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A BIT OF OLD IVORY

AND OTHER STORIES

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BY

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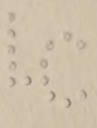

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CONTENTS

A Bit of Old Ivory

BY MARY F. NIXON-ROULET

No one would have imagined that Jane Dorrin was a creature of sentiment. Her very name was against her. Her appearance, too, precluded the idea, for she was small and dark and so slight that she was scarcely more than a bag of bones. Her life certainly gave little chance for anything save sternest duty. Her mother had been a fine, brave woman of much character tied to a husband of no vicious habits and a few characteristics, the chief being an utter incapacity to make a living. She had sewed herself nearly blind in the endeavor to educate Jane, who, with a fine taste for books, had left the convent of necessity to take up sewing as her mother had done. Between the girl and the woman there had been few words and perfect sympathy. When the mother died, Jane locked up her heart. Some day it might unlock for some fortunate one who bore Love for a key, and he would receive a golden store indeed, largess for a king's ransom.

Jane's attitude toward her father was all ex-

pressed in a few words of her dying mother, who had murmured:

"Take care of your father, Jane. Don't let him miss me." And Jane had answered quietly, "Yes, mother."

She had kept her promise. Her father, old, feeble, inert, had missed no creature comforts, for she had worked early and late to keep the little cottage free from debt and feed and clothe the poor old man, for whom the great beautiful world held so little because his own heart had naught but himself. Housework, stitching, waiting on the invalid six days in the week, Mass on Sundays and holydays—that was all life held for "little Jane Dorrin," as the village neighbors called her.

But within the gentle heart what strange things lay! Hope, that bright-eyed visitant, sprang eternal and whispered happy possibilities to her. Some day how different it would all be. Some one would come, she knew not how nor where, but somehow, somewhere, who would understand all her fancies. In the whiteness of her maiden dreams she saw him, strong and gentle, and as she thought, her great dark eyes would burn and her dark cheek glow until she was almost handsome.

He would come from foreign parts and would bring her, she knew not in what shape, a bit of old ivory. In the little inland town in which she lived, Jane had never seen anything of this kind, but her mother had told her of an uncle, a sailor, who had come from over seas and brought many wonderful things in the soft, creamy carvings of the Orient. Jane had always wanted to see them, to possess a piece of ivory, to feel for herself the smooth perfection of its finish.

Where other girls read silly novels to feed their imaginations, Jane sat and dreamed her story, but all the time she worked, and her gentle life of daily sacrifice went on. Not spoiling her—hers was too sweet a nature to be soured, but ripening the buds of gentleness and patience into flowers. The village was a provincial one, the people pleasant, friendly souls who exchanged receipts and gossiped genially when they met. Jane had no intimates among them, though she "sewed up" nearly all the feminine portion of the town. They all liked her; they all told her their affairs, never noticing the fact that she never talked about herself, or if they did, laying her reticence to the fact that she had nothing to tell.

The year her father died was Jane's hardest time. In her gentle, tenacious way she loved the helpless old man, whose dependence upon her drew out all the motherliness within her, and it was terrible to have him leave her entirely alone. She went back to work, a little quieter in her black frock, but just the same sweet Jane Dorrin, quaint and demure as her name.

"Miss Jane," said Mrs. Bent, up at the large white house on the hill, one day in May, "would you take a boarder?"

"I don't know, Mrs. Bent. I never thought of such a thing. Why?"

"Well, my house is full to overflowing this summer. We are going to have a family reunion in June, and my daughter has asked friends to visit us, and her wedding is in September, and altogether I haven't a room to spare. And right on top of everything comes a letter from my brother, the artist, you know. He has just come from Rome, and he wants to bring his little girl here. She is far from strong, poor little thing. She's like her mother was. My brother wants quiet, and you know my house is a poor place to find that, even if I had a room to spare. The young folk always have something going on

—quite right, too—" the merry little matron, mother of six happy, hearty children, laughed genially. "Now, your cottage is quiet and pretty as can be; why can't you let Hugh have your two front rooms for himself? He needs a studio, you see, and you can take the little girl in with you. I'm sure it would be just what Hugh would like, and he can afford to pay whatever you want for your trouble. Wouldn't you like to stop sewing a while, anyway?"

"I don't know," Jane hesitated. "My side does hurt rather badly at times. I'd like to have a child around, and you have always been so good to me, Mrs. Bent, if it would be any accommodation to you, your brother may come."

"Well, I'm glad that's off my mind," Mrs. Bent said briskly. "They'll be here next week, and you'll have time to get things ready, though you'll not have much to do, for your house is always like a new pin."

The week of preparation was a busy one for Jane. Her cottage was a quaint little square house of a story and a half, and she had it all clean and shining from top to bottom. Mr. Erskine had written his sister from New York that he was very much pleased with the arrange-

ments she had made. The little girl was to share the large attic room with Jane, and she had expended great thought and care upon it. A little child to take care of! What happiness it would be! she thought, for she loved children with the passion of one to whom they have been denied.

The little room was very dainty with its white walls, its two white-draped beds, its plain deal chairs and snowy curtains, on the walls a simple print of Our Lady and one of Our Lord blessing the children. Flowers were on the dresser and downstairs they bloomed in every room, for the garden was full of the dear old-fashioned posies and a fragrant yellow rose clambered over the porch, its golden blooms like sunlight through green leaves.

"Peace and quiet at last," thought Hugh Erskine, as he came up the path, holding Elfrida by the hand. "And there stands the incarnation of peace," as he caught sight of Jane's slim figure in the rose-crowned door.

He was so grave and quiet a man, it scarce seemed the bit of thistledown that danced beside him could be his. Elfrida was a slight, delicate fairy of five, pale, almost ethereal looking, yet

full of fire and spirit, an energy too great for her strength.

"Who are you?" she inquired, fixing two great blue eyes upon the little seamstress.

"I am Jane Dorrin," she replied calmly.

"I like you, Jane Dorrin," said Elfrida—the Elf her father called her.

"I am glad to hear it," replied Jane.

"Say 'Miss Dorrin,'" said Mr. Erskine; but Jane flashed upon him her rare smile, the first glimpse he had had of her eyes, and it startled him.

"Please allow her to say my name. Every one here calls me Jane Dorrin," she said.

"It's a dear name," Elfrida proclaimed. "I'm glad you're named that. I'm glad I'm going to sleep in your room. I won't be seeing things then—" the child's eyes were wide with a strange terror.

"There is nothing to see here," Jane's tone was matter-of-fact. "Will you have your tea now, and then I'll put you to bed?"

She noted with satisfaction the hearty appetites displayed by her guests, and her quick eye caught Mr. Erskine's air of approval. No one could have failed to approve the dainty supper,

tiny little biscuits, flaky and hot, fresh butter, snowy cottage cheese, thick cream and strawberries with crisp cookies for dessert.

"Good night, daddy," said Elfrida, as he bore her upstairs to the snowy room under the eaves. "You can go back to Italy if you like, but I'm going to stay here all my life, right here with Jane Dorrin."

"It's love at first sight, is it, Elf?" he laughed. "But what would father do without you?"

"You'd paint and smoke, I suppose. But you can stay here with us, too, can't he?" to Jane, who laughed and tucked the little girl in bed, as the child murmured, "I like you real much, I do, Jane Dorrin."

When Jane came downstairs next morning the Sunday sun was gilding all to glory and the May air was sweet and kind. Birds were twittering everywhere, and as she picked a bunch of purple and white lilacs for breakfast some of the happiness of air and sky stole into her face. She was a quaint little figure in her neat lilac calico morning frock, and Mr. Erskine smiled pleasantly at her as she came up to the porch, the dewy bunch of flowers in her hand, the morning brightness in her eyes.

"You are an early bird, Miss Dorrin. Where is your worm?"

She looked up at him, and he noticed how her smile lighted up her face.

"What are you, an early bird too?" she asked.

"Perhaps I'm the worm—at any rate I'm fairly caught," he smiled. "You have a perfect morning for us,

> 'Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright
> The bridal of the earth and sky.'

I am glad Elfrida takes so kindly to you, Miss Dorrin. She is a peculiar child, and likes few people."

"She will like me," Jane spoke certainly, but without conceit. "I love children and they understand that."

"Yes—it is love and sympathy—" his voice was musing. A quick glance at his face showed her he was looking far away, and feeling that his thoughts were far away also, she stole in to begin her dainty breakfast before going to Mass.

"You go to early church?" he asked, as she appeared again upon the porch, prayer-book in hand. "You are very good."

"No. It's not being good doing the things you like, and I like it best then, it is so still and quiet.

Sometimes one can almost hear the angel wings about the altar," she replied with her grave little smile, and then she sped down the flower-bordered walk. The world seemed strangely beautiful that day. She prayed with unwonted fervor. She went about her duties with a lighter step. And that day was but the presage of a happy summer. Mr. Erskine was of necessity often drawn into the gay life of his sister's home, but Elfrida was Jane's shadow. To all entreaties to go to her aunt's the wilful little maid replied:

"I must stay with my Jane Dorrin. She has no one but me."

The little girl grew stronger each day, tanned by the sun, happy in the sunshine of love which Jane shed upon her.

Jane was very happy too. Service to this little, dependent creature brought out all the womanliness of her nature, and the pleasant outdoor life brought health to her cheek. Of Mr. Erskine at first she saw but little, but he joined them in the garden for a few moments at a time each day. Then he wished to paint Elfrida's portrait, and the only way the naughty little girl could be kept quiet was by carrying the easel to the

grape arbor, with the promise that Miss Dorrin would stay with her.

Thus an hour a day was spent, and the child would sit as still as the Sphinx while the soft voice of her friend told her stories, quaint little stories of field and wood, how the squirrel's tail grew so large, why the larkspur is so tall, or what made the dove's note so sad.

"Elfrida is at her best with you, Miss Dorrin," said the father. "Have you cast a spell upon her?"

"No," she smiled gently at him, but Elfrida was up in arms in a moment.

"She loves me," she said defiantly.

"I love you, too, little daughter."

"But you love me like a man, daddy, and she's just a grown-up me and so she understands every single thing about me." The child looked at her devotedly, and Jane smiled.

"The eternal feminine, Mr. Erskine. What mere man can ever hope to comprehend?" It was a roguish glance she gave him and he answered fervently:

"Not I, Miss Dorrin," thinking to himself, "there is more in this bit of village demureness than I surmised."

After that he was oftener at the cottage than his sister liked, pleading his painting as an excuse. He liked that quiet little garden with its huge elm tree, its quaint little grape arbor, its lilac and snow-ball bushes, its beds of old-fashioned posies, and he liked its mistress. She was a baffling creature. He would hear Elfrida's shouts of merry laughter, see glimpses of lilac calico through the bushes, seek out the twain and find Miss Dorrin calmly shelling peas under the arbor, Elfrida beside her smiling and happy.

"What is the fun?" he asked one day. "May I share it?"

"It was purely feminine nonsense," said Jane calmly. "It would not appeal to your masculine greatness at all, sir."

"Now you are poking fun at me before my very face," he said. "It's not fair."

"It would be more unfair behind your back, would it not?" she asked.

"To think you would do it at all," he said.

She did not answer, but gave him one glance from her great eyes, a gleam so full of merry roguishness that he smiled in appreciation.

"She's my Jane Dorrin," Elfrida had been too

long out of the conversation and spoke eagerly. Jane flushed a brick-warm color.

"'No one denies it of you, Sairy Gamp,'" she quoted, as she gathered up her work and sought the house.

"A gentlewoman born, bred by a gentlewoman," he mused to himself. "Take her out of these surroundings into which she fits so perfectly, would she have this quaint, elusive charm, I wonder?"

The summer waned. One day Elfrida was turned loose in an unused portion of the attic to rummage delightedly in the old trunks, and a glorious time she had with all the treasures found there.

"Oh, Jane Dorrin, what are these lovely things?" she asked at last, diving into a big trunk far under the eaves.

"Be careful, dear, those are my mother's wedding clothes. I will show them to you."

With reverent hands she unfolded the soft, creamy gown, the delicate veil, yellowed with age.

"I wore that veil for my first communion," she said.

"Oh, how lovely! Do put them on for me, please do," the little girl begged.

"Mother and I were just of a size." Jane slipped into the silk gown, which fell in long lines about her slight figure. She threw the veil over her head.

"Oh, Jane Dorrin, you're lovely! You should always wear silk," cried the little girl ecstatically.

"Always," said a voice at the door, and Jane glanced up to find Mr. Erskine watching her. She flushed.

"I was amusing Elfrida," she said, starting to pull off the veil.

"Don't touch it," he commanded, laying a detaining hand on hers, the artist within him stirred to life. "I wish you would let me paint you like that. You should be the Irish lady in 'Rich and rare were the gems she wore,' yourself the fairest gem. You are like a bit of old ivory, itself the rarest thing in all the world."

She gave him a startled glance and her eyes fell.

"You must paint my Jane Dorrin just like that," commanded Elfrida.

"If she will allow me." Mr. Erskine was his old grave self again. "Will you?"

"To please Elfrida," she answered, and though he knit his brows he had to be content.

She sat for him many times in the old ivory gown. About her throat he clasped a rare collar of antique Florentine gold, a chain of topaz fell to her slim waist, a splendid topaz fastened the creamy veil. Regal she looked and queenly, with the almost nun-like purity of her face framed in its midnight hair, the strange, elusive fire of her dark eyes gleaming upon him. She suited well the lines he wrote beneath the painting, of that old story of the Irish maid of the days of Brian Boru, who, attired in silks and gems, went to and fro in the land unharmed, in her sweet chastity of look and mien respected by all.

"It is a wonderful picture; not a picture of me, but of your idea," she said when he had finished, and the three comrades stood to gaze upon the quiet figure, instinct with life against its cool background of Irish hills and shamrock vales.

"It is a picture of you," he said, "since you gave me the idea."

"It's a picture of my own Jane Dorrin," said Elfrida jealously. Her father laughed.

"It's a good thing we have the picture to take with us when we leave you, Miss Dorrin," he said.

"I sha'n't leave her, not never," Elfrida cried

passionately, kissing the slim brown hand of her beloved, and Jane flushed as she heard him murmur:

"I wish you never had to, child."

That night she sat late upon the rose-covered porch, breathing in the beauty of the night. In the garden tall cosmos swayed in the breeze like snowy angel flowers; the stately asters of the garden path stood like sentinels, the scent of honeysuckle was wafted through the air. Elfrida was asleep upstairs, her father was at his sister's. The little place was still save for the hushed twittering of tiny birds within the trees. The moon rose in soft radiance over all and Jane felt her pulses stirred with all this beauty. Romantic, sentimental, in her love of beauty, fate had well-nigh starved her soul in her grim life; but this summer seemed strangely full of it.

"What are you thinking of, Miss Dorrin?" Mr. Erskine's voice startled her as he came around the house unseen.

"I scarcely know." She was lying back in an easy chair, a loose white scarf thrown over her head like a coif. "Just the stillness of the night and the beauty of it. It must seem small to you

who have seen all the beauty of the world, even Italy, land of dreams." She sighed.

"I have seen nothing fairer in all my life than what I gaze on now—" he was looking at her face as he spoke, but she said with gentle unconsciousness:

"This suits your mood, perhaps. Nothing is lovely to us unless we are attuned to it at the moment."

He was silent, struck by her words. Was she right in a deeper sense than she meant? Did she only appeal to his mood, and would his deepening feeling for her pass with the mood? No, he felt sure of himself. He knew that he loved this quiet little soul as he had never dreamed of love, passionately, fervently, with a tenderness and devotion which only love born of truest respect could engender.

No one would have dreamed that such thoughts lay within his breast as his grave voice drew her into talk. Drawn on by his sympathy she spoke out her inmost thoughts, telling more of her dreams and fancies than even she had spoken to herself. And in turn he told her of his travels, of quaint bits of sea and land, of strange happenings,

holding her, like Desdemona, spellbound with eager listening.

"Ah, could I only go—see all these wonders, get *outside* of things," she flung out her hands with a little gesture of longing, then rose and stood beside him. "See this bud half opened to the lovely world! It grows behind the pillar where no ray of sunlight reaches to its heart to warm it into flower. It never basks in the warmth of radiant day. Cool, quiet, it is always in the twilight until it droops and falls. It has never really lived—" she stopped abruptly. "Why do you make me talk to you?" she asked. "I have never spoken so to any one."

"Is not the rose content?" he asked.

"Yes," she gave him a quick, strange look. "She has no one to tell her that the world has fairer sights than her quiet home. Good-night," and before he could speak again she was gone.

The weeks sped on: it was nearly time to leave Elmville, but Elfrida was loud in her protests.

"I will not go away," she cried; "I never, never want to leave my Jane Dorrin," and her father's heart echoed the words.

The day he was to leave she came to him.

"I am afraid you will have to spare Elfrida

to me a little longer. She has wakened with a feverish cold, and does nothing but cry and say she will not go away. I am afraid she will fret herself ill if you can not calm her. Can you not leave her with me, go to perfect your arrangements, and return for her?"

"If you wish her to remain," he said, "I shall miss her very much."

"I shall miss her very much when she goes," she answered gently.

"Maybe I shall not be able to return. In that case I shall send for her," he said. Her calm indifference to him irritated him. To care so much, to see her care so little—it was maddening!

"I shall take the best care of her," she said; "and I bid you good-by. You have been a most considerate guest. The summer has been a pleasant one."

"You have been most kind to us. I want you to let me give you a little remembrance," he said. "It is just a trifle to show you that we appreciate your goodness to us, Elfrida and I. It is something I prize beyond its money value. When I was a boy my mother had it. An uncle brought it from 'over the sea,' as they said in

those times, and in all my wanderings it has been with me. Somehow, I have a fancy that you will like it. Will you keep it and think of the giver sometimes? It is but a bit of old ivory." He put in her hand an old ivory cross yellow with age, the edges worn with much handling. She gave him a strange glance.

"Thank you," she said; "I shall always keep it."

A month later he returned. She heard his eager step upon the porch, and he found her within the little arbor where they had so often sat. The fields were a glory of goldenrod and asters, the trees all scarlet and gold like a triumphal trumpet, the sky a *mélange* of white and blue.

"How do you do?" she said simply; "have you come back for your Elf?"

"No," he spoke quickly, "I have come back for you."

He held her hand in a close pressure. "Will you marry me, Elfrida's Jane Dorrin?"

"No," she said quietly.

"Why not?" his voice was harsh.

"When I marry a man," her true eyes looked into his, then fell, but her proud head did not

droop, "it shall be because I love him, and because he wants me for himself, not for his child."

He drew her a little closer to him.

"I want you." How gently he spoke. "I thought you could not care for me, so I went away. I came back because I could not live without you. I love you, Jane. Will you not try to love me?"

She looked long into his eyes. What vistas lay before her! What sweet companionship of souls attuned in every sense! Softly her hand stole to her breast where, half concealed, lay the ivory cross.

"I do not need to try," she said sweetly; "when you brought me this, I knew you were my dream-knight come to me."

He drew her to him with his strong arm, reverently raising the cross to his lips. A little voice said pettishly:

"But she's *my* Jane Dorrin," as Elfrida eyed them disconsolately.

"Won't you say 'our,' little daughter?" the father said, and Jane gently stroked the child's hair as she said softly:

"Don't you think my heart is big enough for two, darling?"

* * * * *

Two pictures held the gaze of crowds at the spring exhibition of the Academy. All wondered at their beauty, the initiated saying glibly, "Erskine's work, you know; said to be portraits of his wife; very remarkable, indeed—"

One was the painting of the Irish maid, and was labeled "Rich and rare were the gems she wore;" the other, even finer perhaps, was the likeness of a small, slender woman in creamy white, upon her breast an ivory cross, within her dark eyes a wonderful light, and beneath the painting the simple title, "A Bit of Ivory."

The Tomkyns' Telephone

BY MARY T. WAGGAMAN

AUNT BETTY (she was aunt to half Linville) was "thinking it over." So few things required "thinking over" in Aunt Betty Tomkyns' well-ordered way that the process proved a disastrous one. She scorched the tea towels, salted the apple sauce, and sweetened the butter before she roused from absorption into resolve.

"Drat it all, I'll hev the thing, father."

"Hev what?" asked Uncle Si, who was smoking peacefully by the fire—a placid figure-head to the matrimonial bark Aunt Betty had steered successfully for forty years.

"The tellyphone," was the answer. "Land sakes, there I've turned over the vinegar cruet! Looks ez if everything was going wrong-sided for me to-day. That man was here agin this morning, and he does talk convincing, I must say. He 'lows it's cl'ar flying into the face of Providence not to hev a tellyphone when it's waiting for you at a dollar and a half a month. I've been sot agin the things, I must say, dreffful

sot. Looked to me like 'twas agin natur' to be talking to folks a dozen miles away. The Lord never intended tongues or ears to reach so fur."

"An' He didn't," said Uncle Si with an emphatic nod; "you was right thar, mother. They reach fur nuff now without putting wires to 'em."

"But we ortn't to be hard-headed, as the telly-phone man said. We ortn't to sot ourselves dead agin progress, father. If our gran'thers had sot themselves hard-headed agin progress, we'd 'a' been flying the English flag instead of the Star Spangled Banner, and paying King Edward taxes on our tea."

"That's so," answered Uncle Si, puffing reflectively. "It's going a little fur back fer an argyment, but that's so, mother."

"He says he put one in for Elder Jones, and Abner Goldwin, and Squire Bond, and they wouldn't give them up for ten times their cost. He put one in for Dr. Grimes, and he vows it's as good as a new horse and buggy—folks just put their babies to the thing and let 'em crow and cry and cough. He put one in for the new Roman Catholic church just up the hill, and he says he could swing ours on the same

wire and take off fifty cents. He says thar's no telling the sorrow, sin and tribbilation that a tellyphone in your house saves. Suppose you or me was to be tuk sick in the dead of night, or was to be robbed or murdered—what a comfort that tellyphone would be! He heerd of a woman that was calling the police through the tellyphone while she was heving her throat cut, and they got thar in time to catch the chap before she died. And these here Bottoms is mighty lonely, father, and we've got the name of being forehanded, to say nothing of grandmother's silver spoons and forks that hev been heavy on my mind, day and night, since she guv them to me with her dying breath forty years ago. Yes, I've been thinking it over all day, and I've about made up my mind we'll have the tellyphone."

"Jest as you say, mother, jest as you say," answered Uncle Si, a trifle uneasily; "we've done pretty well forty years with our tongues and ears as the Lord made 'em—but it's jest as you say."

And the "tellyphone" was installed in the upper hall of the Tomkyns' farmhouse next day, Aunt Betty excitedly watching the procedure, and

Uncle Si smoking a reflective pipe in his easy chair near by.

For a week or more there was all the charm of a new possession. Aunt Betty called up Sister Jones, and learned, with some difficulty, that she was very bad with the rheumatism. She had a feeble communication with Cousin Mary Ann Green about a recipe for pumpkin pie. She interviewed the "store" telephonically, and heard eggs had gone down three cents a dozen, and they were out of green ginger. Then there was a lull in business. The farm life went on in its old tranquil way; neither sin, sorrow, nor "tribbilation" demanded any interference of the *deus ex machina* that was so potent a regulator of the busy world without.

