

The Pride of Tellfair * is an interesting little story of a few months in a small town of northern Illinois. The town is inhabited by very human beings, and their story is told with sincerity and sympathy. No startling events take place, but the greatest thing that *can* happen to any of us comes about in just the casual, stealthy, remorseless way that we oftenest see it. "In his life" the hero "had seen, perhaps, four women whom he thought he could love," but still he seems to be surprised that the process of "imperceptibly drawing away" from the old love is not easy;

A Human Story.

and there are (happily) so many kinds of minds and so many kinds of hearts in this world, that some of us wonder why he "draws away" from the fourth, whose easy, dainty, feminine character is excellently drawn. She has the courage of her simplicity, and the refinement of honesty, while Josephine's mysterious and costly foreign culture does not seem to work well in Tellfair.

Morris Davenport, the hero, is fond of preaching, and he tells us why the country is preferable to the city. He says the character of city people is not developed evenly; that they have no individuality; and that towns produce a race of nonentities. In Tellfair every one knows (because he tells every one) that he fears Bertha is in love with him, but that he thinks he is going to fall in love with Josephine. Josephine talks it over with Bertha, and Bertha discusses it with him. All this is very true, and no doubt very humanizing, but there are timid souls who are willing to live and die nonentities if they may keep their unhappy little love affairs sacred.

The book is written with such confiding frankness that we are unavoidably interested in everybody, which is probably the blessing gossip brings with it. We even want to remonstrate with Josephine for making that cherry pie for herself when her sister had typhoid fever. But Josephine did not suffer from "nerves."

Tellfair is a real town, and the simple story of a few of the inhabitants is of quite surprising interest, even to the nonentities who live in cities.

G. E. M.

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