facility for coming in contact with important men and getting somewhat behind the scenes in transactions that interest the whole community. The notion is spreading, too, that a newspaper is beginning here, as long since in France, to take the old place of the lawyer's office as a path to entry on public service. The very name by which the disciples tell how his master left a city in much the same fashion as Christ entered Jerusalem. The Bab told the disciple to go and buy three horses in the market place, pay a certain price for them, which would be acceptable to their owners, and bring the beasts to him. He even described the horses in detail.

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Careers for the Coming Men.
Practical and Authoritative Discussions of the Professions and
Callings Open to Young Americans.
Journalism.
By WHITELAW REID, Editor of The New-York Tribune.

The following presents in condensed form some of the points embraced in Mr. Reid's lectures, in opening the course on Newspapers and Public Affairs, under the Bromley Foundation at Yale University. They have always been withheld from publication.

opened the way to moral changes as striking. The cost of raw material has been reduced from two-thirds to three-fourths; the cost of composition one-half, the cost of printing in a greater proportion than either. Meantime, the supply of the raw material has become almost unlimited; the speed with which news can be put in type has been so greatly increased that columns of new matter, and pages if need be, can be set within an hour of the time when the paper must reach its readers; and the speed with which printing can be done has been so revolutionized that it is easier to catch mails and news companies and newboys at the earliest hour desired with an edition of a hundred thousand than it used to be with an edition of five or ten thousand.

Thus it was in 1844, on May 12, that some Shiite theologians sought to corner the "upstart," as they called this youth of twenty-five years, by telling him the gate of science and truth was forever shut.

Obviously the business result from these revolutionary changes in the methods of the business was inevitable, no matter what the sentiments, or wishes, or even principles of the men engaged in it. Nothing could prevent either a great reduction in price or a great increase in size, or both; and nothing could then wholly avert the moral changes which soon began to accompany this unexampled facility of production.