"Looks as if eighteen dollars a year was a good deal to give fur a little thing like that," commented Uncle Si, with the quiet shrewdness that had made the bottom meadows swell his bank account far into the five figure column. "'Pears to me I'd a deal ruther hev a good eight-day clock."

"Eight-day clock!" echoed Aunt Betty with the acrimony of the self-doubting; "you kin be the greatest dunderhead, Si Tomkyns! What on

arth do we want with another eight-day clock? An' here, if we need to call the doctor or the deputy sheriff or the undertaker, we've just got to whisper a word in that tellyphone, and they are here. It suttinly would be a comfort if Dick hed one—"

"What fur?" asked the old man. "'Pears to me ez if you and your darter-in-law, mother, are a deal peacefuler and quieter a dozen miles apart."

"I ain't a hankering after my darter-in-law," and Aunt Betty's face suddenly grew hard and bitter. "You can take to her if you please—you allus was a fool 'bout a pretty face and a soft voice, father, and Dick can do as he pleases; he is a man of thirty, and I suppose he'd a right to choose his own wife. But I mean to do as I please, too. I've been a God-fearing Christian all my life, and I ain't going to uphold no idol-worshiping. It was bad enuff for Dick—to turn from all his own church members and marry a Popish wife; but when she set up an altar in his very room, with graven images and cross and candles—"

"'Twarn't an altar, mother," interposed Uncle Si, apologetically; "Mandy calls it an oratory."

"I don't see no difference," said Aunt Betty, sharply. "Dick ortn't to hev it. He was raised a Bible Christian and ortn't to hev it, and when I told him Mandy was a snare and a pitfall in his way, and a light leading to destruction, as Preacher Wilkins said—"

"He swore at Wilkins, I'll be bound," chuckled Uncle Si; "wouldn't have been my boy if he hadn't. It's a poor sort of a man that won't stand by his wife, 'specially a pretty wife like that."

"I've done with her," said Aunt Betty. "Dick as much as told me 'twas none of my business, or his, either, to meddle with Mandy's prayers; that she was as near an angel as could be made and was making earth heaven for him. I haven't been in his house since, and I'm not going to it," concluded Aunt Betty, her tongue and temper somewhat sharpened by the tinge of rheumatism that had come on with the first touch of the frost.

It needed no telephone instructions from Dr. Grimes to teach her how to fight this wintry enemy. Rubbed well with "poke" liniment, swathed in red flannel, with hot bricks to her feet, and a hop bag to her head, the mistress of Tomkyns' farm had retired early to the big

four-poster, that, with its French calico curtains, its downy feather-bed and heaping snowdrift of pillows, was a throne of Morpheus that defied modern rivalry or reproach. Outside the wind was moaning and sighing dolefully, sending the autumn leaves before it in scurrying flight, while Jack Frost, with stealthier touch, was nipping the blooms in Aunt Betty's garden. But the harvest was garnered, Uncle Si's big granaries were bursting with golden store, the apples were barreled, and the cider pressed. Within the tight old farmhouse all was warmth and peace.

Aunt Betty's groans had died away into a gentle snore, Uncle Si's pipe had dropped from his hand, and he was nodding away into a wintry dreamland; old Towser, crouched on the hearth rug, was dozing in comfort, and Tabby curled up in her mistress' vacant chair was blinking sleepily at the leaping blaze, when a sudden sharp ring sounded through the peaceful quiet.

"The tellyphone!" cried Aunt Betty, starting with a wakeful groan from her pillow.

"The tellyphone!" echoed Uncle Si, dropping his pipe with a crash.

"Ting-a-ling, ling, ling, ling," went the shrill

call of modern progress through the quiet old house—" ting-a-ling."

" See what's wanted, father," cried Aunt Betty, impatiently.

" I daren't, mother," faltered Uncle Si, for whom neither bear nor wildcat had any terrors; " suthing must have struck the thing, it's going like it would bust."

" Ting-a-ling, ling, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling," came fiercely from the insistent telephone.

" You'll hev to go to it, father; I can't," groaned Aunt Betty, in waking pain. " Go listen, or it will never shut up."

" Jest as you say, mother; jest as you say. Drat the thing—I never heerd it go on like this! Which end talks, mother?" asked Uncle Si, who had never ventured to approach his new possession.

" Take down the receiver, and put it to your ear," commanded mother in the pilot voice that had steered Uncle Si through many a domestic storm. " Now listen, listen hard. What does it say?"

" It's jest a buzzing, a buzzing like— No! Lord, some one's talking. It's Mandy— She's a calling ' Father, father '—a calling me."

" Mandy!" gasped Aunt Betty. " Mandy! She

is being robbed or murdered, maybe. Ask her what's the matter, quick."

"What's the matter?" shouted Uncle Si in a quavering basso.

"Oh, father, father," came the feeble cry, "come to us, father. Dick is dying—dying begging for you. Come to him for God's sake. Come to—"

But the receiver had dropped from the old man's shaking hand; his ashen lips could shape no word.

"Father," cried Aunt Betty, sharply, as he tottered to her side, "father, what is it?"

"Our boy!" was the hoarse answer. "Our Dick, mother! Suthing's happened to him. Mandy called to me—he was dying."

"Dying!" shrieked the mother; "Dick dying! Oh, no, no! You heard wrong, father, you heard wrong."

"No, 'twas plain 'nuff," said the old man, huskily. "'Father,' it called, 'Dick is dying, and begging you to come to him.' I must go, mother—I must go and leave you."

"Leave me!" echoed Aunt Betty, springing up from her pillows. "Leave me here, and my boy dying! Si Tomkyns! Leave me, his mother? I'll

be dressed in five minutes. Hitch up the sorrel mare and we'll go."

"Mother, mother, out of your sick bed? It will be your death," groaned Uncle Si.

"What do I care? What do I care?" she cried, fierce in her mother-love and pain. "Quick, quick; hitch up, Silas, and take me, take me to my boy."

And he took her at her word. From the peace and warmth and shelter of this downy nest the old people faced out into the cold and darkness and gathering storm.

It was a ten mile drive, over mountain roads, rough and perilous even by day. The sorrel was old; the chaise had taken Dick to his christening thirty years ago. The wind swept in angry gusts through the gorges; the icy nip of winter was in the mountain air; the "run," swollen by the late autumn rains, foamed in threatening fury at the ford. But cold, darkness, pain and weakness and old age were forgotten. They were going to their dying boy—the boy who had been the joy and pride and blessing of their lives, as Aunt Betty's mother-heart confessed to-night, in spite of poor little Mandy and her idol worshiping!

What a bouncing baby he had been—twelve

pounds from the very start! What a sturdy, rosy youngster, toddling day and night at her heels! What a brave, bold, honest lad! What a man! Folks were talking of sending him to Congress even now—what a strong, true, noble man!

Poor Aunt Betty, cloaked and muffled in a way that precluded all conversation, was "thinking things over," indeed, to-night, and Uncle Si, with his dim eyes strained in the darkness to keep the road, was startled by a sob that pierced his tender, old heart.

"Thar, thar, don't, mother," he said huskily; "don't give up like this. Keep up, old woman, keep up; like ez not Mandy's gone off in a skeer because Dick's got cramp colic. Gals dead in love like she is with Dick hevn't no sense to speak of."

And as the old arm stole around her to draw the big bearskin Uncle Si had taken from its wearer on this very mountain ridge, as the old tender tones sounded soothingly in his ear, the forty years that lay between seemed to vanish, and Aunt Betty was once more driving through the darkness with the sweetheart of long ago at her side.

"We're a getting thar now, mother," he continued, cheerily. "That's the light of Rose farm shining through the cedars—"

"They're a singing," cried poor Aunt Betty, clutching his arm despairingly, "singing hymns, father! Oh, my boy's gone! I feel he is gone—"

"No, no, mother—hold up—that ain't no psalm singing," said Uncle Si, giving the sorrel a flip that sent the chaise down the well-kept road to the farmhouse with a rattle and clatter that made the music suddenly cease. The door flew open; a pretty, fair-haired girl peered doubtfully from the fire-lit room, and beside her, sturdy and healthy and open-eyed with amazement now was:

"Dick!" cried Uncle Si and Aunt Betty in one joyful, unbelieving breath.

"Father! Mother!" cried the young man, springing out to meet them. "On a night like this! Good heavens, what brought you out—"

"The tellyphone," answered Uncle Si, in a sudden fury, as he felt mother suddenly collapse weakly in his encircling arm. "That"—with half a dozen pardonable expletives—"lying telly-phone. It went a ringing through the house ez if it was ready to bust, and called to me clar and plain, 'Father! Dick is dying and you must come to him.' Here, help your mother out, lad. She's all broke up. Got out of her sick-bed to

take this all-fired fool trip that's likely to be the death of her. Just let me get home once more, and if I don't bust that consarned tellyphone in earnest for this night's work my name ain't Silas Tomkyns."

"But I—don't understand," said Dick, when mother, trembling, tearful, and altogether subdued by her late experience, was sipping a comforting cup of tea, ensconced in the softest chair in the pretty sitting-room.

"Oh, Dick, dear, I do," said his little wife, as she put the hot water bag she had just filled to Aunt Betty's cushioned feet. "Poor Mick Flannery, who has been sick so long, was taken very bad to-night. His wife ran in here for brandy and camphor—she was half-distracted, poor thing, and flew to Squire Jones to telephone for the priest—Father Marr."

"I see, I see. He is on father's wire. You've struck it, little girl—Mick sounds like Dick over a telephone, of course. But," and he leaned in the old, boyish fashion over the back of his mother's chair and slipped his arm about her neck, "though I am sorry for poor Mick, I can't quarrel with the telephone, mother, since it brought you back to us. She can't go home to-night, Mandy.

So take her up to your room and put her to bed. My little woman is a born nurse, mother, as you will find out for yourself."

Aunt Betty found out this and many other things during the three days she was the prisoner of Mandy's love and care. The soft, low voice, the tender touch of the delicate fingers, the warmth of the loving young heart won triumphant victory.

"I wish Dick and Mandy were nearer," said Aunt Betty, as she and Uncle Si drove home through the glad sunlight of an Indian summer day. "Country ways come awkward to pretty city gals, and she ain't overstrong, and wants some one to mother her. But Dick says he'll have a telephone put in, so it will sort of draw us together."

And, in time, another tie, stronger than the wonderful electric bond, drew the two homes together. Three or four times a day the Tomkyns' telephone rings imperative calls, and "mother" responds with smiling face.

"Hallo!" comes a small voice that makes new music in the silent old nest, "dis is little Dick; dat you, grandmuzzer?"

Miss Hetty's Tramp

BY MARY E. MANNIX

Miss Hetty Bonsall lived alone in the house that had belonged to her forefathers for generations. Not quite alone, either, for she had one servant, Nora, who had been in the family since before Miss Hetty was born, and who remained with her, faithful and capable, when the last of her kindred were laid beneath the sod.

Miss Hetty had never married, but she was not at all a blighted flower. Quiet, reserved, gentle, and refined, as it was in her blood to be, she had mingled more or less with her friends and neighbors, until the great event happened in her life which made things different. Not suddenly, sharply, or cruelly so, yet decidedly and unmistakably different. Miss Hetty had become a Catholic. The only Catholics in Mapleton were servants, laborers, and factory hands, and when "it" happened, people shook their heads, and touched their foreheads oracularly, but sadly—needing no spoken word to express the thought

that was in them. As time passed, and Miss Hetty —save in this one particular—continued to be exactly her old self and the scarcely breathed theory as to her sanity fell to pieces, her neighbors, still at a loss to account for her strange idiosyncrasy, endeavored to resume their old cordiality. But things were changed, and their mutual relations were never quite the same again.

But if Miss Hetty noticed it—and she must have done so—she never made a sign. Her religion was so comforting and consoling that it made up for everything.

Her conversion had come about in a peculiar way. One evening as she sat watching Nora peeling apples for pies, she asked:

"Nora, how is it that you have always been a Catholic?"

"I was born one, Miss Hetty."

"Nobody is ever *born* into a religion, Nora."

"Well, my people were Catholics, and when she was dying mother made your mother promise to send me to the Sisters' Orphan Asylum. But she hated to see me go to an asylum, and kept me herself instead. She felt it her duty to have me taught the religion of my parents, and sent me over to Four Rivers to Mass every Sunday,

besides having me instructed in my Catechism. She was a fine, good woman, Miss Hetty."

"Indeed she was. And you have clung nobly to your faith, Nora. For a long time you were the only Catholic in Mapleton, weren't you?"

"Yes, Miss Hetty."

"And now you have a nice church, and a good priest, haven't you?"

"Yes, Miss Hetty."

"Nora, I am going to tell you something. I have never before breathed it to a living soul. You remember that year I went to the Conservatory at Boston?"

"Yes, I remember it well."

"I met a young gentleman there whom—I liked —very much. He was studying music. He was a Catholic. When I discovered it I couldn't—Well, I had a wrong idea of things then, and so it was ended."

"And that is why you never married, Miss Hetty?"

"I think it is," rejoined Miss Hetty, with a little sigh. "After a while I was not unhappy, but I could never see any one else whom I liked as well. Now you have my little secret. Something in the appearance of your new priest sug-

gests him. Do you think I might call, Nora?" They were simple souls, both—the servant as simple as the mistress.

"I think you might," said Nora, and Miss Hetty did.

Something had stirred the slumbering past in the spinster's heart. She did not know, she could not know, what had become of her youthful lover, but she found herself longing to learn something of the religion he had professed. The result was that the close of the year found her a Catholic. Nora declared that it was a reward for the kindly act of her conscientious mother. Miss Hetty rather leaned toward the same opinion, and Father Furlong said that God not seldom acted vicariously.

If Miss Hetty had not had the consolation of religion to sustain her, it is doubtful if she could have borne her subsequent misfortune. In less than a year after her conversion she became blind. She could no longer sew, but she could knit; she could not read, but many times during the day the beads passed through her long, slim fingers, and no one ever heard her murmur.

Deep down in her virgin heart Miss Hetty had always treasured the memory of that youthful

fancy, which, if it had not been peremptorily and somewhat rudely nipped in the bud, would later, in all probability, have died a natural death. There were various reasons why it should have been so. There had never been the slightest declaration of love on either side, not even so much as the pressure of a hand. But the timid admiration pictured in a certain pair of Irish eyes had more than once brought a faint blush to the girlish cheek, and though the terrible discovery, made one Sunday morning on her way from the Congregational church, had caused her, as she thought it her bounden duty, to crush the sweet blossom of love beneath the heel of renunciation, she had never actually known those agonies which are known in romance as the pangs of disappointed love. There is hardly a doubt that Miss Hetty was what is vulgarly, but expressively, called "a born old maid." Nevertheless, she had cherished a tender recollection, enjoying rather than suffering a gentle sorrow so exquisitely fanciful that it was not in any sense allied to pain. She had had her one little hour, and it had set her apart, in her own imagination, for sweet remembrance that could hardly be called regret.

Since she had been blind Miss Hetty always

sat on the piazza overlooking the side garden, where Nora could see her from the kitchen and attend to any of her needs. One morning as she sat thus, busily knitting, the fleecy clouds of gossamer wool dropping lightly and swiftly through her fingers, a shuffling step sounded on the gravel walk.

"Good morning, madam," said a voice that had once been musical, and was still not unpleasant in its intonations; "is there any job that a man might do about here to earn his dinner?"

"What *can* you do?" replied Miss Hetty, letting her work drop into her lap, and glancing nervously about her, while a slight pink flush mounted to her cheeks.

"Do not be alarmed, madam," continued the man, noticing her perturbation, and attributing it to the dread which many nervous women feel at the sight of an unknown wayfarer.

"I am not—alarmed," faltered Miss Hetty, as her hands fluttered quickly above her work. "I am blind."

"Blind?" echoed the stranger in a sympathetic tone. "What a pity!"

Then Miss Hetty called to Nora, who was

broiling steak, the appetizing odor of which must have been grateful to a hungry man.

"Nora," said Miss Hetty, when the old woman appeared, "here is a—man, to whom I would like you to give a good, satisfying meal. He is anxious to do some work in return for it. Have we anything—is there—any odd job—Nora?"

"He might chop some kindling," answered Nora. "But I can't let my steak burn. Go to the kitchen steps, my good man," she continued, "and wait there till I dish up Miss Hetty's dinner."

But the tramp, for such he was in every line and furrow of his dissipated face and slouchy figure, had already taken off his cap and seated himself at Miss Hetty's feet. Resting both hands on his knees, and leaning his curly grizzled head upon them, he looked long and earnestly at the faded, flower-like face, from which beamed forth the pure white soul within. And, as he gazed, his brows contracted in a frown, he compressed his loose, vacillating lips together, and his bleared, bloodshot eyes grew moist. He must have had an unusually tender heart for a tramp, for he shook his head compassionately once or twice, blinked his bleary eyes and rose to his feet.

"I can weed a little just here while I wait," he said.

"Do so," replied Miss Hetty, who had resumed her knitting, and he fell to work. While he weeded he hummed snatches of tunes to himself, and again Miss Hetty's hands fluttered nervously through the ice-wool shawl she was making, while her soft brown sightless eyes, beneath their half-closed lids, became suffused with retrospective tears. At dinner her manner was nervous and agitated; Nora could not understand it.

"I do not think I shall take a nap to-day, Nora," she said, when the meal was finished. "I will just go back, with my work, to the piazza."

"Very well, miss," said the faithful handmaid, leading her to her accustomed place; "but do you feel just yourself? You look feverish."

"There is nothing the matter, Nora," replied Miss Hetty. "I prefer to sit here."

When Nora went back to her kitchen the tramp had finished his dinner. He sat, with one elbow on the table, surveying the comfortable room.

"That is Miss Bonsall?" he inquired.

"Yes," replied Nora; "Miss Hetty Bonsall."

"You and she occupy this large house alone?" he continued.

"We do," rejoined Nora, sharply; "but we're not one bit afraid of tramps and thieves. We have a big dog that we let loose at night, and burglar alarms on all the doors and windows. And we have very good neighbors."

The man smiled.

"You needn't fly up like that," he said. "You're a mighty fine cook, and I thank both you and your mistress for the good dinner I have just eaten. Do I look like a thief?"

"No, you don't," replied Nora. "But I'll tell you what you do look like."

"What is that?"

"A tramp and a ne'er-do-well, fallen from a good estate through drink and folly."

"You have guessed rightly," he replied. "That is precisely what I am."

Then the kind heart of the Irishwoman melted.

"Is it too late to turn over a new leaf?" she asked, in a more gentle tone.

The man's lips worked nervously for a moment. "I am afraid it is," he said; "at least, so I have long thought—until this morning. But—if I could be allowed to stay in a home like this—for a while at least, until I could prove myself—there

might be a chance. I am handy—a sort of Jack-of-all-trades. I would make myself useful."

"We don't need any one; we have a boy to come in once or twice a week," began Nora. But Miss Hetty spoke from the piazza.

"Let him stay, Nora. We will give him a chance. Tell him to stay."

"You hear what she says?" said the old woman. "God bless her kind heart. Now let us see what comes of it."

The man rose, stretched himself, and heaved a long, deep sigh that was almost a groan. Then he took his battered cap from the corner of the kitchen chair where he had hung it, and went back to his weeding.

"What is your name?" asked Miss Hetty from the piazza, after a while.

"Bartle—call me Bartle," answered the new man-of-all-work, lifting his head from his task.

Miss Hetty did not speak again. When the work was finished, and he turned to ask for further orders, the porch was vacant. She had groped her way upstairs and was lying on her bed. Her eyes were closed, but she was not asleep. There were tears on the lashes, tears that could not fall, precious pearls of remembrance born of that shad-

owy romance which had touched her life in its early spring, and which the voice of a stranger had vividly recalled, after more than thirty years. What was it she had feared? She would not even acknowledge it to her own soul, yet she had feared it. But now the dread had passed, she was herself again.

"I was so glad, so glad," she whispered, lying on her white bed, "to hear that his name was Bartle; a name altogether unknown to me. I have never heard it before."

For three months the tramp worked faithfully, and Nora daily vaunted his praises.

"He knows his business and he keeps his place," she said. "He's the quietest man, except for that way he has of humming to himself the queerest tunes. But I'm afraid he'll break out some day."

"Let us hope he will not," Miss Hetty would rejoin, "and at any rate we shall not anticipate."

One day it came. Bartle had been lending a hand to some wood-cutters by Miss Hetty's kind permission. When he came home that evening Nora closed the door between the kitchen and the dining-room.

"You are drunk, Bartle," she said.

"I am, Nora," he responded.

"Then out of this house you must go to-night. Miss Hetty has a mortal terror of a drunken man. You have been very ungrateful, Bartle."

"Right you are, Nora," he answered; "right you are," as his head fell limply against the wall.

"Miss Hetty," Nora announced to her mistress, sitting at her supper, "Bartle is drunk. I have told him to go."

Miss Hetty's eyes widened. She stood up. "Oh, yes, yes, Nora," she exclaimed, "we can not have a drunken man about. It is too bad—we had such hopes of him. Call some of the neighbors to take him away."

"He is able to go himself," rejoined Nora; "he is quiet enough."

"Very well. Send him away. I have such a horror of a drunken man."

At that moment the organ-like tones of a wonderful bass voice came from the kitchen. It was singing the "Drinking Song" from the "Huguenots." Miss Hetty's hands, resting lightly on the table in front of her, began to tremble. With an intentness that seemed to carry her out of herself she listened until the song was finished. Then she leaned back in her tall chair as though exhausted, and said in a strained, unnatural voice:

"Do not send him away, Nora. Tell him to go to bed. We will give him another chance."

Mistress and man had very little intercourse. Bartle took his orders from Nora, as was natural under the peculiar circumstances of Miss Hetty's affliction. But many and many a time he would pause in his work to cast a kindly, sympathetic glance, of which she was unconscious, on the cheerful, resigned and still lovely face of her to whom he owed food, shelter and encouragement.

One day Miss Hetty and Nora had gone to spend the afternoon with a friend in the country. They had hired a carriage from the livery stable, and did not expect to return till late in the evening.

The moon was flooding the piazza with light when they reached their own door. From the parlor came sounds of glorious music, played by a master hand. Half terrified, Nora made her mistress sit down.

"I'll go and see who it is," she said.

"No, no, stay here. I want to listen," replied Miss Hetty, grasping the old woman's hand tightly as she drew her down beside her. Waltz followed waltz, and rondo succeeded rondo. The mood of the player changed, and several selections from

Chopin and Schumann were rendered in the most exquisite manner. Then suddenly a magnificent voice poured out the rollicking tuneful notes of "Nancy Lee," and Nora sprang to her feet.

"It's Bartle," she cried. "He's drunk again, and this time he shall go."

"No," answered Miss Hetty, clinging like a child to the old servant. "No," she sobbed, while tears coursed down her cheeks. "He must not go, he shall never go—now. Be patient with him, Nora—for my sake—but first help me upstairs. Then I am sure you can prevail upon him to go to bed."

