

more so than we thought—and I waited and waited for——”

“For her to die,” joined in Lem, “or would she not be sufficiently obliging? If you had told her how forlorn and wretched I was without you, I think she would have been more accommodating.”

“Why, Lem, how you do go on!” said Aunt Polly, turning to help Winifred out of the wagon, for she had not yet moved a jot.

“What have you got there, good Mistress Davis? anything about which I can be of service?”

And Lem peered curiously over Aunt Polly’s shoulder, as if for the first time aware of another person’s proximity.

“What have I got here? why my niece, to be sure, who thought it better to get well and come home with me, than take the journey you recommend. Come, dear, give me your hand.”

“Good mistress, allow me,” interposed Lem; and putting Aunt Polly aside, he offered his assistance.

Winifred was probably a little bewildered, and at the same time too intent upon the young man called Lem, to make sure of her footing—at any rate, she slipped and fell to the ground.

“Oh, mercy! are you hurt?” cried Aunt Polly, in great alarm.

The big dog sprang forward with a growl.

“Down, Cropear,” cried the young man; and pushing dog and mistress both aside, he lifted Winifred in his arms, ran with her down the walk, and seated her in the arm chair before the kitchen fire, where he left her, scarcely, in her surprise and terror, knowing whether to laugh or cry.

The wagon had stopped in the shadow of some trees, which prevented her from fairly seeing the face of the young man, which was, in the first place, partly hidden under the broad brim of a straw hat, so that she was by no means sure, save from an instinctive apprehension, that she did not see him for the first time.

“My poor child!” cried Aunt Polly, hurrying in, out of breath. “Are you killed? Can you walk? O dear, O dear!”

A gay laugh was the first response; and having thus given expression, in some sort, to her confused feelings of shame, wonder, and delight, Winifred replied: “I don’t know whether or not I can walk—that strange knight-errant of yours did not allow me to try.”

“He is my hired man!” quickly emended Aunt Polly. “I do not have him do errands of nights; indeed, I can’t tell the time he has had a chore to do after sundown, till to-night.

“Never mind, my dear,” she went on, seeing Winifred look abashed, as a footstep was heard approaching, “I dare say he would have taken up a dumb critter or a stick of wood, just the same as he did you.”

Winifred’s face assumed a less luminous expression on hearing this, and her eyes became suddenly attracted by the great, blue stones of the hearth.

“Sleepy, aint you, my dear?” said Aunt Polly, seating herself between the cat and the steaming tea-kettle; “don’t care to look about any to-night; haven’t any interest in anything nor anybody, have you?”

Winifred assumed an indifference of tone that was contradicted by her blushing cheek, and replied that she was both tired and sleepy, and cared for nothing so much as her bed.

At this moment the “hired man” appeared at the door, and made some inquiry as to the disposition of the luggage, but though her emotion betrayed itself by an involuntary start, she did not even glance toward him.

“Just leave it on the porch till morning; it’s getting late—high time for you to go home, isn’t it?” Aunt Polly answered.

The flush in Winifred’s cheek gave place to a sudden pallor, and her foot, that had been tapping on the hearthstone, was still.

“I will do what you wish, high time or not,” he answered; and turning away, he busied himself about the porch longer than Aunt Polly thought necessary.

“What *are* you doing, Lemuel?” she asked, at length.

He replied by inquiring if she would not give him her assistance for a moment.

What they said did not reach Winifred, though the suppressed tones in which they conversed seemed to indicate reference to her. She was confirmed in this inference by the elaborate explanation which Aunt Polly entered into on her return, as to what the subject of conversation had been.

She would fain have made some inquiry concerning the young man, but dare not, lest she should betray the conflicting emotions of her heart; and when he again

appeared at the door, to consult with Mistress Davis about the garden, she did not even dare to look toward him.

Aunt Polly asked if all had gone well in her absence.

“Excellently well,” he replied, tossing his straw hat over his hand with gay good humor; “and my conduct, personally, has been exemplary in the highest degree. I doubt, indeed, if the most rigid Puritan could find anything in it worthy of stripes, and it requires but a small offence to incur that light penalty.”

Aunt Polly sighed, and replied, gravely, that she wished he was good enough to be a Puritan.

“But I am not!” he rejoined, with mocking seriousness; “they are much too good for me.”

Still Winifred did not glance toward him, but she believed, in her heart, that he was none other than Lemuel Coleburn, that he recognized her, and that his satirical allusion to the Puritans had special significance. Under pretence of drowsiness, she buried her face in her arms, and fell into a mood half-petulant and half-pouting.

“Give old sorrel an extra portion of water,” called Aunt Polly after Lemuel, who had turned away from the door.

(To be concluded in next No.)

WANTS AND BLESSINGS.

By Phoebe Cary.

No gift of poesy is mine,
To bring me either friends or fame;
I have not written any line
To link remembrance with my name;

No wealth, to take with open palms
Its blessings to the poor and weak—
Not of my charities and alms
Has any tongue the right to speak.

I have no beauty in my face,
Where roses bloomed not in its prime;
The brown grows darker, and I trace,
Daily, the deepening lines of time.

Yet to me friends, most kind and true,
A little of their love have given;
I have my blessings, though but few,
Some trust in man, much faith in heaven—

Faith that our Lord’s great sacrifice
Hath power to save us from the fall;
And hope, through God’s abounding grace,
To find forgiveness—this is all.