Perplexed, half indignant, fearful that the mind of her dearly beloved mistress was about to give way, yet true to the lifelong tradition which had made obedience to her as willing as it was absolute, Nora obeyed. The next day Destiny cut with one sharp blow the tangled skein which Nora had felt she would need all her wits to unravel. Coming downstairs alone, Miss Hetty slipped and fell, receiving injuries from which she never recovered. For several days she lay unconscious. This state was succeeded by intermittent periods of suffering. A woman was installed in

Nora's place, and she devoted herself to taking care of her mistress.

One morning Miss Hetty asked:

"Is Bartle still here, Nora?"

"Yes, Miss Hetty, and doing fine. He's taken the pledge from Father Furlong. He never told us he was a Catholic, did he?"

"No, but I had thought for some time that he was."

"I never dreamed of it. But he's been to confession and holy communion for the first time in twenty years, he told me, and he's promised to go regular."

"I am very, very glad to hear that," said Miss Hetty, and soon after seemed to fall asleep. One day, it was the one before the last, she asked for Bartle. Nora summoned him. He came softly into the room, and sat down beside the bed.

"I wanted to talk with you a little, Bartle," she said, quite calmly. "You know I can not get well."

"So they tell me," he answered, "but I don't want to believe it."

"It is true, however," she continued, in the same quiet tone; "and I wanted to tell you—before I go, how pleased I was to hear that you

were doing so well and had been to the Sacraments."

"God helping me, I shall never drink another drop," he said.

"Bartle, I have left you something in my will; enough to enable you to take care of yourself in your old age. I have given it in trust to Father Furlong. You do not know why I have done this?"

"No, I certainly do not."

"Because you remind me of some one I once knew. It is your voice, especially, that recalls this friend to my recollection. I did not think there could have been two voices in the world so much alike." Bartle did not speak.

"That man, my friend," she resumed with difficulty, "I have long lost sight of; he promised to make a great success. But should it have fallen out that he did not, whether through circumstances, or violent temptation, or some inherent weakness, as is often the case, who knows but that something might not have happened, or will happen, at the end, to retrieve it all?"

"That were impossible," said Bartle, bitterly.

"Or at least to encourage him for the rest of his days to be a better man?"

"At least a better man," he repeated, sadly.

"That we two old-time friends might once again be friends—in heaven."

Bartle rose.

"With God's help, in heaven," he exclaimed fervently.

She stretched forth her worn, transparent hands.

"Good-by, John Redmond — good-by — till heaven!"

He clasped them in his own, while hot tears fell from his eyes upon the wasted fingers.

"Good-by, good-by," he gasped, and rushed, sobbing from the room. Miss Hetty turned her face to the wall. She neither wept nor sobbed; she had passed all that—her soul was at peace. Nothing mattered now but what was to come after.

The next morning she said quite composedly to her faithful nurse:

"Nora, in the top drawer of my desk you will find a little ivory box. There is nothing in it but a withered rose. Lay it with me in my coffin. It was given me one day by the friend of whom I told you. I have always kept it. The one I gave him in exchange was never so treasured, I am sure," she added with a wan little smile. "Men

do not cherish or remember things as women do. You hear what I am saying, Nora?"

"Oh, Miss Hetty, I am listening, and I will do your bidding."

Twenty-four hours later, when they had dressed her for the grave, Nora took the withered leaves from the ivory receptacle where they had lain so long, and hid them between the loosely folded hands of her dead mistress. As she was leaving the room she met Bartle crossing the hall.

"Do you think I might see her now," he asked, reverently.

"Indeed you might," was the reply; "she thought well of you, Bartle."

He went in and closed the door. A short, but fervent prayer beside the blossom-strewn bier, a long, long, wistful look at the gentle face, saintly and beautiful in the embrace of that death which is the peace of God. Then Bartle turned slowly away. As he left the spot, something dropped from his fingers into the flower-banked coffin. It was a withered rose.

Bricks and Mortar

BY MARION AMES TAGGART

THE high rocking chair—a country chair that looked out of place—tilted furiously to and fro, but it could not keep pace with its occupant's fierce longing.

She was a gaunt woman, long of bone, sinewy of muscle; she gave one the impression of resembling her father, whom one knew instinctively as a man who had wielded pitchfork and hay-rake in the open fields. Beauty was no more her portion than it is that of any woman of her kind, the kind that grapples early with the problem of how to exist, and the weariness of hard work. But her features were not unshapely, and her steady gray eyes were as kind as they were keen; natural intelligence and dignity were declared in the honest face on which sorrow had left its indelible mark.

Now the eyes were hungry, eager in expression; a fierce light burned in them not unsuggestive of a trapped creature. They gazed unseeing at the blank brick wall before the window, and the rock-

ing chair rocked back and forth rapidly to the length of its panic-stirring rockers.

A man came into the room, a man with stooping shoulders and an air of defeat for which he seemed apologetic. The woman turned to meet him, arresting her rockers' mad course mid-way back by the tips of her shoes pressed perpendicularly downward.

"No good?" she asked tersely as she met his depressed glance.

He shook his head.

"What do they advertise for men used to the country for if they don't want 'em?" she demanded. "Where'd they expect to find a man used to taking care of cows and horses if it wasn't you?"

"They'd engaged some one with a reference, a city reference, before I got there," he replied dispiritedly. "I guess they don't any of 'em want a man with only his own reference as a farmer of his own farm, Denie."

The diminutive of her name had a pathetic ring, so obviously was it the sole remainder of her rosy-cheeked, free youth.

"If I've got to stay shut up a pris'ner in brick and mortar much longer, Ben, there won't be

enough of me left to lay in a bricked-up grave, such as we give folks in the graveyard at home—I don't know what kind of graves they make in these city burying grounds!" she exclaimed. "I'm dying, that's what I am! If I could once get back home I'd git rid of this fever that's burning me. My eyes are afire lookin' at that brick wall across there—just one great, hard, bleak, blank thing, not a dent in it; no cracks for pity, like a stone wall's got; just smooth bricks and mortar! And here I sit looking at it, not a leaf in sight! And behind it there are two hundred girls or more, working away at machines, smelling oil in a hot room! Not one of 'em with an idea of what clover smells like, I make no doubt, nor how it feels to have the wind blow down the hills in your face in the early morning! Benjamin, I'm going crazy! If we hadn't have mortgaged! If we hadn't a come away to town after we got sheriffed! If we hadn't done anything we have done, when we didn't git along! We could have worked somewhere for luckier folks than us, and anyway we'd have been in the country! My eyes are burnt out of me with that brick wall, but I can't moisten 'em with one tear. I just sit and look and look, and rock and rock,

till I wonder I don't throw myself out that window against that wall—I get to thinking I'd like to mark it with blood, so's everybody'd know what it is. And then I'm sure I'm going crazy."

The man looked helplessly frightened. "I guess you hadn't ought to sit and brood, Denie," he said; "it makes you think things. It's something that we've been able to pay the rent of these two rooms, and have enough to eat, so far."

"So far—that's it, Ben! So far from home, and so far along! But nobody knows how much longer we can hold out," retorted the woman. "We ain't fit for city, and every week is likely to be the last we can pay for even this stifling! Ben, let's set out and walk home! We'd be walking along country roads, and if we died on the way we'd be dying in the open! But we wouldn't die. Folks along the way would be good to us, and when we got home we'd find work and a corner to sleep in. We'd git home someway, Ben."

Her voice grew pleading, and the husband shuffled in distressed sense of responsibility to gainsay a woman's visionary impracticability.

"We'd be beggars, Denie," he said. "I haven't a cent to start away on, you know that!"

"And ain't we beggars now, I'd like to know?" she demanded fiercely. "I sit here begging that brick wall to have mercy on me till I feel as if I was praying to an idol of brick and mortar, and was a heathen in heathen lands! We'd be beggars to folks instead of to bricks and mortar, Ben, and to God and not to monsters made by men to eat up helpless women—like me outside that wall, and those girls behind it! Oh, Ben, take me away home again, or let me start for it, and not die here looking at that brick wall, when there's sky and trees beyond."

She arose from her chair, and going over laid a trembling hand on the faded greenish sleeve of her husband's shabby coat. He covered the work-worn hand with his own gnarly one, which shook at the appeal, and answered her with the patience that he extended to all things besides her whom he loved, the patience that held in it the explanation of why he had failed to wrest from adverse circumstances the success which men had won who had been less fortunate in their beginnings than he.

"I wouldn't dare to go off like that, Denie," he said gently. "It wouldn't do to throw up the little we're sure of, and go off like that.

Wait a little while, Denie, and I'll get work in the country somewheres—wait just a little while longer, Denie, and stop brooding over that brick wall yonder."

The woman turned away. Her cheeks were flushed, and suddenly she revealed the fact that she was far younger than she had appeared at a glance.

"I've got a long, narrow box to put in the window in the other room," she said in the tone of one who recognized the futility of further words; all the resonance had gone out of her voice, and she spoke with a dulness equal to her husband's. "I'm going to put in it those seeds I brought along from home. I want to try if the larkspur and portulacas and those things won't grow—the sun comes in there afternoons."

"So do," said her husband heartily, "they'll blossom for you if anybody, Denie."

"It's about eight inches wide and twenty long; not much like our front yard, Ben. But I've got to have some kind of a garden to keep the upper hand of that brick wall."

The woman turned away with a dreary smile as she spoke. The fire had faded from her eyes, the sudden color from her cheeks. She looked old;

yes, skin, hair, even the monotony of her voice, seemed an unshaded gray.

The weeks went by, and the two lives passing in the two small rooms on the lower floor of the city lodging house went by with them uneventfully. Lonely and sad, hungering for her lost home, Denie Sebring gazed at the relentless wall that seemed to her worn nerves and discouraged heart the type of the city's horizonless cruelty. And Ben Sebring performed the small tasks that came his way, contriving to keep the roof over their heads and a scant supply of food in the larder, pending the time that his answers to advertisements for experienced workers on farms should be crowned with success, and he could take his wife back to the fields for which she visibly pined. There was but one cheerful, prosperous thing in the small home, but one bright spot in the tragedy of failure, and that was Denie's window garden, her less than two feet substitute for her luxuriant front-yard and the vistas of her green-clad native hills. She had been famous among her neighbors for that touch of hand which makes everything grow upon which it falls, and, imprisoned among her hated brick and mortar, her hand had not lost its cunning. The little

brown seeds which she had brought away from Crestville had been gathered with a heavy heart that last autumn when she had known that her garden was a thing of the past, and the foreclosure of the mortgage and the sheriff's sale which stood to her as the brand of disgrace but a matter of days before it must be faced. These little seeds, buried in the narrow window box and watered with tears as abundantly as from the small jug which had been her cream jug in the farm days, had all sprouted, and the plants had grown just as their parent stocks had grown in the lost front yard. More slender, a paler green perhaps, they were, but growing, and budding, and now blossoming bravely in the window where the factory girls, passing to be daily immured behind Denie's hated brick wall, could see them, and where other denizens of a most unblossoming quarter could feel their cheerfulness as they went by in the narrow way. More than mere blossoms they became to poor Denie; a safeguard they were against the queer visions, the brooding melancholy born of her loneliness and the corroding hunger for her old home—and for the fancies, bred, too, by the actual hunger of body, as well as heart, for there was sometimes extreme scarcity

of food in the closet. At home, however badly affairs went with them, there had always been more than enough to eat; as long as they held the farm it was sure to supply them abundantly, after some fashion.

As the blue and pink larkspur blossoms opened, and the mignonette and portulacas sweetened and brightened the window garden, Denie watched them as a portent; if they did well, she told herself, it meant that she too would do well, and to "do well" meant but one thing: To return to Crestville. But if her flowers withered away, if blossoms proved abortive, then it meant that the thin woman bending over them would also die in the miasma of city streets, crushed beneath the bricks and mortar encompassing her.

The flowers thrived, thrived wonderfully, considering how brief was their sunshine, how circumscribed their plot.

"Queer how much you set by those flowers!" observed Ben one day, catching a glimpse of the fleeting triumph in his wife's face as she straightened herself after a long and close inspection of new-forming buds.

"They're all there is," she said.

One day a man unlike the general passer-by

went past Denie's glorified window. Went by, but halted, turned, and retraced his steps to look more closely at the box filled with the old-fashioned flowers of everybody's childhood garden. Denie did not see him, being engrossed in her sibylline pets, and he entered the general door of the house, and knocked at the Sebring's particular door.

Denie answered the summons.

"Good morning," said the stranger. "I came to see you about your window garden."

Denie looked amazed.

"It isn't for sale," she murmured.

Her visitor smiled.

"So I should imagine," he said; "it attracted my attention, being so entirely unexpected in this section. It reminded me of my mother's garden in the country."

"Yes," said Denie with a sob in her throat, "I brought the seeds with me when we left."

"Ah, I thought you could not be city bred," the visitor commented. Then he glanced at the tall, wasted figure, taking in comprehensively all its details and revelations. He was a man of sudden impulses, of immense heart, and quick to read the symptoms of a tragedy. His acquaintances called him eccentric, a crank; his friends and near-

est of kin called him a saint—terms are largely a question of speaker and point of view; both these factions may have been right in the case of Richard Dallas.

"Have you a husband and children?"

"A husband, and five dead children," said Denie briefly. She looked into the stranger's eyes, near-sighted eyes as to landscape; far-sighted eyes as to souls. They compelled the reticent woman's confidence, as they compelled every one's.

"It's a story not much different from a good many people's," she said, "but I suppose everybody has to read their own story as if the words hadn't ever been used before. Ben—my husband's—as good a man as walks this earth, but he never has got along, and when things got too bad to help it we mortgaged our farm, and when we couldn't pay the interest we were sheriffed, and we moved to town because Ben would—I mean he had an idea he'd get on here. I suppose it was mostly because he couldn't ever get on there—as if the city was easier to make your way in, at our time of life!"

"And you're homesick," the stranger finished.

"I'm dying, inch by inch and day by day,"

Denie said. "The brick and mortar is killing me."

She looked in her visitor's face after she had uttered words that she had not intended to say, but there was nothing in his face to make her wish to recall them. With the rashness to which he was subject, the rashness of a knight errant born too late for the profession of defender of the weak, Richard Dallas made up his mind on the spot, and spoke it.

"I have bought a farm," he said. "I don't know what to do with it; it came into my hands by way of trade, rather than in outright purchase. I need a farmer and his wife to go up there and look after it. If you and your husband will entertain the idea I should be glad to arrange with you to do this for me."

Denie began to tremble.

"It's in the country; a farm must be in the country," she gasped. Then she added: "There isn't a better worker, a better farmer than Ben, if he's working for some one else; he couldn't manage for himself. And I do understand a dairy, and gardens—" she broke off, shaking with eagerness. "Where is your farm?" she asked with a feeble attempt to appear indifferent.

"Up in Pocahontas' County, on the L. S. D. railroad; the name of the village is Crestville—My dear woman, what's the matter?" Mr. Dallas interrupted himself to steady Denie, who began to sway as she stood.

"My home!" she whispered. "What farm—"

"It is called Laughing Brook, but most people up there seem to call it Sebring's—"

The stranger in his turn stopped short, as he saw Denie's face. "It's your old home!" he cried enlightened. "You are Mrs. Sebring! How fortunate I came here! Of course you will run it for me—"

But for the first time in her self-controlled life Denie had fainted dead away.

When Ben came in later from another vain quest of country employment he stopped in his own doorway frightened by what he saw. There before her little window garden knelt Denie, sobbing and kissing her blossoms in a frenzy of joy.

"We're going home! we're going home, Ben!" she cried as she saw him. Then she crept on her knees across the floor and fell to hugging his shoes and crying over them.

"My flowers saved us from bricks and mortar!" she cried hysterically as he raised her with a bewildered kiss.

Chilly Con Carney

(The Story of an Irish Bog that Moved.)

BY P. G. SMYTH

His surname was Carney, and his Christian name was Cornelius, shortened to Con, and he was the most unpopular man in that part of the country, and he didn't care who knew it.

It was a local wit returned from America—a "Yankee," as they call that class of people—who first termed him Chilly Con Carney, and then he was sorry for having done so, not so much on Mr. Carney's account as for the time and trouble he had to take in explaining. For his explanation was usually considered lame and impotent and his sense of humor gravely defective. Glenree learned for the first time that *chile con carne* was a popular Mexican dish, consisting of meat garnished with hot and peppery condiments. But how could anything be chilly and hot at the same time? Con Carney was chilly enough, to be sure, and cold blooded and miserly; but what has that got to do with hot Mexican dishes? It was a foolish joke entirely. *Bah, moryah omadhaun!*

The punster, fresh from the States, fearfully and scathingly berated the obtuseness or assumed obtuseness of the natives of Glenree. He was drifting from despondency into melancholia, when to his rescue came an angel in the shape of an American tourist, whom, after some conversation in the presence of a few of the obtuse ones, he directed to where he might obtain that pleasant New World viand, *chile con carne.*

"Say, old man, that's a mighty good local joke of yours," said the tourist, when he came back, flushed and laughing nervously, from Mr. Carney's house, "but it's a kind of dangerous one. When I told him what I wanted, the old guy looked as if he'd eat me up; but when he told me his name I saw the josh I was up against. So that's the kind of *chile con carne* you have in these parts! It's a prime joke, by thunder—ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" echoed the group, their appreciation at length aroused.

Thenceforth for a time it was hazardous for any American tourist, particularly one with a home hankering for *chile con carne,* to visit Glenree; for it became not only a local joke but a

local act of vengeance to direct him on that particular quest to the dwelling of Con Carney, and then to witness the angry altercation and sometimes even the personal encounter that ensued, when everybody hoped that the amazed and assaulted "Yankee" would give the irate old land-grabber the trouncing of his life. For Chilly Con waxed hot and fiery under this unique form of boycotting, which the police were unable to stop and even the parish priest protested against in vain.

"Travelin' gintlemin with a taste for that furrin food, *chile con carne*—that's the kind, long life to them! that's always welcome in Glenree," was the prevailing local sentiment.

Ambitious, persevering, unencumbered of scruple, Mr. Carney had a knack of getting anything upon which he had laid the eye of desire. The amalgamated farms which he held betokened this, the farms from which tenants had been evicted for non-payment of rack rents, and that he had taken in scornful and silent defiance of Land League and National League and United League, who variously boycotted, denounced, and burned him in effigy. He had long been a grim and retiring bachelor, keeping a cheerless and in-

hospitable bachelor's hall. But now a new and strange longing glowed in his rugged bosom. He wanted a wife to tend him and his home, and maybe help with the stock. She would have to be young and good and pretty, and she would need to have money—the more the better. With his usual judgment and tenacity of purpose, and adamantine confidence in himself, he started out to find a girl to suit his domestic program. And he had found her, and everything was arranged, to his satisfaction, at least, one fine Saturday night.

That was the very night Charlie Tierney came to Glenree, his native place, on a vacation trip from the States.

To catch his folks napping, to burst in upon them unexpectedly and enjoy their surprise and delight at his coming, that was his darling plan. And that was why, leaving his traps at the post-office, he slipped across the fields and slyly opened the back door of the ancestral cottage. A pleasant culinary aroma greeted him.

"God save all here! My, what a smell of spices! Eh—a turkey, and a goose, and chickens galore, and beef and bacon, and Sibbie Hefferon making a currant loaf big enough to feed a com-

pany of the Black Militia! Come, now, this is too bad. I thought to take you by surprise, and somebody has given me clean away. Who told you I was coming home this evening?"

"Why, nobody told us, Charlie," replied his mother, when the first warm greetings were over.

"But why those preparations for a big banquet, then?" he asked, in affected chagrin; "I thought it was a fatted calf for myself, being the only son, prodigal or otherwise, in the family."

"It's not a fatted calf for a returning son, Charlie," sadly said his sister Annie, who was busy ironing table linen; "it's funeral baked meats for a departing daughter."

"Lord save us!" exclaimed the young man tentatively, becoming suddenly conscious of an atmosphere of domestic depression.

Then Sibbie Hefferon, the ancient retainer, impressively raised a robust arm covered with adhering dough and looking like a piece of sculptor's work in the rough.

"Master Charlie, your father has turned his ould iron hand to matchmakin', and he's goin' to make a marriage of a kind that was never made in heaven. Your brother-in-law is to be Chilly Con Carney."

The young man started in amazement and anger.

"What—that fishy-eyed miser, that yellow-fanged wolf down the river, that hypocritical, hatchet-faced, slab-sided incarnation of everything mean, a greedy landgrabber and gombeen man—or loan shark, as we call his kind in the States. In heaven's name, Annie, my girl, whatever tempted you to accept that parchment-covered rascal, old enough to be your father, ay, or your grandfather? I thought my friend Fred Beamish, who owns the farm next ours, was—"

"Your friend Fred Beamish was insulted and ordered out of this house a week ago because his holding is less than half as big as that of Chilly—of Mr. Carney, my destined husband," said Annie bitterly, between her tears. "As for me, I have been, according to the ancient custom, the unwritten law, allowed no voice at all in the transaction. I am as a Circassian slave girl in the Turkish slave market—and the bargain has been made."

"Don't talk that way, *avourneen,*" pleaded her mother.

"Ay, don't talk that way, *avourneen,*" sarcastically echoed the privileged old servant; "sure,

there's no use or sinse in your frettin' yourself now, with everything ready for the weddin'. The piper is engaged, and the fiddlers. Father Pat is noticed for the marriage. All your far and near relations that aren't gone to America will be here to-morrow, and big and hearty is the dinner we're gettin' ready for them. The Durkans are comin' from Ballysokeery, and the Gallaghers from Killala, and the Flanagans from Crossmolina, and we'll have great doin's entirely. Och, 'twill be a fine weddin'—lots of kind and lovin' friends to eat and dhrink and dance and wish you joy, and then off you go with that fluke-eyed ould—"

"Don't be discouraging her, Sibbie," said Mrs. Tierney severely. "Things are bad enough without making them worse."

"'Tis sorry I'd be to discourage her, ma'am," replied the equivocal Sibbie. "Many is the girl would like to be in Miss Annie's shoes to-morrow, for Mr. Carney has money, and Mr. Carney has land—not sayin' how he got it—and Mr. Carney is purty ould, and in coorse of nature, not wishin' anybody any harm, Miss Annie ought to soon bury Mr. Carney.

"Sure, it's a woman of my age he had a right

to take," she continued reflectively; "and if it was me, I'd very soon bury him!"

Charlie Tierney had been doing some thinking and planning. "When you don't like this fellow, Annie—and it would be unnatural if you did—why don't you refuse to marry him?"

"You know very well, Charlie," replied his sister, "that there would then be no living for me in the same house with my father."

"Well, you don't have to stay here if you don't like. Just put down your foot, pack up your things, and come away with me to America, where those ancient, fossilized, mildewed ideas of matchmaking and parental power don't go."

But Annie shook her head. She was an old-fashioned Irish country girl, with old-fashioned Irish country notions of filial obedience. The long inherited instinct of submission with regard to the selection of a life partner was strong within her, and, though her nature protested, it feared to revolt. She tried to console herself with the thought that matches made by the "old people" seldom proved unhappy.

Besides, in marrying Mr. Carney, she would remain near her parents, for his holding, or combination of holdings, adjoined theirs further

down the right bank of the river Glenree—the broad acres he had filched from the poor evicted, from widow and orphan. And above and adjoining the Tierney farm lay that of Annie's lover, Fred Beamish—poor Fred, ruthlessly rejected, mournfully dejected.

"Break off this unnatural marriage, father, and save your daughter's happiness, maybe her life," pleaded Charlie Tierney that evening, impetuously entering the room where his father sat smoking.

Tierney senior was an aggressive looking little old man, gnarled yet hardy of body, gnarled yet strong of mind. He finished deliberately cutting his tobacco and filling and lighting his pipe before he replied to his son or even acknowledged his presence.

"Young man," he said severely, "your ould father knows his business, and the betther you attind to yours the betther you'll plaise me. Remimber that. I'm masther in this house. If you don't admire how I'm doin' things your absence will be good company."

"But think, father," persisted Charlie, "there are plenty of good, decent, respectable farmers over the countryside. Choose one of these for

her, and not a sordid, soulless, detested old reprobate like Chilly Con Carney."

"Spake respectfully of your intinded brother-in-law, my high flyin' young Yank, and don't preshoom to tell me what to do or what not to do. The ould people made my match for *me;* I only saw your mother an hour before I put the ring on her finger; it's my turn to make matches now. Take care that I don't make one for yourself and tie you up to some ould widow without a tooth in her head but with money galore—in the bank—and divil a divoorce you'd get, aither, for thim things may suit America, but not Ireland, and not Glenree. Tell your foolish sister she may as well stop her tanthrums. The priest is notified, and the fiddler is hired, and the friends are bidden to the weddin' from near and far, and I have here your sister's fortune of three hundred goold sovereigns to hand over to Misther Carney, who, I am sure, will take good care of it."

"That's what I'll be very glad to do indeed," said a croaking voice, and to Charlie's surprise a tall, gaunt figure loomed out of the shadow of the window curtains and confronted him. The lamplight showed a cadaverous face with fishy eyes and fishy lips and bristly yellow whiskers,

like a cat's. It was old Chilly Con Carney himself.

"Master Charlie," he said with oily suavity, "a traveled man of the world like you ought to feel it an honor and an advantage to have a man like me marry into your family, a substantial man, a man of affairs, with the best farm of land in Glenree. And now, good night."

"Oh, Mr. Carney, have mercy on me—don't drag to the altar an unwilling bride," pleaded Annie, as she met her intended in the hall,

"My bonnie bride," he said, "you'll get over that feeling. Drop your silly romancing! Right good husbands are few, and very soon you'll find me one of the best of them."

So Chilly Con Carney, closing his ears and heart and conscience to the girl's wail of despair, set complacently forth to his residence in the center of his broad, smooth acres.

When he entered and turned up the lamp he found he had the house all to himself—his aged factotum, who had long helped him to keep bachelor's hall, having gone away for a Sunday visit. Seating himself before the fire Mr. Carney fell into a pleasant reverie, wherein floated the sweet face of Annie Tierney. Gentle Annie—finest girl

in the land—splendid housekeeper—and after tomorrow she would be with him to stay! And he dozed in his chair until the gray light of dawn came stealing in.

Suddenly he became wide awake, alert and alarmed. Three black, glistening serpents had writhed in under the door and trailed their lengths across the entire floor. Several of the lower window panes cracked and fell inward, and cataracts of black, heavy, oozy stuff came bursting and thundering into the room. The fire hissed and went out. Dark, sticky matter rose around his ankles and climbed to his knees, and looking forth he saw what seemed a black, glistening sea of tar, menacing and terrible!

Great was the alarm and commotion that Sunday morning along the banks of the Glenree. At first streak of dawn a shouting horseman galloped, like Paul Revere, from house to house, giving warning that the bog of Monamore, above the village, had again burst its trammels and was coming down the stream. From the threatened lowlands people hurried half dressed to the hill slopes, where groups stood watching the strange and appalling spectacle revealed by the light of day.

It was like the upsetting of a huge cask of treacle. A dark moving mass choked the current of the Glenree, here clogging and clotting a bridge and there brimming over the banks into nooks and angles, defiling everything and every place it polluted with its black and viscid touch. And wherever Brother Bog came, he came to stay.

Amid the awe caused by the solemn mourning badge of inundation a stalwart young farmer suddenly shouted in fierce delight and flung his hat high in the air. It was bad taste, some thought, but nobody blamed him: he was Fred Beamish, the lover of Annie Tierney.

"Hurroo, boys," he cried, "the bog has fallen in particular love with the holding of Chilly Con!"

Sure enough a semi-liquid inky sea was slowly spreading over the flat and fertile fields of Mr. Carney, seizing foot by foot and perch by perch on the amalgamated holdings acquired by him through dint of rapacious land hunger.

"Ha, the grabbed farms have the widows' curses," exultingly yelled an old woman. "And there, begorra, goes the naygur himself."

Looking toward the Carney home they saw a wild, lanky being dart from the back door and

flounder into the encircling bog, making for the nearest rising ground. His legs, as he laboriously waded along, were soon cloggy and shapeless with mud. Every few yards, in his haste and terror, he stumbled and fell, till he was soon caked, blackened and befouled from head to foot. It was like a dirty living log that at length drew itself out of the black sea and lay on the hillside, where Chilly Con, now chilly indeed, panted with fright and exhaustion.

While startled and marveling groups still lined the green hillsides, and the Sunday morning bells began to ring, strings of side cars laden with smiling country folk in happy anticipation of pleasure began to arrive from various directions and to pull up at the Tierney cottage. They were guests "bidden" to the wedding nuptials of Miss Annie Tierney and Mr. Cornelius Carney, and grave grew their faces when they found Brother Bog in the rôle of Ancient Mariner.

"The match is broke off," declared that shrewd and practical man, Tierney senior. "Seein' that now Mr. Carney has hardly as much land left as would sod a lark, it would be onraisonable for

him to expect me to give him my daughter and her fortune."

"And, faith," he added, in gratified afterthought, "it was rale lucky for me I didn't hand him over them three hundred goold sovereigns last night, as I intended doin'. Very safe and fortunate, indeed! I must have got the prayer of some good ould woman."

"It wasn't mine, then," snapped Sibbie Hefferon.

"I said some good ould woman," retorted Mr. Tierney.

A look of joy and relief shone on the sweet face of Annie Tierney. The visiting women and girls flocked round her, few of them knowing whether better to condole with or congratulate her.

As for her brother Charlie he busied himself actively among the male visitors, as alert as a worker at an American political convention. There were many whispered communings and approving nods and smiles, and by and by a large deputation filed into the room where sat Mr. Tierney.

"All of us are of one opinion, Mr. Tierney," said a white-haired patriarch who acted as

spokesman, "and that is that a fortunate thing has happened. You can ginerally trust a decent Irish bog to do the right thing, and that's what the bog of Monamore done this blessed morning. It previnted what would surely be an unnatural and an unhappy marriage. What happened was for the best. Howsomever, being as we're all here, friends, relatives, and well wishers, and a beautiful smell of cookin' in the air, and the fiddlers and pipers waitin' out there in the kitchen, and Father Pat within aisy call, we don't see why we can't have a rousin' good weddin' afther all. Chilly Con is out of the question, the saints be praised, but there's young Fred Beamish, a dacent father and mother's child, able and willin' and—"

Mr. Tierney jumped up and protested. He was a hard and obstinate man, but he was taken at a grave disadvantage, and the ramparts of his objections and arguments crumbled away before the ardent assaults of the Durkans of Ballysokeery, and the Gallaghers of Killala, and the Flanagans of Crossmolina and other far and near connections. After surrendering he genially opened and shared with them a jar of poteen—pure barley poteen, the genuine native article—and he

actually laughed as, glancing out the window, he saw his hopeful son frantically shaking hands with Fred Beamish.

In that part of Ireland, when both the contracting parties are known to the pastor, matrimony —alas! a fast vanishing quantity in Ireland nowadays—is utterly free of trammels or red tape. No marriage license is necessary, and no publishing of banns. Therefore, an hour or so after old Tierney had given his consent, the exulting lovers drove to the parish chapel, where Father Pat met them and performed his sacred function.

On their way back, accompanied by the long line of merrily crowded jaunting cars, they passed a tall man whom nobody recognized on account of his thick coating of bog mud. He might have been as spruce as any of them were he arrayed in his wedding outfit; but it lay under several feet of miry covering in a house far out in the recently formed black sea. Although he needed a suit, however, he had now no special desire for nuptial garments. A man made suddenly and strangely landless, his mind was deeply occupied with anything but matrimony.

Widow Lavelle's Lots

BY P. G. SMYTH

It was a rather gloomy and inappropriate place for such a bright and cheery little body to live in, that grimy manufacturing district of South Chicago, where smoke blackens the sky and cinders the earth, where coal dust encrusts the worn faces of the workers, and everything pathetically emphasizes what seems to be the repulsive ugliness of the local form of human toil.

Yet Mary Lavelle's cottage and yard lay like a pleasant oasis in that darksome tract. Through the ubiquitous smudge her hollyhocks and morning glories smiled like a healthy urchin with an unwashed face. The scarlet geraniums on her window sill glowed in bright relief against their background of snow-white curtains, lighting up like rubies the front of her humble domicile. The red brick cottage, which, since Lawrence Lavelle's death, his widow occupied with her niece Nora, contained only a sitting room, bedroom and kitchen, each of them a model of neatness—although the only approach to decoration was made

in the first-named apartment, where hung the conventional picture of St. Patrick attired in gorgeous robes such as the famed apostle never wore, also one of Robert Emmet in brilliant and betasseled military uniform such as never decked the form of that young patriot, and a large gilt-framed crayon portrait, enlarged from a photograph, of the late Mr. Lavelle, now many years deceased, but with his memory fondly cherished. It was a rather cramped but a very neat and pleasant interior.

Neatest and pleasantest of all was the widow herself, in her crisp print gown and snowy apron, with hair almost as snowy. But she was nowise cramped, like her bijou surroundings. She was the jewel in the casket. Mary Lavelle had a great and generous heart, and she looked it. Her aged cheeks still wore the apple bloom, and her eyes beamed genially through her glittering glasses. In person she diffused a refreshing—one might even say a sacred—atmosphere of kindness, cleanliness and wholesomeness. She was a very lovable old lady.

Mary was a steady worker, too—you could not call her a hard one, for, though the click of her sewing machine usually lasted from morn till

night, she had so mastered the secret of work that she, and not it, was the master. Therefore lightly rested the golden crown of industry on her silvery hair. She was always able to meet her rent, pay her grocery and other bills, and the small fee for Nora's education in the parochial school, and even to add, time after time, to the thousand dollars in the bank, which she had received, after her husband's death, from the Catholic Order of Foresters.

Much of her work was done through pure and practical charity. For instance, when that inconsiderate or inexperienced young matron, the wife of Dan Connolly, presented her husband with their first offspring, a son, there did not happen to be a rag of baby clothing in the house. Widow Lavelle lifted her hands in horror.

"My goodness me, Julia Connolly," she remonstrated, "what in the world were you thinkin' of! Did you expect him to come like a soldier, with a knapsack on his back, holdin' his clothes and all his little belongin's?"

And she went forth and purchased sundry yards of cotton and flannel, and the music of her ever-ready machine ceased not until the pink atom had ample worldly raiment.

Her good works extended in other directions. "Bud" Crawley, although unamenable to the reproof of the assistant pastor, would, when coming home drunk on Saturday night, go a long distance out of his usual way to avoid meeting Mary Lavelle. One Saturday night, however, he did meet her, and—whatever was the nature of her gentle yet forceful appeal nobody ever learned—"Bud" went a far greater distance out of his usual way, and that was to go and take the pledge, and he kept it.

These must suffice as specimens of the character and scope of the apple-cheeked little woman's worthy deeds. Their number is known in heaven. "Large was her bounty and her soul sincere."

Outside her bank account Widow Mary Lavelle was a woman of property, though she smiled sadly when reminded of it—and very few of the neighbors of late had the bad taste to remind her of it. The said "property" had long been regarded as a standing joke, but to refer to it now was considered an uncharitable reflection on the judgment, and therefore a slur on the memory, of the late Lawrence Lavelle. The property consisted of four black, barren, cinder-strewn lots, lying out amid a network of railroad tracks and

unapproachable save at the risk of life and limb. When Larry Lavelle was induced by a prairie lot agent to buy them at prairie lot figures the place was almost a wilderness. But by and by the big factories sprang up, and poor Larry's lots became gradually invested by the iron roads, until it became out of the question of building there. The railroads did not want them, and he knew not of any legal remedy. So there in dark desolation, sprinkled with cinders, swept by the sooty smoke of passing locomotives, the four lots had lain ever since, useless as the Sahara, avoided even by the sparrows, and all but forgotten by Mary Lavelle herself.

"What do you think, but Mrs. Lavelle is going to take a trip to Ireland," was the rumor that passed one day round the neighborhood.

She did not deny it. Yes, indeed, and she was going to take Nora with her, poor little Nora, who was so bright at the schooling. How glad the child would be of the long jaunt to New York, and then to see the great, blue ocean, and then, best of all, beyond it the grand, green hills of Ireland!

For a still, small voice within the old woman's warm heart had grown by degrees pleading,

urging, almost clamorous. It was the call of her native land, the appeal of the shamrock sod. The voice that called to her was of wind and water, of wind murmuring softly among fragrant hawthorn boughs, of water like the lapping of wavelets on the shingly shore of Lough Conn. And daily greater grew the longing to sit once more in the Irish sunshine on the mossy and ferny sward, where the hazel nuts grew on Annaghmore, and to look across the shimmering bosom of the lake to where the lofty dome of Nephin rose in kingly purple, and the lonely ruin of Errew Abbey nestled beside the water.

"We will get there, Nora darlin'," she said in ecstasy, "when the white is on the thorn and the gold is on the whins, and when the blue fairy thimbles are peepin' out under the hedges of the little potato gardens that slope down to the shore. 'Tis over thirty years since I saw the old place, but I can see it this minute as clear as ever."

And she set diligently to work to prepare their outfit for the journey.

A few of the neighbors who had come from Mrs. Lavelle's part of the old country came with sundry messages for her to deliver to their friends or relatives there, and each individual message was

a revelation in human nature and an index of the character of the sender.

"Kindly tell my sister Winny and her husband that we're doin' first rate, Mrs. Lavelle, and that we have full and plenty, and tell all the neighbors the same," requested a woman who was struggling to raise her five children on her husband's wages of $12 a week: with an inherent spirit of pride, dignity, and self-respect she abhorred the shame of being considered poor after having been so long in America.

"That brother of mine is rowlin' in riches since he bought his farm under the Land Act—be sure and tell him, ma'am, that he might do worse with his money than send some of it out here, where it's badly needed," enjoined a woman whose home was paid for and who had money in bank.

"All I'll ask of you, Mrs. Lavelle," said a young man, as he handed her a small gold watch to be taken as a present to his mother, "is to bring me a pebble from the shore of the lake near our house."

"Dear, dear, I'll never be able to remember half all these messages, though I'll do my best to try. Nora alanna, before they make any more

of a postman out of me, I wish we were on the blue water."

But Widow Lavelle's hopes of seeing Ireland were doomed to a black and bitter frost.

It came one day when Nora ran in after school, panting, breathless, excited.

"Oh, auntie, auntie, there's bad news, very bad news," she cried in alarm.

"Calm yourself, darlin'—and what's the matter?"

"They're saying that Frazer's bank is failed."

Then Mary Lavelle's face grew pale for the first time in years, her form drooped, her hands fell listlessly on her lap. The ill news that travels fast was soon confirmed, and its shadow lay chill and depressing in the little cottage interior. Neighbors came trooping in with condolences and suggestions. The widow heard them one and all with patient musing; then the glow leaped again into her cheeks, the light into her eyes, and defiant cheeriness into her manner.

"People dear," she said, "sure it's the will of the good God, that does all for the best, and things were never so bad but they might be worse. Well, farewell, old Ireland, and here's settlin' down

to work in you again, sweet and sooty South Chicago."

But when they went out she bolted the door, sat down, threw her apron over her head, and rocked to and fro before the stove, while Nora looked on silent and sorrowful.

"Nora, acushla," said the widow at last, "in money we have only about five dollars in the world. Hand me the bank-book out of the cupboard till I see what's lost. It must be near $1,600 —an awful lot of money, aroon, to lose in one's old age, but welcome be the will of God."

The child brought out the book and with it a parcel of time-stained documents which the widow recognized with a sigh.

"The deeds of the four lots among the railroad tracks. My sorrow on them for good-for-nothing old lots! I wonder now," she mused, "would they be worth anything at all, at all. Anyway sure there's no harm in tryin'."

With Mary Lavelle action swiftly followed thought. Next day she took the deeds into the big city and submitted them to a leading real estate man, whose office was in a skyscraper near the Board of Trade. She felt rather ashamed in presenting them.

"Sure, 'tis mighty little, if anything, I can expect for them same lots," she said. "To tell you the truth, sir, you'll have a hard time sellin' them for me, for there's no way of gettin' to them except by a balloon. If you can get even $25 apiece for them, take it."

And she took her departure, he assuring her that he would do his best in her interests.

Which Mr. Seebright promptly did, writing as follows to the lawyer who had charge of the real estate business of one of the railroad companies, whose line ran alongside the Lavelle lots:

"DEAR SIR: I am instructed to dispose of four lots, most desirable for railroad purposes, immediately adjoining your company's tracks in South Chicago. Enclosed plot, etc., will show their location, and the special importance and value they could be made to the railroad company.

"Our price for them would be $800 cash."

"That's a pretty good figure to start on in case it should come to a matter of dickering," mused Mr. Seebright. "Of course they'll try, if they want to buy, to beat me down, with a final cheeseparing and splitting of differences. However, if they are worth anything at all to that bloated cor-

poration they must be worth a good deal more than the measly $100 the poor soul is willing to accept for them."

Next day the real estate man had a business visit from the railroad company's lawyer, a suave and courteous gentleman, with a large stock of professional tact and diplomacy.

"Mr. Seebright," said the caller, going straight to the point, "I am sorry to say you are asking too much for those lots. We admit that we would much like to secure them, but you are asking several hundred dollars more than we are prepared to pay."

"Several hundred dollars more!" repeated Seebright. "Why, my dear sir, do you want to get them for nothing?"

"Patience, patience, and consider our offer," urged the lawyer. "We are not in pressing need of the lots, and we are willing to pay you a reasonable price for them. You ask $3,200 for the four; well, we will give you $2,700."

The real estate man momentarily started and stared, but immediately acquired control of himself as a cool, alert, inscrutable business man.

"Well, I will consider your offer," he said in seeming indifference. "By the way, have you got with you my letter on the matter?"

The lawyer had it and passed it over, and on glancing at it Seebright was instantly alive to the situation. His letter had asked for "$800 cash;" in the typewriting the word "cash" was blurred so as to read "each," making the demand appear "$800 each" for Mrs. Lavelle's four black, cinder-strewn, steel-encircled lots.

"So you consider the lots worth only $2,700?" nonchalantly inquired the wily Seebright.

"That is our liberal valuation."

"Well, I am not inclined for dickering, though $500 is a big bite out of a client's price. You may consider the deal closed. The papers shall be ready to-morrow morning."

The company's lawyer departed satisfied, and Mr. Seebright indulged in a wild and lurid war dance, leaped two chairs, vaulted the desk and spilled a bottle of ink on the carpet.

Thrilling was Mary Lavelle's amazement a day or two later, and fervent her chant of praise, when she received into her hands a check for $2,500, the price of her four lots minus the real estate agent's commission.

"God never closes one door but He opens another," she reverently quoted. "Now, Nora darlin', it was just as well that we didn't unpack

our trunk, for we're going to Ireland after all. In little over a week it'll be you and me attendin' Mass in the chapel of Rathduff and sittin' on the warm grass under the blue sky in Annaghmore."

And large was the gathering that saw them off at the station and shouted them Godspeed as the train pulled out from the grimy precincts of South Chicago.

The Rokeby Ghost

MARY T. WAGGAMAN

"SIMPLY perfect, Bess," said Miss Lawrence, sinking down in the depths of a great easy chair after a tour of her friend's country house. "I don't wonder you and Dick seized upon it at once —rats, bats, ghost and all."

"We've driven off the rats and bats," laughed the little hostess, as she poured a welcome cup of tea, "and as for the ghost, we don't talk or think about him."

"Why not?" asked Miss Lawrence, lightly. "An old-fashioned ghost is a delightful addition to an establishment in these prosaic days. I should make every effort to retain the ghost, Bess. It is so patrician."

"Of course some of us believe in such things," said little Mrs. Winters, dropping another lump of sugar in her friend's cup. "Still there are always so many stories about an old house like this. The Rokebys came over with Lord Baltimore, you know, and the family have owned the place ever

since. And it was entailed in the old English fashion, so they couldn't sell. And Jack Rokeby—you know him, Nell."

"Yes," answered Miss Lawrence, briefly, a delicate flush rising to her cheek.

"Well, he has nothing left to speak of, except that old place—with an invalid mother and two sisters on his hands, and he was glad to let us have it at a rent I am almost ashamed to tell. The doctor said Dick ought to live an outdoor life for a year or two after his spell of typhoid. So when we came back from our honeymoon in Florida, Dick brought me down to see the place and I lost my heart at once."

"I don't wonder," said Miss Lawrence, looking up at the old colonial mantel, upheld by carved pillars bearing the Rokeby crest. "It is just the place for lovers to live and dream."

"I suppose it is," was the response, "only Dick and I are not the dreaming sort. To us it seemed just the place for house parties, and hunting parties, and all sorts of jollifications. Twenty rooms at least, my dear, with no one knows how many more walled up."

"Walled up!" exclaimed Miss Lawrence, opening her violet eyes in wide amaze.

"Yes, Jack told us there were one or two rooms sealed up. One is the old Romish chapel. It seems that the Rokebys were an old Catholic family in England. Dated back to the Crusades. All sorts of dreadful things happened to them in the times of persecution; they lost their home and their fortune and several of them their heads for their faith, and finally they came over here with the Calverts, who gave them a grant of this Manor. And they had their own chapel—and—Mass—don't you call it?—and a priest here—even when they had to hide him to save his neck. And so when, about seventy years ago, the son and heir of the house gave up his faith while abroad at a German university, and married a Protestant wife, it created excitement as you may guess."

"Naturally," said Miss Lawrence, warmly; "I am a Catholic myself, you know, Bess, and can understand what apostasy means to such a race of martyrs and saints."

"They say it broke his mother's heart. She is the lady in the Empire gown, whose portrait you saw downstairs. But the old father was of sterner stuff—he tried to disinherit his son, but the entail still held in those days, and he could not prevent Rokeby Manor from falling into his heir's

hands. So he had the chapel, which had been a holy place for so long, walled up that it might not be profaned or dishonored. And where he left his money no one knew. His son concluded it must have been given away in secret charity, for the old gentleman got strange and moody at the last and lived and died here alone with the exception of a few trusty slaves. It is his ghost that is supposed to walk—and really I don't wonder. The Rokeby fortunes are going down in a way to rouse any right-minded ancestor. As Jack told Dick, things have touched bottom rock with him. He is too poor to marry for love, and too proud to marry for money, so he is likely to prove the last of the Rokeby name and line. But goodness gracious! here I am chattering away, forgetting my Nesselrode pudding that Chloe can never manage alone. We dine at seven, Nell. Look your prettiest; Dick has half a dozen fine fellows down for the duck-shooting all ready to fall victims to your charms."

And the pretty little housewife of a year flitted away, leaving her guest to think over the light, careless words with a pain stirring in her heart that those who knew Helen Lawrence best would never have guessed.

But Miss Lawrence was a woman of the world, and women of the world often walk its glittering ways with hearts as veiled and silent as those of the cloister, hearts that break and die and make no sign.

When she floated into the dining-room that night, a radiant vision in filmy white, the violets that followed this reigning belle everywhere blooming on her breast, her snowy throat banded with pearls, the six bold hunters succumbed without a struggle.

All evening she held gay court in the great Manor Hall, where huge hickory logs blazing and crackling in the big chimney place showed the old Crusader's shield of the Rokebys, with its cross and sword and proud motto, *"Dieu et mon droit."*

All evening, as she laughed and jested, the grave, tender eyes of the pictured Rokebys on the wainscoted walls seemed to rest upon her. Despite the love locks and doublets, the eyes seemed to pierce her heart with unforgotten pain.

Not six months ago eyes just like these had looked into hers with a hopeless love the lips had been too proud to speak. For Miss Lawrence was heiress as well as beauty and Jack Rokeby was

bound by strong fetters of duty, the last of his ruined race.

It was with a sigh of relief that she entered her own room that night, glad to drop her glittering mask and be at rest.

"You can go, Margaret," she said to the maid who was awaiting her; "I will not need you to-night."

"Let me stay with you, miss," said the girl. "It's such a strange, lonely place, and the housemaid has been telling me how the rooms over here are haunted. I don't like leaving you alone."

"Nonsense," said the young lady. "I thought you had more sense than to listen to such foolishness, Margaret. There are no such things as ghosts, as you have been taught and ought to know."

"They were saying this was the worst room of all," continued the girl, uneasily.

"Mrs. Rokeby, the old lady, was fairly driven out of it with the moanings and the rappings. And the candles are flaring, as you can see, miss, without a breath blowing on them. The maids were telling me they always flare and flicker in here, and there's a cold draught, like that from an open vault, even on a summer night. It is the

room where the old Squire died, him that put the ban on the place. They say you can hear his cane tap, tapping, just as when he walked in life, miss."

"How perfectly silly!" laughed the young lady. "I am not in the least afraid of the old Squire or his cane, and I prefer to be alone. Put another log on the fire, Margaret, and go to bed."

And as the girl reluctantly obeyed Miss Lawrence locked and bolted her chamber door and flung herself in the great easy chair before the hearth to dream hopeless dreams.

This old house had put a spell upon her she had never felt before. Though scores of princely mansions had been open to her queendom, none had charmed her like this. It seemed to call her, to hold her, to claim her for its own—the old ivy-veiled walls closing around her seemed to take her to the heart of things.

And how she could lift its shadow, how she could brighten and bless it, how sweet it would be to unseal its closed sanctuary, and let the light of faith shine out once more from its hallowed walls!

But this could never be, she felt, with a hopeless pang. Stronger even than the love she had read in its master's earnest eyes was his pride.

"You will come to see me in town next winter?"

she had asked when they had parted last spring at the friend's where they had met at an Easter house party.

"No," he had answered, and she had almost winced at the despairing clasp that had wrung her little hand. "I—I dare not—it would be madness. This is good-by."

Good-by! The wind had sounded like a knell in her ear—the death knell of a sweet, womanly hope. It seemed echoing through his old home to-night in tender, sorrowful plaint. The old home in which she could only poise like a brilliant winged bird, and where she must not rest. "Good-by!" She leaned back in the soft, cushioned chair and let the tears that had gathered in her violet eyes fall freely, tears that she had held back all evening, and that even her faithful Margaret must not see. And as she sat there, abandoned to her grief, a cold breath swept over her that made her start. It was like the touch of an icy hand. The lace ruffles on the toilet table stirred, the candle flickered, flared, and went out. And tap, tap, in the sudden darkness, came the sound of a ghostly cane.

The dreamer sprang to her feet, her blood for the moment chilled. But it was heroic blood. Helen

Lawrence had been trained to wisdom and courage beyond her years.

She held back the cry of alarm that she felt would only add to the shadow on the old house, and to its master's embarrassments. The ruddy light from the leaping fire emboldened her to pause and reason. The sudden draught must come from some opening, a door or window which she had overlooked. She re-lit the candle with steady hand, and holding it high above her head, began her search.

The two windows were closed, the door bolted and locked securely, the oak panelled walls seemingly intact. But the shadow of the high-curtained bed fell heavily in one corner, and as the girl neared it the ghostly draught swept icily upon her, heavy with earthy damp.

Tap, tap, tap, came the chilling sound, and the flaring light of the candle fell upon a figure—the dim, shadowy figure of an old, white-haired man leaning on a cane. In a sudden madness of terror, she flung the silver candlestick she held at the grisly presence. There was a crash, a shock of blinding pain, and all was blank.

* * * * *

"Nell, Nell, oh, Nell darling," little Mrs. Winter's voice was the first sound that reached her guest. "Oh, thank God; she is opening her eyes at last! Do you know me, Nell?"

"Bess, dear, yes; what—what has happened?" Miss Lawrence lifted a hand that seemed strangely heavy to her bandaged brow.

"Oh, don't—don't talk, dear, please. The doctor said you must keep very quiet," said the little lady, hysterically. "You're safe again, quite safe, Nell. Oh, we've all been wild about you for the last six hours. To think of my putting you in that dreadful room. Oh, don't, don't think about it, dear."

"The room!" repeated the sick girl, her eyes widening with remembered horror; "the dreadful room—the draught—the tap—oh, Bess, what—what was it? Are there, indeed, ghosts—that—that cannot rest?"

"Oh, no, dear, no! Don't look like that, Nell, there was no ghost at all, dear; there never has been. It was only the picture of old Martin Rokeby that fell on you, Nell, when you were bravely looking around, I suppose, for the strange sound. It seems that there was a door behind it of which no one knew. A door whose rusty fasten-

ings had given away, and that sometimes blew open a little, swinging to and fro against the picture, making the strange tap, tap, like an old man's cane. The door opened into the old chapel, and, oh, such things as we found hidden there; gold and jewels and family plate—all old Martin Rokeby's vanished wealth. We sent for Jack at once, but the poor fellow has not given a thought to his treasures, he has been so distracted about you. Gave himself dead away before everybody. He is madly in love, as we all can see. Now you must go to sleep—or I'll be simply torn to pieces for talking so much to you, Nell. Your face is flushing up with fever now—do shut your eyes and go to sleep, please."

And though the little hostess' methods would doubtless have been criticised by a scientific nurse, they proved eminently successful. In spite of the talking, Miss Lawrence began to improve with astonishing rapidity from that moment. Within a week she was downstairs, with her soft hair rippling on the bruise on her temple, and the gentle languor of convalescence only adding to her charms.

Mrs. Winter's other guests had discreetly vanished—only the master of Rokeby remained to

watch the red flush deepening on Miss Lawrence's cheek, the starry light brightening in her beautiful eyes. Seated in the carved arm chair before the great log fire in the Manor hall she seemed like some fair spirit sent to redeem the fallen fortunes of the race, for the hidden treasure her courage and daring had revealed brought the Rokebys independence, if not affluence, once more.

"It was a strange freak of my great-grandfather," said the young heir of the house this evening as he sat at her side. "We always understood that the old gentleman grew very eccentric at the close of his life. The break with his son preyed upon his mind. After his death my grandfather never cared for the place; he spent most of his life abroad, and the grounds were worked by tenant farmers. The house has been little but a burden for years—a burden we could ill afford."

"But now surely the old rooftree calls to you?" Miss Lawrence said gently. "Surely you will come back?"

"That is for you to say," was the eager, impassioned answer. "Helen, beloved, I dare speak at last. Your touch has unsealed my lips. My home, my life, my heart are yours. Will you kindle the

fireside flame, the altar light, or leave them dark and desolate forever?"

And in the starry beam of the beautiful eyes uplifted to his he read his answer.

* * * * *

So it happened that there was a Christmas wedding in the old Rokeby chapel, for the fair bride thus willed. The sturdy walls had withstood the years bravely; mould and dust were soon cleared away—altar and sanctuary revealed again in all their beauty.

The portrait of old Martin Rokeby, lifted again to a place of honor on the walls, seemed to smile in pale triumph, as, amid lights and flowers and bursts of glad music, the solemn voice of the old Mother arose once more within the hallowed walls, blessing the children and the children's children of the young pair whose love had unsealed the closed sanctuary and banished the Rokeby ghost forever.

When the Dumb Speak

MARION AMES TAGGART

TEN years ago the railroad had not come from Yarmouth to the Acadian settlement thirty miles below, down the coast toward Cape Sable. It was reached by stage coach along a road revealing glimpses of the ocean as it makes up into Argyle Bay, studded by any number of pretty little pine-clad islands. Two years after the English had scattered the Acadians from Grand Prè, Pomcoup was served in like manner. But the people found their way back to the sterile coast which had been home, or a handful of them did, and began anew to clear lands and found another Pomcoup over on the west side of their little bay, across from the original settlement, then occupied by the English. From this handful of loyal exiles has descended the entire population of the fishing hamlet which they founded, still living much the same sort of simple, communal life as that described by Longfellow in "Evangeline."

All down the long road to the point stand little frame-houses, similar in their shining neatness

of kalsomined uniformity. The only pretentious building in the place is the church, overlooking its flock on a slight eminence, flanked by great pines that screen the burying-ground from the fury of the winter winds.

Monimé Le Blanc stood looking out of the door of her particular frame-house. She was a pretty girl, after the Pomcoup style, low-browed, brown-eyed, perfect oval of contour, with a straight, delicately cut nose, full, soft lips, and a skin faultless in the tinting given it by the thick fogs that constantly roll in from below the point, shrouding the seven mile peninsula in an impenetrable veil of stinging moisture.

Monimé's penciled brows were drawn into a decided frown, and her expression was anything but cheerful. Behind her crept up another girl, almost as pretty as she, but with a singularly childlike expression of bright alertness about her eyes, and an eagerness that suggested pathos. She laid her hands on Monimé's shoulder, peering anxiously over them as she did so, and Monimé started with a violence betraying how complete had been her abstraction.

"Oh, Déidamie!" she exclaimed, petulantly.

With a swift motion of her hands the second

girl said in pantomime that her foster-sister was as deaf as she, not to have heard her coming. Monimé understood, having been Déidame's comrade from the cradle, and laughed a little. She pointed to the bay, and Déidame nodded, without looking in the direction which she indicated; she had seen already, and would have known without seeing, that at that hour, in that wind on Saturday, the fishing fleet was coming in.

Monimé unclasped the lintel of the door, and signified to Déidame that she had no interest in its coming, but she scanned the schooners as she fluttered her fingers, and with such an eager look that the deaf-mute pointed at her mockingly. Monimé tossed her head, and switched her brown skirt into the house, but instantly ran back to kiss Déidame, lest the girl might mistake the scorn as intended for herself. She kissed her so impetuously that she did not see the expression on the face which she snatched close to her own, the blank look of pain that followed the girl's look of expectancy, as the schooners came up the bay.

Twenty sail there was making up this little fleet; every Monday morning it went out to fish for cod, every Saturday came in again to land its haul, and to hear Mass, for the Acadian is as

strictly sabbatarian as is the best of the Puritans. It took away with it all the men of the place, except the lighthouse-keeper, the two shopkeepers, the graybeards, and a few others who stayed behind, following one of the rare land avocations. From sixteen to sixty all the husbands, brothers, and sweethearts of Pomcoup went away to catch the fish which wives, sisters, and sweethearts cured on the beach in the sun, under the brief warmth of their northern summer. Monimé had neither father nor brother coming home to her on that fleet which was getting itself gilded by the setting sun until it looked like the golden argosy. There was, then, but one other possible relation for the young girl to expect—but her face was dangerously forbidding for a lover's hopes.

Venerante Amirault, her foster-mother, had come, with Déidamie, to preside over solitary Monimé's household; they were cousins, as was everybody in that community of descendants of the intrepid band of returned exiles. Osée d'Entremont was coming in on the schooner that led the fleet. He was considered the handsomest, the most daring, as he was one of the best young fellows in Pomcoup, and his daily record of fish

was always one of the heaviest. Monimé Le Blanc was considered fortunate to have been his choice, but she had been his choice from such an early childhood-day that it was taken as a matter of course, and the wedding was to be that autumn when the fleet was in for the winter. This one winter ambitious Osée would not go off to St. Pierre, as was his custom, to gain a little extra wealth, but would stay at home to begin his life with Monimé, and to enjoy the fruits of his past industry. His little house was built and ready, nearer the church than Monimé's home, in which Venerante would stay on with Déidamie after its girl owner had gone to her husband's.

Something was wrong between the lovers. Déidamie knew it already, but Venerante discovered it when Osée did not hasten to them for supper, as he always did on landing, and when, after supper, he joined the group of men around the tiny shop without a glance in the direction of the house.

Sunday morning came, and the priest, whose parish covered sixty miles, was to say Mass in the Pomcoup church—on alternate Sundays he crossed over the bay to the little church which stood lonely among the English houses on the

east shore, and his flock from the west side followed him in boats. To-day the case was reversed. As Monimé and Déidamie walked behind Venerante down the road to Mass, the bay was dotted with sail boats coming in procession to bring the faithful from across the bay to Mass. The sails were painted; dull Venetian reds and strong blues rose up against the clear sky and the dark background of pines, with a picturesque effect of which the accustomed eyes regarding their coming were unobservant. Monimé saw nothing, not even the sunshine; she was intent only on keeping others from seeing the angry pain that was consuming her. It never would have occurred to her that in the breast of the girl at her side there was a sharper pain than in her own. Déidamie had loved Osée with a love that was as strong as her devoted heart for as long as she had been capable of feeling. It had never crossed her mind that he could think of her with other thought than he gave to Monimé's afflicted foster-sister; it was part of her life of denial, and there was no blemish in her entire loyalty to Monimé and Osée's mutual love, no shadow of suspicion that she could have a claim on anything but the kind-

ness that had never failed her in either of these two whom she loved best on earth.

The Pomcoup men were gathered in front of the church as Venerante, her soft black silken mouchoir tied over her head, and the two girls in their white Sunday best, came up the walk. The bell of warning that the priest had entered the sacristy for robing fell on the ears of the bronzed fishermen discussing the hauls of their various boats, and enjoying the sunshine and the feeling of solid earth beneath their feet. Instantly the group broke up, and the men, hats in hand, filed into the building their hands had raised, no laggards to disturb the piety of the women; each was in his place, as the priest raised his hand for the first "*In nomine Patris.*"

The girls in the choir chanted the Mass. Their voices were singularly light and childish. At the Offertory they sang their best-beloved hymn, which a priest who had wandered that way from France had taught them; appropriate it was to the community which went down, or sent its best-beloved down, to the sea.

Monimé did not hear the hymn. It is doubtful if she heard or followed with more than perfunctory attention the Mass itself. But she would

not glance toward where Osée was sitting; if the quarrel was to be made up, he must come all the way to do it; she, foolish child, would not go to meet him!

Osée went away the following morning, but not with the fleet. He went away by coach to Yarmouth, and Monimé heard, through one of the neighbors, that he had gone to ship for foreign ports.

All Monimé's pride could not keep her from growing pale as the summer wore away; pale and thin she grew, but no one dared to ask her what had gone wrong between her and Osée. When Déidamie's sweet face also grew white and her step slow, the neighbors said that it was new proof of her dear love for the foster-sister, whose griefs and joys she shared. If Venerante understood the heart her daughter's sealed lips could not reveal, she made no sign. It was a sadly altered household that waited for the next turn of fate's wheel, and waited for Osée's return.

He came at Christmas, older by almost as many years as he had been months away.

The Children of Mary were to watch beside the crib after the midnight Mass. They assembled in the house nearest to the church in

the cold December night, heavy wraps concealing their slender figures, but all chatting blithely as they came down the road; all but two, Monimé, the heavy-hearted, and Déidamie, who was voiceless. It was impossible to tell which girl was hidden under the white veil that all wore alike. Osée, coming down the road, quickened his steps, passing down the line of veiled maidens, trusting that Monimé would know that it was she whom he sought, and that her pride would let her give him one little sign on his return after so long an absence. Lizette smiled to him; Elise spoke his name, Reine said swiftly that she was glad he had come back, but Monimé walked undistinguished among her friends, and did not deign him recognition.

Osée entered the church with little Christmas joy in his heart. The scent of the pine, the lights on the altar cheered him. This was home, this the dear familiar church where Monimé was to be made his wife—and this was Christmas-tide! There could not be a doubt that Monimé would sob her joy and loneliness out upon his shoulder in the morning! He left the church at peace, and full of hope. On the steps he ran into the one

out-and-out scapegrace in the little community—Adrien Le Blanc.

"In time to dance at my wedding, Osée!" he cried, gripping the wanderer's hand. "We shall welcome you most of all who come to-morrow, when Monimé and I are married!"

"It is a lie!" gasped Osée staggering back as if the blow that he had received had been a physical one.

"Is it? Did Monimé smile at you when you passed the Children of Mary going to the church to-night? She was afraid that it would anger me if she noticed you—as though I did not know how much she cared for you now, and as though I would not trust Monimé!"

Adrien smiled into Osée's face as he spoke, and his words fell on a mind ready to listen. Osée forgot that Adrien owed him an old grudge, a matter so trivial that to a larger nature it would have been impossible to have remembered it. All the old distrust and anger at Monimé's treatment of him flamed into life as Osée listened.

"Take her, then, and the more fool you if you look for constancy in her," he muttered, and flung himself down the church steps and away in the darkness.

A little figure in white, with a long veil floating out on the cold wind, followed him like a wraith. It was Déidamie, who had left her comrades around the crib, with a presentiment of evil which was part of the afflicted girl's gift of clairvoyance, and had loitered in the shadow while Adrien had talked to Osée. Although she could not hear she had understood enough of what passed to know that Adrien had made mischief. She also knew enough of Osée's impetuous temper to realize that mischief made now, after all that had been, would be irreparable. She knew that a three-master from Miquelon lay in the harbor, ready to sail at dawn, and she guessed that Osée was going to her.

The young man strode down to the beach so swiftly that the deaf and dumb girl had to run to keep him in sight. She tripped on the roots and rocks in her path, for the night was very dark. The wind whipped her garments, and tore her veil from her brown hair, but she did not pause, did not realize that she was shivering. Osée so far outstripped her that when she reached the beach he had laid the oars in a fisherman's boat drawn up from the surf, and was shoving it down over the rocky sand with a speed

of which he would not have been capable in another mood.

Déidamie came up and laid her hand on Osée's shoulder. The young man started, and looked at her a moment with a passing thought that he was seeing a vision. Then, as she smiled at him, he knew his silent little playmate of early years, and smiled back at her, with a passing softening of his heart toward Déidamie. The deaf and dumb girl seated herself on the dory rail, and, pointing out to the black waters beyond, shook her head. Osée's face clouded, and he nodded with emphasis, at the same time taking Déidamie by the arm to raise her.

Déidamie linked her forefingers—her sign for Monimé. Osée turned away his head, setting his teeth with such a look of bitter wrath that Déidamie sprang to her feet, and held him fast by the lapels of his coat, forcing him to look at her. Something in her eyes held him, and with rapid passes of her flexible hands Déidamie touched the finger that wears the marriage ring, earnestly denying that her foster-sister was to marry Adrien, or that she had a thought for any one but her lifelong lover.

Osée hesitated. "How do you know, little Dé-

idamie?" he asked aloud, at the same time forming the words in the sign language in which he had become adept in childhood by much practise with the deaf and dumb child. Déidamie flushed in the darkness. Osée could not see her blush, but he could see the luminous eyes revealing themselves to him, letting him read the girl's soul under the stars. All the pent-up love of her innocent life shone out at him through Déidamie's eyes as he looked into them. He saw that he could trust her to tell him the truth about another woman, because she herself loved him.

He dropped on the side of the dory where Déidamie had sat, and covered his face with his hands. Déidamie stood motionless, conscious of her revelation, twisting her hands and trembling as she waited. Osée made no sign, and going up to him she touched him as lightly as the touch of a fern along the roadside, timorously shrinking, as if she feared his displeasure.

He looked up miserably, but seeing the fear, the pain in the little white face beside him, a great rush of tender pity for the girl overwhelmed him, and something almost maternal was born in him for her. He forgot himself in a desire to comfort her, as if her sorrow had no connec-

tion with his indifference to her. But Déidamie was not thinking of herself; it was not to win his pity, much less his love, that she had let her love shine out through her eloquent eyes, but to win his trust that he might believe her when she told him that Monimé loved, and was waiting for him. She took his hand to lead him up to the path from the beach, at the same time making her symbol of Monimé with her cold little linked fingers.

Osée hesitated, but only for an instant. With her face uplifted and shining, Déidamie drew him gently away, and he yielded to her touch, following at last willingly. The deaf and dumb girl took him by the steepest but nearest path to her home, to Monimé's home, which she and her mother Venerante shared.

Venerante and Monimé had entered the house but a few moments before; Monimé had been one of the band which had been appointed the first hour of guard at the crib. The girl had laid off her heavy wraps, and sat crouching by the fire which Venerante stirred. She was cold, but the chill at her heart was colder. She had looked for Osée to wait for her and to come home with her, and make right their differences under the

Christmas stars in a reconciliation which should be a new betrothal. And he had not waited.

Monimé heard Déidamie's step—and then she heard another! She sprang to her feet, and stood trembling as her foster-sister entered, with Osée following. Déidamie went up to her and put her arms around her, resting her head for a moment on Monimé's shoulder as she looked into her face. Then she reached out for Osée's hand and put Monimé's into it. She kissed her foster-sister, long and clingingly, then turned and drew her mother Venerante out of the room.

There was no need of words between Osée and Monimé. Explanations would come later, but for the nonce it was enough that they were together.

Déidamie crept up to her little room under the eaves, and lay down on her narrow bed, shivering with the cold of her long exposure. Tears were streaming down her cheeks while yet her lips were smiling. For in her heart was peace that she, who loved Osée, had given him to Monime once more.

"What God Hath Joined"

ANNA T. SADLIER

'Twas an ill moment for Elizabet Cornelson when her mother, who was the widow of the esteemed burgher, Joris Cornelson, contracted a second marriage with Hans Arent. Arent was an ill-conditioned and quarrelsome person, being frequently complained of by the Schout* for various insolent practises, to the scandal, offense, and reproach of the neighborhood. He had scarce a stiver when by the nuptials with my sister, Vrow Cornelsen, he came into proprietorship, for the time being, of the house with its new brick front and the garden thereunto attached, situated upon the East River just southward of the Wolfert's Valley.

Elizabet was betrothed in her eighteenth year to Pierre de Brugere, a virtuous and comely youth, of excellent character, to whom we were all most

*An officer of the law, charged to maintain order in the city of Manhattan under the Dutch administration.

warmly attached. A date was set for the wedding, but the sudden death of my sister put an untoward stop to that celebration, and caused it to be deferred. Because of my attachment to my niece, and sorely against my will, did I remain a member of that household in which Hans Arent was master. He had been likewise left sole trustee of the estate, and guardian of Elizabet, and it soon became evident that he would fain rid himself of my presence, and that he looked with extreme disfavor upon de Brugere and his suit. He desired, in truth to bring about a union with a kinsman of his own, a loutish fellow named Jan Janssen. Which designs of the stepfather were the cause of those vexatious happenings hereafter to be set forth.

Elizabet was debarred from holding any communication whatever with her lover, and upon refusing to receive Jan Janssen, or in any fashion to countenance his suit, was addressed by Hans Arent in language insulting and abusive, and subjected to much ill-usage, being deprived of food and immured in her chamber, whence she was rarely suffered to come forth. These things being brought to the notice of Pierre, mightily moved his indignation, and in secret conference with me he

disclosed a plan whereby he might be married privily to Elizabet and escape with her out of the jurisdiction of New Amsterdam. The notion terrified me, since Hans Arent was a violent man, capable, if angered, of proceeding to any extremity. Pierre's arguments were, nevertheless, most forcible, coupled with the unhappiness of my cherished Elizabet and the fear that she might be forced into a marriage with Jan Janssen. Therefore was I moved to consent to the scheme, and to promise whatsoever assistance lay in my power. So complete was my confidence in the young Frenchman that I left in his hands the various details of this hazardous enterprise. I knew only that I was to accompany my niece, and that the date was set for the twentieth of November.

Never shall I forget that date. The night was moonless and dark. Hans Arent retired, as was his wont, at an early hour, and we had but to wait until we heard him most audibly snoring in such manner as well nigh to shake the edifice. Elizabet clung to my arm timorously, as together we stole downstairs, carrying but a small quantity of necessary clothing. We stepped forth into the roadway and looked with caution about us, glancing hastily backwards at the house, which lay

shrouded in the dusk, giving no token whatsoever of life. The river lay dark and very silent, save for the water lapping against the shore. The same stillness was upon the land, disturbed merely by the distant barking of dogs. Those canine voices gave us a moment's uneasiness, lest they should waken the tyrant who slumbered behind the closed shutters. As we stood, Pierre's familiar accents sounded in our ears. With infinite rejoicing we turned to find him beside us, and made what haste was possible in the darkness, to follow him unto a destination as yet unknown. We had much ado to keep our footing, since only the lanthorns upon the poles of dwellings guided us through the murky gloom of the night. The city gates had long been shut, and the watch had passed upon its rounds.

I confess that it was with trepidation that I discovered our destination to be the house of the Spaniard. Almost from childhood, I, in common with many others of the population of the burgh, had regarded that mysterious man and his abode with awe, though no doubt it was by reason of his foreign speech and difference of religion, which kept him in a singular isolation. His dwelling was of goodly proportions, its gable end abut-

ting upon the great Highway, where it joined with the Beaver graft. It was the Spaniard himself who opened the door, admitting us into a hallway, square and of vast dimensions. He did not speak, but greeted us with a courteous obeisance, and led us forthwith into an apartment which I perceived to be an oratory or chapel, because of the lamp burning before a temporary altar. The sight of this lamp gave us courage. I felt my own spirits rise while I noted the color which dyed Elizabet's pale cheeks and the light that came into her eyes. After the example of the Spaniard, we three knelt, and while we were yet upon our knees a door opposite to that by which we had entered opened, and a man of venerable age appeared upon the threshold. He was tall and emaciated in figure, with silvery locks flowing over his shoulders. He wore an ecclesiastical garb, a cassock of black, with snow-white surplice, to which he presently superadded a silken stole. His aspect was awe-inspiring, and, moreover, we of the Catholic religion practiced it with much secrecy, but rarely seeing priests, since the laws of the colony were at that time stringent against the exercise of their ministry. The cleric knelt likewise an instant, then turning disclosed to us the benignity and

saintliness of his countenance, while he signed for the young couple to approach. He discoursed to them momentarily of the importance of that step they were about to take and the indissoluble character of the marriage bond. He had previously been informed of such particulars of the case as it behooved him to know, so that no time was wasted in making clear the situation. They were a goodly pair, as they stood side by side before the clergyman—Elizabet in gown of mulberry colored lutestring, with scarf of a similar color upon her shoulders, and the hood falling back to reveal her charming countenance, whereof the beauty was but heightened by the startled and timorous expression and the vermilion flush upon her cheeks. Pierre, tall and erect, with much courage and resolution displayed in his bearing, his handsome face aglow, his black eyes shining. Never shall I forget that marriage, which I was presently called upon to witness, appending my name with that of the Spaniard to the certificate. After which we went forth again, my sweet girl and myself haunted by the fear of impending misfortunes.

* * * * *

Pierre, who had been ever an adventurous youth, had acquaintance with the masters of ves-

sels plying between our seaport and foreign parts. As it was our wish to remove ourselves as far as possible from the reach of Hans Arent and from the jurisdiction of New Amsterdam, Pierre had made interest with Captain Bolton of *The Miranda* to receive us immediately after the marriage ceremony on board his sloop, outward bound for Boston harbor. Once in the colonies of New England, we should be safe, for the nonce, until the affair had blown over or Hans Arent had been brought to reason.

It was a fearsome thing for a young bride so timid and retiring as was Elizabet to be placed in circumstances so untoward, and to discover herself on board of a frail vessel in the darkness of a November night. The presence of Pierre and of myself gave her courage, though I was all of a tremble, fearing at every instant to hear the voice of Hans Arent in pursuit. The smell of the salt sea sickened me with apprehension; the damp and clammy atmosphere of the vessel brought to mind our present perils and future uncertainties. As I looked up at the sky, the murky blackness of which was now bedecked with stars, I could only pray God to have me in His keeping and to bring good out of this evil, which had been brought

about by the wicked contrivances of Hans Arent. These practices had compelled my beautiful and innocent Elizabet, her handsome young bridegroom, and myself, to comport ourselves as criminals, and to fly from our native city. The master of the vessel had intended to make sail and to clear Sandy Hook before the dawning, but the wind, which had been blowing fitfully, fell, of a sudden to a deep calm and brought *The Miranda* to anchor a short distance from the shore.

The hours which followed were most harrowing. We awaited in vain the faintest symptom of a freshening breeze to speed us upon our course. Pierre kept up our courage as best he might, with merry jests upon Hans Arent and his doings, but the skipper showed upon his bronzed and sea-worn visage a keen anxiety. For well he knew that he had braved the terror of the law in abetting our undertaking. In the event of pursuit he would be compelled to show his license for the carrying of passengers, with a full description of the latter, and their purpose and intent in leaving the port of Manhattan.

It was near the dawning when our fears were realized to the utmost. A small boat set out from shore, in appearance one of the oyster craft which

plied a trade in those bivalves about the waters of the Bay. It soon became evident that it was bearing toward us, that in its stern sat Hans Arent, while the other persons visible we apprehended rightfully to be the officers of the law. I wrung my hands and wept. Elizabet turned pale in truth, but displayed no other token of affright. She held the arm of her husband, who still strove to reassure her, while the captain stroked his grizzled beard, walking to and fro, half in anger, half in perturbation.

There was naught to be done. The vessel afforded no hiding-place, nor would that have screened us for more than a few moments from an officer with a search-warrant. Hans Arent was accompanied by the Schout in person, and another myrmidon of justice, and their mission was to arrest Pierre de Brugere on a charge of abduction and to restore Elizabet to the custody of her guardian. The latter vouchsafed me no word, casting a glance of furious anger toward me. Nor would he permit me to enter the boat, so that I was compelled to depend upon the good offices of Captain Bolton for transport to the land.

As the sailors plied their oars in the wake of that other boat which had borne hence Elizabet

and Pierre, the scene was a beauteous one, as I have many times since recalled, though in that chill dawning it conveyed naught to my mind but misery. The morning brightened over the river, The Breuklyn shore lay still and serene, and afar Staaten Island glowed green as a jewel upon the face of the waters. Lest my tale be tedious, I will not attempt to set forth the anguish of mind which then and during the following days I endured. Nor could I obtain other tidings of the newly wed, save that Pierre was lodged in jail and Elizabet was in the custody of Hans Arent.

* * * * *

It was Hans Arent's purpose and intention to procure the banishment of Pierre from the colony for such term of years as would permit the accomplishment of his nefarious projects. Hence was the lad brought before the burgomasters and officers of New Amsterdam on a most grievous charge. Even the circumstance of his marriage with my presence and connivance could not be given with such veracious details as would guarantee its authenticity, since it was manifestly illegal for a priest of the Catholic religion to perform the marriage ceremony, stringent laws

against such ministry being then in force. The Spaniard would be likewise amenable to justice were it known that a foreign ecclesiastic had performed any functions in his dwelling, and I for assisting thereat.

The courtroom was crowded, since the case was of interest to many persons. It went to my heart to see the gallant and comely Pierre manacled and brought into the courtroom with as scant ceremony as though he had been some foul criminal. His bearing was high and courageous, his countenance open and ingenuous, and his demeanor such as to attract the sympathy of all right-minded persons. When the Schout had laid formal complaint Pierre, being closely questioned, declared that he was married to Elizabet Cornelsen, to whom he had been previously betrothed, as was publicly known. But he resolutely refused to give information as to where and by whom the marriage ceremony had been performed. In this resolve he remained unshaken, in the face of the most urgent threats and persuasions. Hans Arent grew purple with passion at hearing of the nuptials, for he had been of opinion that the pair had counted upon their being married in the New England Colonies, and seeing his advantage he

pressed upon Pierre to produce the proofs and likewise caused Elizabet to be summoned to the court. He relied upon the weakness of her sex and her timidity to declare that which Pierre had concealed, or to contradict his testimony.

Elizabet, pale and timorous at the untoward situation in which she found herself, displayed, nathless, a fine courage in refusing to answer those questions which might incriminate others. The Schout thereupon perceiving that nothing was to be learned, demanded that Pierre be banished from the colony for a term of twenty years, and fined one hundred guilders. The burgomasters, despite their sympathy with the young couple and their dislike of Hans Arent, were compelled to pass sentence as recommended. Elizabet cast one glance at the corner where I sat, heavy-hearted and downcast. Then her wide, startled eyes fixed themselves upon the countenance of Pierre, who was attending to his sentence. She remained thus, motionless until the order went forth to remove Pierre from the dock. As if awaking from a trance, she uttered a heart-piercing cry, and forgetful of all else flew with a swift movement across the intervening space and threw herself sobbing upon the prisoner's breast. As

Pierre strove pitifully to sustain her with his manacled arms, there were but few dry eyes in the court, and especially in that portion of it where sat the womenfolk.

Most of those present had known the girl from her infancy, and had likewise been acquainted with Pierre. Many were the kinsfolk and friends of the Cornelsen family or of my own. Hence they were filled with the greatest indignation and grief, and as the constable would have forcibly restrained Elizabet in order that Pierre might be removed, they gave audible vent to their feelings. In truth it was a harrowing instant, at which occurred an unexpected interruption.

A remarkable figure was suddenly seen advancing upwards through the crowd. Tall and emaciated, garbed in cassock and stole, the apparition cast an awe over the assemblage, and many muttered to themselves that it was a phantom. It was an old man with silver hair flowing over his shoulders and a countenance of singular benignity. My heart beat fast at the sight, for well I knew that it was the selfsame cleric who had officiated at the Spaniard's house. Having taken his stand beside Pierre, to whom Elizabet

still clung and whom the constable was waiting to remove, he spoke to the magistrates as follows:

"Your honors, I appeal from your decision, as being based upon an error, and I protest against its enforcement."

There was a pause. Amazement and a kind of consternation seized upon the court, since here was a priest of the Romish faith venturing into the presence of the magistrates and questioning the decision of this worshipful assembly. The chief, frowning, for there was blind prejudice against all who professed the Catholic faith, and its ministers, asked him by what right he dared to appear there.

"By the right of my sacred calling," the cleric answered, "to speak a word in favor of those accused."

"No word will we hear from you," cried the magistrate, excitedly, and he called upon the officer to lead Pierre forthwith from the court. The man, who was a rough character and a creature of Hans Arent, as was afterwards ascertained, made a hasty forward movement to obey the order. But the priest, motioning him backwards, stepped between, and raising his hands above the couple, as though he were invoking the divine protection in

their behalf, exclaimed in a low but penetrating voice which sent a thrill through every heart:

"What God hath joined let no man put asunder."

The chief burgomaster, having recovered from the amazement into which he had been thrown, demanded to know in what manner the couple had been joined together, and by whose ministration.

"By mine!" replied the cleric, calmly.

"Know you not," cried the magistrate, "that the statute forbids the performance of such functions by strangers?"

"I hold my commission from a higher source than any statute whatsoever," answered the priest; "those whom I have joined in wedlock are children of my faith, and I and no other should perform such ceremony. If, however, your honors adjudge that there are penalties for the act, I and no other should suffer those consequences."

And proceeding, he made a most moving appeal in behalf of Pierre, who was arraigned before the court, and of Elizabet, who had been so long the youth's affianced wife with the knowledge and consent of her late mother and other kinsfolk. His words were eloquent and of a heaven-inspired wisdom, so that even the most

prejudiced were convinced, and then it was demanded, at the instance of the Schout, that witnesses to the marriage ceremony be produced. I arose from my corner, and with limbs that trembled and a tongue that stammered, declared myself a witness to the act, and as the court still hesitated, deeming my sole testimony insufficient, there was a new murmur of surprise. For the Spaniard, arising, likewise offered his testimony. He was a man of wealth and of respectability in the town, and his evidence could not be readily gainsaid. He it was, moreover, who paid the fine of one hundred guilders imposed upon the priest for having illegally married a couple, as well as his own fine for having permitted such function in his dwelling, and other expenses incident to the case. The sentence of banishment which had been erstwhile passed upon Pierre was commuted and he joyfully paid his fine, and likewise that penalty which had been incurred by Elizabet and myself.

Meantime Hans Arent had raged and stormed in the court like a madman, till the magistrates had ordered him to be silent. He had grown so purple in the visage with fury that I feared to see him fall in an apoplexy upon the ground. We were presently rid of him, however, for hearing

that a close inquiry should be made as to his guardianship of Elizabet's fortune, a portion of which he had unlawfully converted to his own use. he fled the country in company with Jan Janssen, taking passage, as we afterwards learned, upon a vessel bound for old England. Nor is it likely he will ever return hence again.

So it has chanced that though the season be wintry a second spring has come to the dwelling near the Wolfert's Valley. Sitting upon the settle hard by the fire blazing upon the hearth, I hear the voices of Pierre and Elizabet, as they walk to and fro without, singing that olden song of love, which the aged hear as an echo and which to the young is perpetual gladness. While the flame leaps and dances upwards, methinks I hear the voice of the venerable missionary, exclaiming:

"What God hath joined, let no man put asunder."

Helena's Jewels

BY MARY E. MANNIX

THE drooping branches of the giant pepper trees, laden with their rich red berries, for it was the fall of the year, were casting their shadows on the bare ground beneath them, worn brown and hard by the scraping of many feet. For it was here that the young men and maidens danced in the cool of the evening, and here that old Pedro Nuñez, the richest man in the little pueblo of Santa Marta, sat all day long, smoking the big cheroots which he bought by the thousand in the City of Mexico, once a year.

For a generation he had kept the curio shop which had been a source of income from the pockets of the tourists who came daily to visit the little frontier town. But now he had retired, his nephew had succeeded him, and it was the wish of old Pedro that the young man should marry well. And to marry well in the mind of Pedro Nuñez the elder, meant to marry houses and lands, without any great thought to any other qualifications, or the lack of them,

which might distinguish the fortunate possessor of the aforesaid riches.

He had long been contemplating a certain match for his nephew, and now some twinges of hereditary gout in his limbs, ascending higher and higher, warned him that the hand of the grisly skeleton, death, might at any time be stretched forth to seize his own in an eternal grasp.

Pedro Nuñez loved the boy as well as it was possible for him to love any one, but his heart was in his purse.

The gate clicked on its hinges.

"Is it thou, Pedrocito?" he called out, in a thin, cracked voice.

"Yes, uncle," was the reply, as a tall, handsome young fellow, with dark, olive skin and flashing black eyes, came forward smilingly.

"Is the store closed?"

"Yes, uncle."

"Good sales to-day?"

"Very good. There was a great crowd. I have sold all but four of the Navajo blankets."

"That is well, and so early in the season! Sit thee down, my boy. I have been thinking."

Pedro sat down as commanded.

"I wish thee to marry, my boy—and soon."

"Yes, uncle," replied the young man, lighting a cigarette. "I, too, have been thinking of it."

The old man glanced sharply at his nephew. Could it be possible that he had placed his affections on some one? But no, he had neither heard nor seen anything in his conduct that would indicate a preference. After a couple of puffs at his cheroot he continued.

"I have chosen a wife for thee, my boy."

"Chosen a wife for me!" exclaimed the youth, unable to conceal his surprise at this proceeding on the part of his uncle, who, though in some respects arbitrary, had never been a tyrant. To young Pedro this last move on the part of the old man was both strange and tyrannical.

"Yes," answered his uncle shortly, not well pleased with his nephew's tone. "She who will be thy wife very soon—I hope—is Maria Ascencion Velasquez."

Now if there was a girl in the pueblo whom young Pedro disliked, it was that same Maria. Neither beautiful, amiable, nor industrious, she queened it over the others by reason of the position of her father, the alcalde, and also

because, after old Pedro Nuñez, he was the richest man in Santa Marta.

"Hast thou spoken to her, uncle?" inquired Pedrocito, sarcastically. The tone was not lost on the old man.

"*I* spoken to her?" answered he. "That is for thee to do, my boy."

"And that I shall *never* do," was the reply. "I do not like her—no one likes her. It is only for the riches of her father that she will ever be married. Not for all the wealth of the City of Mexico would I be tied to such a one as Maria Velasquez."

Then before his astonished uncle could reply, he cleared his throat, and in a voice which endeavored to be firm, but which trembled unmistakably, he added, "Besides, I have already chosen."

"Thou hast already chosen!" cried the old man, his shaking hands closing above his polished black staff. "And whom, pray?"

"The little schoolmistress."

"The little schoolmistress," repeated old Pedro, his thin, high voice palpitating with rage. "That daughter of a—of a—"

"Of a very good man, uncle, as thou well

knowest. More than once he was a friend to thee and thine."

"That white-faced, slender, puny, poverty-stricken—"

"Have a care, have a care, uncle," again interrupted Pedro the younger, rising to his feet. "Thou art old, and I owe thee gratitude, but I can not bear too much from thee. White-faced she is indeed, and I marvel greatly that she could see aught to favor in my brown skin. Slender is she, as thou sayest, but that I much prefer to the awkward stoutness of—"

"Now, now, no more," shouted the old man, also on his feet. "What dowry will she bring thee?"

"Jewels," answered the young man, with great promptness.

"Jewels! Where hath she even the gold to buy them? She hath deluded thee."

"They are of a quality which can not be bought," said Pedro, his eyes and lips smiling. "They were given her."

"When, and by whom?"

"At her birth, by a fairy godmother."

"Thou dost rave, boy."

"Nevertheless it is true, uncle."

"Boy, thou art a fool! I will disown thee."

"Very well, uncle. I am sorry, but if it must be—"

"And disinherit thee."

"So be it. I am young and strong. I can work. I have still the ranch my father left me."

Leaning heavily upon his stick, grumbling as he went, the old man disappeared within doors. Not a word was spoken between uncle or nephew during the evening meal. And the breach widened daily.

* * * * *

But the bark of Pedro Nuñez was worse than his bite. No more was said of disinheritance, though the old man had changed toward his nephew. He simply endured what he could not prevent, and a few days before the marriage announced that he was going to live with his niece, Dolores Tata, the daughter of his late wife's sister, as the house had really belonged to the father of young Pedro. This project he at once carried into effect, much to the satisfaction of Dolores, who hoped entirely to supplant the young man in the affections of his uncle.

Her attentions were so assiduous as almost to become wearisome. She hovered constantly

about him, while his desire was to be let alone. She was continually inventing new dishes for his delectation, while he preferred those, few and simple, to which he had been accustomed. At length this assiduity and unwonted vigilance in this regard awakened his suspicions of her motives. He began to sigh so heavily by day, and to groan in his sleep so persistently by night, that Dolores grew alarmed.

"Uncle," she said, one morning, "are you ill?"

"No, *heja mia*," replied the old man. "But I am sad and troubled."

"Why, uncle?"

"For that I am a poor man in my last days, instead of being able to count my possessions up into the thousands, as I had hoped."

"But how is that, uncle?"

"Did you not know, then, that I gave up all to Pedro?"

"Not the store?"

"Yes, the store and all its contents."

"Without compensation?"

"Surely, *heja mia*."

"But what folly! It is not like you."

"Perhaps not; the evil is done."

"But Pedro surely supports you?"

"Barely. And now he refuses to do that, unless I go to live at his house. He does not feel able, he says, to pay my board here."

"Is it he who pays, uncle?"

"It is he who pays."

"And little enough," said Dolores, sharply.

"It seems I shall have to go, Dolores. So kind have you been, and so attentive, for the little that has been given you. I can never forget it. I am sad to leave you. If I could but remain in this comfortable home, where I do not feel that I am a stranger. I have not long to live and—"

"*Quien sabe?*" replied the woman, shrilly. "You may live till you are a hundred. If Pedro will no longer pay your board, it is better that he keep you under his own roof. I am a poor woman, and am not able to house paupers."

"Thank you, daughter," said old Nuñez, rising and slowly hobbling into his room, where he began to pack up his possessions, a work which was soon accomplished. Leaving his effects in readiness to be moved, he betook himself to the store of his nephew, which he never entered now save as one business partner calling upon another in search of his dividends. There-

fore it was with no little surprise that Pedro saw his uncle approaching. He went to meet him, received him kindly, and pushed forward a comfortable arm-chair.

"Pedrocito, I feel very unhappy where I am," said the old man, after he had settled himself satisfactorily.

"I am sorry to hear it, uncle," rejoined his nephew.

"Dolores is a deceitful woman. She is kind only because she hopes to enrich herself later."

"How do you know that?"

"Never mind, but I do know it. I am bothered besides, with her officiousness."

"That is a pity. What will you do?"

"I long for the old home, Pedrocito. For my own room, with the great bed and its heavy hangings, keeping one so warm in winter time; for the old bench under the big pepper tree—my favorite seat during forty years."

"You would have us go elsewhere, then, and take back the house?"

"Go!" exclaimed the old man. "Is it not thy own house?"

"But we could—to please you and make you happy."

"Thou stupid one! Thou pig-headed boy! Dost not understand?"

"No, uncle, I do not," answered his nephew. "Explain what you want."

"To live there—with thee and thy wife, if she will take me. Doubtless she will not, since thou hast told her what I said of her."

"That I have never told her, uncle. I love her and thee too well," answered the young man, relapsing into the affectionate address of former days.

The old man was silent; a tear shone in his eye.

"Thou wilt be welcome," Pedro continued. "Thy old room has never been dismantled."

The uncle Pedro wiped his nose with his big red handkerchief.

"Go, prepare her," he said, "and then send to Dolores for my goods. I will follow thee."

An hour later he appeared at the gate of his former abode. The young wife, arm in arm with her husband, came to meet him, kissed him on both cheeks as though he had been her father, and led him to his former apartment. He said little, but content and joy shone in his every feature. The days flew quickly, and he was happy. Domenica, the old servant, had been retained, and between her and the new mistress,

the house had taken on a more pleasant and comfortable aspect. Love, and the peace love brings, reigned in that little household; the old man basked in its sunshine. Nothing was ever said on either side about remuneration. The nephew would have scorned to ask money from the one who had given him nearly everything he possessed, and it never entered the mind of Ellen Nuñez, or Helena, as the old man called her, to wonder or inquire regarding the subject.

* * * * *

One day as they were seated side by side under the pepper-tree, she with her sewing, and he with his interminable cheroot, he said:

"*Helenita*, where dost thou keep thy jewels?"

"My jewels, uncle! I have none."

"Hast never had?"

"Never. You know very well I was only a poor girl."

"Yes, yes, but some one once told me thou hadst some."

"They jested then, or mocked me," said Ellen. "Pedro will tell thee I had not as much as a gold ornament until he placed the wedding ring upon my finger."

"I believe thee, my child. It is nothing. Let it pass. An old man's memory is often at fault."

The next day he went into the store.

"Where does Helenita keep her jewels, Pedro?" he inquired.

"Her jewels!" laughed the young man. "Hast thou not seen them yet? Thine eyes must be failing—she wears them every day."

The old man looked at him curiously.

"Ah!" he said. "I believe I understand. I am not so slow or so stupid. I believe I understand," and he hobbled home again.

A few days after this he went to the house of Dolores. She received him very coolly. Scarcely was he seated in the *patio* when she remarked:

"I have rented thy room to the commercial traveler who runs between here and San Diego. He makes two trips a week, and is away half the time. And he pays a good rent."

"That is well," said the old man, "that is well. I am glad to know that thou canst turn an honest penny in that way. And I, too, have good news," he went on. "Some money has come to me that I did not expect. An old debt—with interest for many years."

"How much?" inquired Dolores, assuming her sweetest manner.

"Three thousand dollars."

"Three thousand dollars?" Then *sotto voce*, "He can not live long."

"Yes, it was a windfall."

"Indeed it must have been, uncle. And thou art tired of thy present house, I am sure. What kind of cooking can the *Americana* do for thee? I have such a large kitchen, I could turn the dining room into a pleasant bedroom for thee. Whenever thou wilt, thou mayst come, uncle."

"I thank thee, Dolores," said the old man, preparing to depart, "but I am very well contented with Helenita, and there are jewels in that home to which I have become so attached that I could not bring myself to leave them."

"Jewels! To whom do these jewels belong, uncle?"

"To Helenita. I see them every day."

"Where did she get them?"

"They were given to her at her birth."

"At her birth? Why does not she sell them?"

"They would be worthless then. They can not be bought or sold."

"Thou art a silly, driveling old man" cried

Dolores, shaking her fist in his face. "Why dost thou come here with thy nonsense? I believe neither in the tale of the money nor the jewels —one is as false as the other."

"That is as thou pleasest, Dolores," said old Pedro in a slow, drawling voice, getting out of the way as he spoke. "I think it is the last time I shall visit thy house, as I have no desire to be insulted by thee."

* * * * *

Ten months later the old man died. Some time before his last illness he paid several visits to the only notary of the village, who came, two days after the funeral, on a Sunday afternoon, to read the will at the house of young Pedro, in the presence of such among the friends and relatives as desired to hear it.

He had remembered a few old acquaintances, together with Domenica, in small amounts; the church and Padre Juan Bautista also came in for a share, while his nephew received the store, all the merchandise and the land on which it stood. The will then went on to state as follows:

"To my niece-in-law, Dolores Tata, in consideration of her loving care and attention—

when I did not need it—and her contempt of me when she thought I did—I leave the sum of three dollars, together with three counsels, viz., First, to try to cultivate respect for the aged; second, to look about her for some roots of charity and plant them in her heart; third, to make an effort to hide from her countenance, if she can not banish them from her breast, the evil passions of avarice and ill-nature which now disfigure it, that her neighbors may not flee from her in disgust and abhorrence.

"Lastly, I leave to my dear niece, Helena, the wife of my beloved nephew, Pedro Nuñez, the sum of three thousand dollars, wherewith to purchase an appropriate setting for the three priceless jewels in her possession, and with which she was endowed at her birth, and which she has kept bright and beautiful through all the years of her sweet and useful life. These jewels are the virtues of kindness, cheerfulness, and industry, which can neither be bought, sold, given away, nor stolen, and I pray God that their luster shall never diminish, nor their value decrease in her kind and affectionate heart."

That night there were joy and gratitude and

prayers for the departed in the house of Pedro Nuñez and his sweet young wife, but I am afraid that behind the closed and darkened windows of Doña Dolores Tata, there were more maledictions than blessings—and perhaps, a few angry tears.

A Belated Planet

BY MARY T. WAGGAMAN

THE Professor buttoned up his coat with bachelor prudence, for there was a nip in the evening wind.

It had been a pleasant wind all day, warm and soft and balmy, as became the breath of the Indian summer, and laden with spicy odors of late bloom and berry from the meadows and mountainsides over which it had taken its vagrant way.

But it had freshened with the sunset, and the Professor, turning from the grim hospitality of his college boarding-house for a night vigil in his observatory, was conscious of a sudden shock as the gust met him at the corner, fierce, keen, blustering, a blast from old winter, whose bleak triumph was near.

And as all day long the warm, whispering breeze had brought tender memories of an old-fashioned garden where the grapes had purpled and gay flowers nodded through the autumn paling sunshine, so now the Professor was conscious of an

old pang stirring in his breast as the nip of the wind sent his thoughts back to a wide, cheery fireside, where, on eves like this, the flames had leaped from the great hickory logs at the first touch of the frost; a fireside that had seemed to his homeless student youth the brightest, dearest spot on earth, where he had dreamed and hoped and loved and—wakened into the pain and darkness of hopeless loss.

But that was all past. Professor Elmer Leighton, with half a dozen hard-earned scientific capitals added to his name, had given up dreaming for doing many years ago.

If the old pain had wakened to-day, it was as the soldier's old wound opens sometimes on a forced march. It had been a week of strain up the rugged steeps of science.

For nights he had kept watch in his observatory for one bright particular star on which he had based a series of calculations that would settle a point long disputed by some learned confrères. But cloud and mist had intervened, and the star had failed to appear.

With his reputation for professional accuracy at stake the Professor was hurrying to his usual vigil now, anxious and overwrought. The last

rays of the autumn sunset were fading behind flaming bastions of cloud that threatened again to defy his quest as he climbed the steep path leading to the college observatory, when a small voice struck upon his ear.

"Unky Tom," it piped, "Unky Tom, take Tollie home."

The Professor stopped and stared. It was such a wee mite of humanity that confronted him in the twilight. He really never remembered seeing so small a being at large before. He had an idea that infants of this size were usually trundled or carried or kept judiciously asleep. But this one stood upright on two short but sturdy legs, and its small hands were filled with blooms of golden-rod and asters.

"God bless me!" exclaimed the gentleman nervously, as the little one dropped his flowers and slipped a diminutive hand confidently into the Professor's grasp. "What are you doing here, all alone, child?"

"Tollie lost," explained the small wayfarer calmly. "Tollie tudn't find mama, and Tollie lost. Take Tollie home, Unky Tom."

"Lost!" echoed the gentleman in dismay. "This is dreadful! An infant that can scarcely

talk. Do you know—where—where you live, child?"

"No," answered Tollie, shaking a shock of golden curls; "Tollie don't know. Take Tollie home, Unky Tom—take Tollie to Gammer's."

"Gammer's," repeated the Professor in perplexity, "Gammer's! Ryan!" and the speaker hailed with relief the sturdy, gray-coated janitor who came whistling down the hill, "here is a lost baby I have found wandering on the road. See if you know him."

"Sure an' I don't, sir," said Ryan, staring at the pretty little figure in its belted and braided blouse; "faith, he is a small one to be let loose at this hour of the day or night. What's yer name, kiddy?"

"Name, Tollie Tars—ting," was the kiddy's dignified answer.

"That bates me, and you, too, sir, I guess with all your learning," laughed Ryan. "We'll thry it again. Where do you live, sonny?"

"'At Gammer's,' he says," answered the Professor. "Do you know any place or person here by that name, Ryan? 'Gammer's?'"

"I don't, sir," answered Ryan, reflectively, "unless—unless—mebbe it's baby brogue for grand—

grandma, sir. But you have no call to be bothering wid the lost kid, Professor. I'll take him off to the station house and give him in charge of the police. Come, kiddy."

But the curl-veiled ears had caught a word of terror.

"No," shrieked Tollie, lustily, and the Professor's knees were clutched by two little arms in a way that nearly threw the student of the stars off his earthly footing. "Unky Tom, Unky Tom, don't let bad man take Tollie! Don't let bad man give Tollie to police! Tollie dood boy—Tollie dood boy!"

"Arrah, come away wid ye," said Ryan, with rough good nature. "I'll not hurt ye, sonny. Listen, now—I have a foine little white kitty beyant that I'll give ye all for yer own. Whisht now! Stop that scraching! Don't mind him, sir; let me take him, kick as he will. Ye can't be worried wid an infant babe loike that, wid all the hivins waiting ye above, sir. Whisht, I tell ye, kiddy."

"No, no. Unky Tom, Unky Tom!" Tollie's shrieks of terror woke the academic echoes of College Hill, Tollie's small arms clutched the dean of the faculty with a grip of despair.

"Don't, don't touch him, for God's sake!" ex-

claimed the Professor, desperately. "You'll send him into fits, Ryan. There, hush, hush, little boy—no one shall touch you, no one shall take you away. I'll keep him, Ryan. I'll *have* to keep him while you go in to town and—and report —that—he is here with me."

* * * * *

It was nearly two hours later, that a very pretty and excited little lady, attended by an equally excited maid, burst into the Seventh Precinct Police Station with hysterical inquiry.

"A lost child, madam?" was the calm official reply; "yes, we have him, I think; little chap about three years old, yellow hair—"

"Oh, yes, lovely golden curls; my darling baby, my baby!"

"Blue frock with filigree work on it," continued the officer, consulting his notes.

"Yes, yes! Oh, where is he, where is he? Take me to him," cried the little woman eagerly. "I only came to town to my brother's for the day," she explained. "I went to church this evening, to the cathedral, and left my little boy playing with his cousins, as I thought. But he must

have strayed after me, and Mabel here thought he had gone with me—"

"I did, Mistah Policeman; 'fore de Lawd, I did, sah. I thought Miss Patty had taken de chile wif her to church and didn't look out for him at all." Mabel's black eyes were rolling in dismay, Mabel's black face was a dull gray with terror.

"He was found by one of the professors at College Hill," explained the official, smiling. "He is there now, perfectly safe, at the observatory."

"At College Hill! the observatory!" exclaimed the little mother in dismay. "My poor darling!"

"It is not very far," continued the guardian of the law, who was not too dulled by stern, unyielding duty to recognize the charm of tearful brown eyes and rippling golden hair under the demure folds of a widow's cap. "I will call a cab for you, and, though I believe it is not usual to admit visitors to the observatory at this hour, an exception will be made under the circumstances, I am sure, madam."

And thus courteously sped on her way, the anxious little mother and her maid were soon

driving on through the star-lighted darkness beyond the city limits.

"Oh, where are we going? How did my precious baby ever stray out here, Mabel?"

"'Tain't so fur, Miss Patty," explained Mabel. "The college grounds ain't so fur from Marse Tom's. I often rolls his chillun out dar. It's a pretty road—with lots of flowers to ketch thar eyes, an' dat boy of yourn is rambly, Miss Pat, jes, nachally rambly."

The cab rolled into the college gates as the girl spoke.

"Can't get no further, lady," said the driver, stopping at the foot of the steep path that led to the observatory. "You'll hev to get out here."

Like a bird on the wing the mother sped up the height to the domed tower where Ryan, the faithful guardian of this portal of science, sat smoking his nightly pipe.

"My baby, my baby, my little lost darling—is he here?"

"He is, ma'am," said Ryan, in a tone of hearty relief, "an' it's glad I am to see ye, for the kid'll give the Professor nither pace nor rest. Calls him his uncle, ma'am, and won't lave his arrums."

"Oh, take me to him, take me to my darling at once," cried the lady hysterically. "He is frightened to death, I know, in this strange, lonely place."

A strange place, indeed, it seemed for baby feet to stray! Ryan led them up dim, stone steps, lighted only by the glimmer of his lantern, and winding high into dusky space.

"De Lawd!" panted Mabel, as she followed her little lady, "whar is we a-climbing to, Miss Pat?"

Then suddenly the stairs ended at the arched doorway of a room domed spaciously and opening on all sides to the autumn sky. And seated there in the tremulous starlight was the famous astronomer, Professor Elmer Leighton, the golden head of Master Tollie Tarsting nestled tranquilly on his breast. The mother started forward, and the glad cry died on her lips. She stood breathless, speechless as this new nurse lifted a warning hand.

"Hush, Ryan! Don't wake him for heaven's sake, or I'll get no work done to-night. Bring a cushion or a coat or something and fix a place where I can put him down, poor little chap—a soft, warm place, Ryan. He is so little, so very

little—and eh—" the Professor started as he raised his eyes from the little sleeper's face for it was not Ryan who stood there breathless, bewildered, with flushed cheeks and trembling lips and tearful eyes.

"Patty!" he cried sharply, "my God—not—Patty!"

"Elmer!" the mother dropped on her knees beside the man and child. "Elmer, with my baby, my lost baby," she sobbed.

"Your baby! Yours!" he gasped.

"Yes, yes, all that is left me—all, all, after ten long, hard years. His father is dead, and I was alone in that far Western land. So I came back to the old home, the old fireside, the old life, with my one treasure, my lamb, my Charlie, my baby boy. Wake up, precious, wake up! Mama has come for you, mama has come to take her little boy home."

But Tollie, wiser than his little mama, knew a good thing when he had discovered it.

"No," he answered sleepily, nestling closer in the strong arms' shelter, "Tollie too tired. Tollie tay wif Unky Tom."

"Oh, he takes you for Tom!" said his mother.

"You were always thought like him, Elmer, and

we are staying at his house for a few days, now. I am looking for work in town."

"Work!" echoed the Professor in a low voice. "Work! Patty—"

"Yes. Mother is growing old," she answered. "I can not have her to care for both Charlie and me. So we came to town to-day to look for a place."

"Yes," said the Professor. She was still kneeling beside her child, her hand clasping Tollie's, her fair young face aglow with mother-love and grave with mother-care, the past all forgotten in thought for her boy. "And you found a place, Patty?"

"No, not yet, not yet," she replied anxiously. "But Tom thinks I will in a day or two."

"I am sure of it; in fact, I know of one vacant now," said the Professor.

"Here, in the college, I mean?" she asked eagerly. "Oh, if you would speak for me, Elmer! I am not the giddy girl you knew long ago. I have learned so many things. To mend and make and market; and though I could leave Charlie with mother, it would be hard to give him up, Elmer. I would work for very little pay if—if I could keep my baby boy."

"You could keep him," answered the Professor, as his hand strayed tenderly over the little sleeper's golden curls. "If you will take the place, Patty." His voice trembled. "The old place you turned from ten years ago. It has been empty, desolate ever since—how empty and desolate I scarcely knew until Tollie's baby hand opened the closed door to-night."

"Elmer!" she cried, comprehending at last, and starting, rosy with blushes, to her feet, "give me the baby. Charlie, Charlie, come, darling, you must wake and come with mamma."

"Unky Tom, Unky Tom," protested Tollie as he was snatched, his blue eyes half open, from his protector's arms.

"Yes, yes, my darling," said Tollie's mother, hiding her glowing face in the baby curls; "Uncle Tom will come see Charlie again."

"To-morrow," said the Professor decisively. "I'll come to-morrow, my little man, and we'll find the rocking-horse we talked about to-night, and the drum, and the kitten. Let me carry him down to the cab for you, Patty; he won't let Ryan touch him, and the stairs are steep."

And with Ryan's glimmering lantern guiding them, the party made their way back to the cab,

Master Tollie Tarsting now wide awake, jabbering gleefully on the Professor's shoulder.

"Where shall I find you?" asked the gentleman as, his visitors safely ensconced in the cab, he held a small black-gloved hand for a moment tightly clasped in his own.

"In the old home, by the old fireside, where we were so happy long ago," was the faltering answer. "Come, find us there, Elmer."

And as the cab rolled off in the darkness, Professor Elmer Leighton sprang up the observatory steps, his heart bounding, his brain whirling joyously, like one who, after long years of drought and want, drains a cup of new-made wine. And as he entered the domed room where he had kept his long and lonely vigil for nights a cry of triumph broke from his lips. For the battlements of darkness were down, cloud had dissolved, and mist vanished. Clear and bright in the western horizon shone the Star of his search—a radiant omen of hope and love—the belated planet that had risen to light his life forever.

The Habit of Jerry

BY MARION AMES TAGGART

"I'm going to save his soul!" announced Hannah Smith with decision.

"I should just like to know how you're going to do it?" observed her neighbor, Mrs. Hallet, stopping her rocking to emphasize her sense of the unlikelihood of Hannah's success. "First of all, you've got to find the soul to save it. Theologically we all know he's got one, but outside revealed teaching you'd never know it—you've got to make an act of faith to be sure of it."

"He's sort of numb," admitted Hannah.

"Sort of numb! He's clear numb; whatever has happened to the man it's frozen up all his life, soul and all! He puts me in mind of the big cakes of ice I saw once in a window advertising artificial ice—they had slices of oranges, and bananas, all sorts of fruit frozen in them. Your boarder may have sweet bits like that in him, but they're all caked over!'

Mrs. Hallet resumed her rocking as if it would

carry her past a subject of which she had finally disposed.

"All the more reason for thawing him," said Hannah, suggestively shading her face from the heat of the stove as she lifted off her big preserving kettle.

"You're not in earnest, Hannah?" protested Mrs. Hallet.

"That's precisely what I am; I should think it was about the best thing a person could be if she was going to turn apostle." Hannah laughed as she spoke, but the light of a propagandist was in her eye. "That man isn't bad," she added, turning on Mrs. Hallet as if she had been his accuser. "He's just numb, as you say. He doesn't go to church, and he won't go to church, and he's despairing, in his quiet way. Of course, despair is a sin, but it isn't a vice—I'm sure there isn't anything wrong in the poor fellow in that way. Something has taken the mainspring out of him; he has lost faith, and hope—"

"And so you want to practise charity," Mrs. Hallet interrupted her. "Well, if any one was ever designed, and made, and sent into the world especially to that end it's Hannah Smith. But how do you mean to save his soul?"

"I mean to cook for him," announced Hannah, so solemnly that round-faced, merry Mrs. Hallet shouted.

"Well, considering that he's boarding with you I should imagine that's what you'd have been doing all along," she gurgled.

Long, lean Hannah, the very antipodes of her thick-set neighbor, who had been her seat mate at school forty years before, turned to look at her reproachfully.

"I'm going to cook to save him," she said firmly. "I've been thinking a great deal at odd times about the way we neglect cooking as an influence. I've been convinced more than once that we ought to realize how the flavor of something a poor outcast from home had loved when he was a child would affect him, how the smell, say of frying doughnuts, might move a lonely person's conscience by recalling his grandmother's kitchen, and with the kitchen of course the teachings of that dead grandmother, and how some one in the grip of a temptation might be torn from it, by—well, I don't know—by a pumpkin pie, or warm gingerbread, or something homy if he could smell and taste it at the critical moment. I'm certain there could be a lot done by establishing—"

"Mission kitchens!" Mrs. Hallet could barely articulate the words, she was so convulsed with laughter over her friend's theory of influences. "Oh, Hannah Smith, you certainly are queer!"

"I'm going to cook for him on a different basis," repeated Hannah Smith firmly. "I've been trying to make him comfortable, and now I'm going to do more."

Hannah Smith was accounted the best cook in the community at the same time that she was one of its best women. Mrs. Hallet began to wonder, as she heard the ring in her friend's voice and remembered her skill and goodness, whether, after all, Hannah might not start her boarder heavenward by this strange footpath. Hannah interrupted her thoughts to say: "And after I've got him thawed and receptive by means of old-fashioned, home cooking I'm going to borrow your Jerry."

Mrs. Hallet's eyes softened; this time Hannah had suggested an influence that her neighbor understood and felt was irresistible. She arose to go.

"You shall have Jerry, and welcome, any time you want her," she said. "I guess you're going to succeed."

"Jerry" was little Geraldine, Mrs. Hallet's young daughter's legacy to her mother when she left the world untimely, left it the richer by her baby of two weeks old.

The baby had proved to be hopelessly crippled from birth. At first Mrs. Hallet had found it hard to be reconciled to accepting the maimed little life as the price of the blooming girl who had given it to her. As time went on and Jerry unfolded the wonderful sweetness of her heart, the loveliness of her wan face, the fragrant spirituality of her childish character, her grandmother had begun to see that only in physical strength she was lacking, only in her feeble limbs was halting, and she loved the child with a love that held in it something of awe as well as gratitude to her for having come to bless her lonely home. If Hannah saw that Jerry was the one who could best arouse her boarder, then Jerry's grandmother was able to feel such respect for her friend's discernment that the funny notion of conversion through home cooking lost its ridiculousness.

Hannah set about this propaganda at once. She had discovered that the stranger whom she had taken within her gates had spent his boyhood on a farm, and, being country-bred herself, and from

the same section of country, she knew what dishes had saluted him doubly, through his two senses, when he came in hungry from school, and she set about preparing them.

The boarder was a silent, listless man, with nervous hands and a stoop in his high shoulders. Hannah had spoken truly when she had said that he was despairing; how truly she could only guess. Defrauded of all but a pittance by the man who had been his best friend and confidential partner, betrayed and deserted by the woman whom he had loved when misfortune overtook him, Charles Hermann had allowed himself to drift into apathetic skepticism toward everything in which he had once believed. He lived a harmless life, as far as a negatively unproductive life can ever be harmless, and the future held no hope for him, as the past held no pleasant memories. No pleasant memories subsequent to the day when he had left his father's farm. But around that early life clustered the remembrances of a just father, of a sweet and tender mother whose death had been the end of that innocent, happy life; the first link of the long chain of misfortunes that followed it.

He came into Hannah Smith's cheerful dining-room and stood still a moment, arrested by the

odors that struck him with a magic that transported and rejuvenated him.

"What have you for supper, Miss Smith?" he asked. "Is it—it can't be scrapple and apple butter, and—not doughnuts too? Why, it's the very supper mother used to get up for us when father and I came in on an autumn night from hauling mine props to the station!"

He spoke with such a new ring in his voice that Hannah's other boarders—there were not many—looked up to see if it were really Mr. Hermann.

Hannah smiled, her kindly smile lighting up her high cheek-bones into a kind of beauty.

"It's our old home supper too, Mr. Hermann," she said. "I was raised on a farm like you, and when I feel as if I wanted to find the little Hannah Smith that used to be me I cook up some of the things my mother used to have."

The man looked at her with a sympathetic glance, and took his place at the table silently. Hannah noted the satisfaction that her viands evidently had the old-time flavor, and she fancied that tears were not far off to serve as their sauce. A glamour of youth rested over her table to the eyes of Charles Hermann, and Hannah smiled to herself as she saw the melancholy stealing over

him which was sweeter than indifference. From this night of the beginning of her apostolate Hannah preached eloquently the poignancy of association from the pulpit of her shining cook stove.

Little Jerry was helping her to arouse the object of her compassion, unconscious of the reason for her being urged to "make friends with Mr. Hermann."

A reserved little soul, Jerry was not disinclined to her fellow mortals, and the lame child and the empty-hearted man soon evinced a marked enjoyment of each other's society. The man told the little girl stories of the dear old days on that lost hillside farm, remembering details that he would have said that he had forgotten, helped to memory by her dilating eyes, and no less by the spurs to memory with which Miss Hannah was nourishing him.

In her turn Jerry told him stories of her dolls, of the angels, of her three newest kittens, of her flowers, and her suspicions as to fairies that ran along on the city telephone wires in default of better playground, admitting him without reserve into the wonderful treasury of the mind of an imaginative child.

She was a devout little soul, dear little crippled Jerry, and she said things to him of the faith which had slipped away from Charles Hermann with his other treasures, till he found himself striving to keep her from seeing how far he had strayed from her standards, and then reproached himself that he sat a hypocrite in the white light of her innocent eyes.

When Jerry fell sick in the spring three people stood aghast at the difference it made. Her grandmother's life was of course bound up in the child, but Hannah, too, realized that if she lost her little neighbor the sunshine of her life would go out with that child soul, and Charles Hermann walked about dazed, praying under his breath for Jerry, Jerry who was so dangerously ill, and who had recalled him to love and hope. He could not account for it to himself, but he discovered that the lame child had become so indescribably dear to him that he seemed to be bleeding inwardly as death tried to wrest her from him.

He found himself on his knees before the tabernacle in the dim church where Jerry had taken him to see the crib four months before.

"Spare her, Lord, spare us little Jerry, and I will not be unfaithful again," he whispered. Then

he realized with a start of the soul that even should Jerry die she had fulfilled her mission—he had learned to pray again!

But Jerry did not die. On Easter Sunday she opened her soft eyes to smile at Hannah's lilies, and at Mr. Hermann's canary, singing to her in the sunshine by her little bed with an ecstasy of joy that indicated his knowledge of human beings, dumbness under profound gratitude, as well as a certainty that Jerry's kittens could be trusted to remember the lessons they had been taught, and to spare her bird.

"Where is he?" asked Jerry, not yet being strong enough for many words. They knew that she meant her "Hermie," as she called him, and told her he had not yet come in from church, and his thanksgiving communion that his little Jerry was better.

The child smiled happily, and fell asleep. Hannah met Charles Hermann in the hall as he was returning, with his hands full of daffodils, smelling faint and sweet of spring.

"Hannah, I want to tell you—" he began, but broke down.

"How glad you are," she finished for him, noting with surprise his use of her name. "So are we all

glad, glad and thankful beyond words. I think I should have been lame in mind and heart all my days if I had lost Jerry; I have the habit of Jerry."

"We all have it," asserted Hermann. "Blessed little Jerry! But—I want to marry you, Hannah."

"Me! No, you don't!" cried Hannah in a panic.

"Yes, I do," affirmed Charles Hermann—who certainly ought to have known. "You have brought me back to life with the flavor of my mother's homely dishes, and you have taught me to love you."

"But that wasn't what I meant to do!" cried bewildered Hannah.

"What did you mean to do?" asked her boarder, for the first time learning she had had a definite end in view beyond his comfort.

"I meant to arouse you, make you, interested—save your soul!" said the woman confused.

Charles laughed. "And so you did, you and Jerry! Was that your object? Isn't it saving a soul to teach it to love? And am I not back again, safe and happy, in my mother's Church, fresh from my Easter duty? Surely you knew that I was learning to live and to love."

"To love Jerry, yes, and to love God, but not, not—'

"Not you?" Charles interrupted her. "How could I help it since you gave me myself, and all else? Of course I love you, Hannah! Marry me and nourish the new life you have called into being in me with your old-fashioned viands, full of health and sweetest memories."

"I always thought that a great deal of good could be done by what might be called suggestive cooking," said Hannah, feebly and whimsically.

"I should think so!" agreed her lover enthusiastically. "Hasn't it been done? We will take our little Jerry off to the mountains and build her up to strength, while you go on making me a saint in your own queer, dear way! And our Easter joy and our 'habit of Jerry,' as you call it, shall never end. Do you say yes, dear Hannah?"

"Yes," said his dear Hannah, to her own surprise.

At the Turn of the Tide

BY MARY T. WAGGAMAN.

"BUT I don't want him, Aunt Ray," said Kitty, tremulously.

"Don't want him!" gasped the good lady. The exigencies of her Paris modiste had made Aunt Ray's breathing apparatus unequal to any emotional demand. "Don't want Lord Bonnithorne!"

"He is fat, old, and ugly, and I couldn't love him a bit," faltered Kitty.

"Couldn't love him! I really never heard of such idiocy! Who expects you to love him, you little fool? It would be simply flying in the face of a benevolent providence for you to hesitate one moment at such an offer. Lord Bonnithorne, with a title that dates back to the Tudors, and a rent-roll of twelve thousand a year! And you, a poor girl with scarcely a decent gown to her back! Why, he is the catch of the season. Every woman with a marriageable daughter in our set is angling openly for him."

"Oh, I think he is horrid," said Kitty, almost

crying. "He has puffy eyes, gets so stupid after dinner, and has had three wives already."

"What is it to you if he has had twenty?" said Aunt Ray, sharply. "They are all safely dead and buried, and a widower makes the best of husbands, as every one knows. I don't want to hear any nonsense, Kitty," the speaker's voice hardened; "I've done a great deal for you, as you should remember, given you six years at the convent, sent you pocket-money and clothes, and brought you up here this summer to show you a little of the world. I must say, considering that you have had only a few little home-made frocks and your graduation gown, you've been a remarkable success. Now that such an opportunity is offered you of helping yourself and every one belonging to you it would be simple madness in you to hesitate. Think of your hard-working father, your poor, delicate mother, Nellie shut up in that dull country house, with no chance in life, little Rick with his lame back. I'll give you your trousseau and wedding. It shall be the most brilliant affair of the season—there, there, don't cry, child, or you'll ruin your looks. What in heaven's name is the matter?

I hope there is no silly love affair with any one else?"

"No, no," answered Kitty, quickly, "no one else cares for me. Only give me time to think, Aunt Ray, give me time."

"Take your time, then," said the lady, her tone softening somewhat; "only remember if you disappoint me in this matter I have done with you and yours forever. I really could not uphold such headstrong folly. Take your time, but Lord Bonnithorne must have his answer to-night."

And this was the momentous question bewildering poor little eighteen-year old Kitty, as she wandered down the beach stretching far away from her aunt's stately mansion, Cliffdene; around point and cove laid bare by the outgoing tide. The voice of the sea was all that sounded here, and oh, how deep and strong and tender it seemed to Kitty to-day, after all the gay clamor of the house-party—the dancing and dining and the tittle tattle of the gossiping guests, after Lord Bonnithorne's stupid flatteries. The long swelling note of the waves recalled so many tender sounds to Kitty—the wind that swayed the cedars in her mountain home; the full organ notes in the little convent chapel; the deep,

strong college chorus that woke the echoes of the hills last Christmas, when Gerald, Aunt Ray's step-son, had stopped with a camping party for a "coon hunt" in the Maryland woods. Oh, what a gay, glad Christmas it had been for little Kitty—with sleighing and skating and coasting, and Gerald the life and leader of all. Ah, she had heard his story since—Aunt Ray had told her how he had been madly in love with Aline Armistead, and since her marriage had forsworn all womankind.

Really it had not seemed so last Christmas, but Kitty had only been a schoolgirl then, with her hair in braids—and of course Aunt Ray, being Gerald's stepmother, knew. And now Lord Bonnithorne had proposed, and it was her duty, Aunt Ray said, to marry him. Her duty! Could a loveless, hateful marriage be duty, little Kitty pondered, while tears dimmed the eyes that Gerald had called wood violets; and she wandered on heedless of distance, past the narrow stretch of sand that girdled Pirate's Point, where the shore rose in great, rugged cliffs that curved in to form the cove.

The sky had darkened literally as well as metaphorically for Kitty; the black cloud that

had lain on the edge of the horizon had risen sullenly; the waves, still held by the mystic force of the tide, began to curl into white foam-wreaths—but Kitty, absorbed in the doubts, fears, memories crowding upon her, wandered on under the frowning cliffs, the threatening sky, heedless of the gathering storm.

* * * * *

"Engaged, you say? Little Kitty is engaged?" The stalwart sunburned young gentleman, whose "man" had just dropped a varied array of hunting traps at the Cliffdene porch, spoke with unusual vehemence.

"Yes," replied his stepmother with irrepressible satisfaction; "engaged to Lord Bonnithorne—"

"Not that bloated old roué!" exclaimed Gerald Granville, excitedly.

"Really I must beg you to remember that Lord Bonnithorne is my guest," said the lady severely.

"Which, to be frank with you, Madame mére, adds nothing to his credit. The summer guests at Cliffdene are not at all above reproach. When I heard you had little Kitty here I came—but—

well, I must say, I really expected nothing so sudden as this."

"Nor I," said the lady, triumphantly; "I never heard of such good fortune. Lord Bonnithorne has just left me. He is ready to make the most generous settlements. The Bonnithorne diamonds are to be reset to suit Kitty's girlish beauty, his castle transformed to her taste. Really, the child's luck has almost taken my breath."

"And mine," was the due rejoinder. "I suppose I ought to congratulate you on your matchmaking and Miss Kitty on her conquest, but I have no time to wait."

"No time!" echoed the lady. "I thought you would give us a part of your summer, Gerald. Men are so scarce on the beach, and Aline Armistead is here—and free—"

"So I understand. But you know my notions of divorcées. I have Romish ideas, as you say, on that and many other subjects. I don't care to renew Mrs. Armistead's acquaintance, so if you will let Martin go up to my room, and collect the few things left there I'll say good-by. I really can't get into a dress suit for dinner, so I'll take a bite at Morton's by the cove, and then— Well,

I'll be off to Egypt or Norway—I can't say which."

And, despite his stepdame's really sincere protests, the gentleman strode away in a mood he found painfully inexplicable, taking the high road that led along the bluffs, as the great ridge of cliff was called, that, jutting out sharply into a point about a mile from Cliffdene, curved back into the cove, a treacherous stretch of sand that, broad and bare at certain hours of the day, was now swiftly filling with the white-capped, angry waves surging back with the "turn of the tide."

As Mr. Granville paused on the road that led along the verge of the cliff, to look with gloomy eyes on the gathering storm, he became suddenly aware of a slender white-robed figure hurrying desperately along the narrowing sands below.

"Good Lord! the tide is racing in like a mill-stream! She will be caught!" he exclaimed. "She will never make the point, fly as she may, and— My God!" as the speeding figure cast a frightened upward glance at frowning cliff and blackened sky; "it's Kitty, little Kitty Vane!" And in another moment Mr. Gerald Granville,

with all the skill of an Alpine climber was scrambling down the sixty feet of cliff, forgetful of all things save the little girl with violet eyes who was in dreadful peril below.

Higher and higher leaped the waves as Kitty sped on, while the great storm dragon rearing its mighty form across the sky began to mutter ominously, and forked tongues of flame lighted sea and shore. On and on the little flying figure went in its mad race with the tide. But the rushing waves, lashed by the rising wind, won.

Kitty reached the point that barred her way to safety to find the breakers boiling high over the narrow path that skirted its base. Only the Pirate's Stair remained to her—a steep, jagged ascent cut in the cliff, that even on a summer noonday she would not dare. Now, swept by the storm, veiled in flying foam and spray, it was impassable even to steadier feet than hers. For a moment her brave heart chilled; trembling, she crouched against the rock, feeling all was over. She must die, die here alone, and as the old familiar prayers of love and trust rose, there came the thought that perhaps even this wild, dark fate was better than that to which she was so nearly pledged.

"My God, help me, help me to die," she cried, as the storm burst in all its fury. And then through crash and roar and foam and flood came a voice that made the trembling girl's heart leap to her lips.

"Kitty," it called, "wait, Kitty. I am coming."

"Gerald!" the cry rose like that of the storm-tossed bird to its mate, as, through the wild chaos of foam and flood a stalwart form came leaping to her side; "oh, is it Gerald?"

"Yes, it is I, little Kitty—it is I. Thank God, I reached you in time."

"Oh, but you will die with me, you will die with me! Gerald, dear Gerald, you can climb the stairs. Save yourself. I am not afraid to die. Leave me, Gerald."

"Leave you, Kitty? Leave you here alone? I would rather die a thousand times. But I will save you if you will trust me. Put your arms around my neck, hold fast to me, and I will take you up the rocks."

"Oh, no, no, you can not. You will die with me, for me, Gerald. Save yourself, oh, save yourself. Leave me, Gerald."

"Kitty, listen. I will not leave you, because

I love you. Whoever or whatever may stand between us I love you better than my own life. I came up here to-day to tell you so, to claim you for my own, and I heard, Kitty—but no matter — I tell you this now, that you may know that to die with you would be no harder than to live without you."

A mighty bolt seemed to rend the cliffs asunder, the heavens flashed into awful light, the waves leaped, foaming, almost to their waists, but neither heard nor saw, for Kitty's arms were outstretched, her sweet face radiant with joy, as she uplifted her tremulous voice.

"Then take me, Gerald, save me, for yourself, for I love you; love you, beloved, alone. Let us live or die together."

And lifting the slender figure in his arms he bore her up the storm swept cliff.

* * * * *

Even the rock-hewn walls of Cliffdene shook with the tempest, the fiercest, as Aunt Ray assured her frightened guests, that had visited the shore for years.

Little Kitty Vane was missing through it all. She had been seen by some of the servants

taking the path to the cove before the storm burst, and grave fears were felt for her safety—fears that deepened into wild alarm when a search party discovered her little sailor hat and broken parasol caught in a ledge of the rocks.

But at sunset a mounted messenger arrived with tidings that changed Aunt Ray's hysterical grief into wrath:

"DEAR MADAME MERE: Have no anxiety about Kitty. I have saved her from death—and Lord Bonnithorne. We were married an hour ago at St. Mary's and are happy as two foolish lovers can be. You will hear from us again when we reach Nice. Good-night. GERALD."

The Piebald Nag

An Old-Fashioned Love Tale.

BY ANNA T. SADLIER

It was upon a lovely morning in May that I caught my first sight of the piebald nag driven, ever so slowly and with evident trepidation, by the fairest and daintiest vision that ever set a heart throbbing against the ribs. Need I particularize that it was a girl, still in her teens, prettily clad in a spring-like costume, crowned by a large hat which seemed, to my inexperience, a mass of green foliage? It matched the trees and the grasses by the wayside. I caught one swift glance from eyes so deeply shaded by long lashes that I scarcely divined their color, though I was quite prepared to swear that they were the incomparable hue for me. I hastened home to inspect my toilet, to be assured that my necktie was in place, my hat at a right angle, my coat of a modish shape, and my hair properly brushed. I had never been a dandy before, but I began from that time forth a career of foppery which might have caused Beau Brummel to stare. That, with many

other things, I may set down to the account of the piebald nag, who, with his slow and mincing gait, permitted the dart from those eyes to reach me.

Upon the following day I stationed myself in the selfsame point by the roadside, not so very far from my home, where the trees overarched and a tiny stream, gurgling over the rocks, made pleasant melody. I had discovered in the meantime—oh, blissful knowledge—that the fair charioteer was Miss Margaret O'Hagen, and that her father had rented a big house at some little distance from our own during my last year's absence at college. This gave me the assurance that the young lady would be certain to pass by that road very frequently.

Therefore I was in position to catch the very first glimpse of the piebald beast and of those hands, too small for the task of controlling him. The animal had a waggish look about him, as if he were quite well aware that such was the case, and only allowed Miss Margaret to believe that she was managing him. His spice of humor showed itself more evidently as he drew near to where I stood. For he kicked up his heels and away, so that I had but a fleeting vision of a dainty figure, enveloped in a cloud of white, which

flew past me. A confused metaphor ran through my head, wherein angels had a part, as also the nag whom I objurgated.

By his sudden start, however, he had done me a service after all. For there lay in the road, when the vehicle had passed, a tiny purse. I captured it and held it in my hand reverently, as though it had been a sacred relic. My foolish heart bounded. I stowed it away in my vest pocket, close, oh, very close to that organ which was palpitating so vigorously, and I got through that night as best I could. I walked up and down until a late hour, smoking cigarettes and gazing up at the stars, which I envied because they were looking down upon her. I had discarded her name by this time and attached myself solely to the pronoun. I inhaled the fragrance of lilac and of honeysuckle with delight, though these odors are highly provocative of the complaint from which I was suffering. There is so much sweetness in their fragrant breath, so much of spring, and they typify in some sort, immortal youth, and love, which is its enchantment.

The next day and the next after that I waited and waited, my heart torn with despair and yet with a delicious expectancy. At any moment she

might come. I remained out there for the greater part of each afternoon, taking off my hat and allowing the breeze to blow over my fevered forehead. My father, chancing to come by, and quite unaware of my plight, advised me to cover my head, and indeed to go in out of the sun, unless I wanted to get a stroke. I scorned the advice and resented its prosaic triteness. I fingered the purse lovingly with hands that trembled. and I pondered, as I stood, while the tiny brooklet seemed to echo my thoughts, whether or not I should screw up my courage and go boldly up to the big house with my treasure trove.

At last, upon the third day, with a pounding of the heart which sounded like a hammer in my ears, I perceived once more approaching that yellow and white mane and the honest parti-colored face of the nag. One might have thought that he had compassion upon my case and tipped me a friendly wink, for, as he drew near, he began to lag, and to put one foot before the other —or was it sweet maid Margaret herself, though I dared scarce think so, who purposely slackened rein that she might triumph over the sorry plight to which, in a brief interval of time, she had reduced me? Even the most angelic of

these beings have their weaknesses. Overcome by a sudden panic, I retreated behind two large trees, and had hardly done so when the nag brought close to me his precious freight and came to a dead stop. Presently I heard the sweetest voice, which addressed not me, but the piebald one:

"Was it here do you think, old Spot," she inquired, "that I lost my pretty purse? It was your fault, making that wicked start, you bad, bad, old Spot!"

She alighted as she spoke, and, contradicting her words, caressed the nose of the malefactor, who seemed sensible of her favors and gently rubbed his nose against her arm. She began, after that, to seek among the grasses by the wayside, and the buttercups and clover blossoms, gipsy children of the spring. I, enjoying the delicious spectacle, did not come forth at once. Sorrowful and disappointed at last from her fruitless search, she stood upright and I saw a tear fall from her eyes. My heart leaped into my mouth. I could stand it no longer. Blushing furiously, I came forward. She started at sight of me, with a quick glance of alarm which presently changed to a roguish twinkle. She eyed me in silence, however, while I contrived my little speech. I found it

difficult enough, though I had delivered a flowery oration at the college commencement and had been highly commended for my eloquence.

"Forgive me for addressing you," I said, "but you seem to be looking for something."

"Yes," she answered gravely, "I am looking for a purse which I dropped hereabouts some two or three days ago."

"And which I was fortunate enough to find," I exclaimed eagerly, extending the missing trinket.

She took it with a quick movement of delight, which was inexpressibly charming, and turned her eyes full upon me, crying:

"Oh, I am so glad! You don't know how I value this little purse. Thank you so much."

"It has been a great happiness for me," I ventured, and I would have said more if she had given me the smallest encouragement, for who so bold as your shy man once his tongue is unloosed by love? Miss Margaret glanced at me in surprise, then she smiled and said frankly:

"You are a stranger in the neighborbood?"

"I was born and bred here," I answered. "I have spent the greater part of my twenty-three years not far from this spot."

"Indeed! Why, it is strange I have never seen you, till—till the other day, and yet I have been living close by for six months."

"All that time I was at college," I explained; "but I have come home now to stay, and since my family is known to yours, perhaps I may venture to introduce myself."

When I mentioned my name, which is well and honorably known in that part of the country, her reserve vanished as a snow-mist before the sun. She thanked me warmly for her purse, and told me the special reasons why it was of value, and made my heart glad by an invitation to call at the big house. I went home that afternoon walking upon air, with my head held high, smiling at every one I encountered. Never was courtier honored by his sovereign more proud and gratified than I by that permission. I barely waited two or three days for decency's sake before accepting that invitation. From that time forth my visits to the big house were so often repeated that my father began to twit me about the matter, and my mother to look half-sad, half-smiling, realizing, no doubt, that that time had come when she was no longer the only woman in the world for me. I did not know it then, nor till long after-

ward, that my father and Miss Margaret's father joked and laughed together over their pipes about the sudden fancy which had smitten me, well pleased, indeed, as they confided to each other, that it should be so. They were only anxious that the young things should make a match of it. This love, which was so sacred a thing to me, was thus disposed of by these hoary philosophers as though it had been a common every-day affair. Meantime the air grew daily more and more roseate for me, till it rivaled, as the summer went on, the poppies and gladiolus. The skies waxed bluer, and in the bird-notes I heard my own gladness repeated. I could not choose but give thanks to the Creator, who had made the world so fair and given such gladness to His creatures. For an honest love leads the heart upward, and this is a truth which can not be gainsaid.

Margaret's father had, however, confessed to mine that he could not understand the ways of women, and that he had no notion whatever whether his daughter regarded my suit seriously, or was merely enjoying a summer romance and keeping a boy's heart in leading-strings for a time. I knew not myself how the land lay, and at times was convinced that my passion was a hopeless

one, and that I should have to go away to some distant country and forget. Margaret gave me no sign of special favor. I was simply one of many. I took my cup of tea almost every afternoon from the girl's fair hands, and I suffered her to beat me at tennis, although I was a champion. Or, when she permitted me to play upon her side, I wielded my racket with a fiery ardor which soon suffused my face with crimson and incapacitated me from personating properly the rôle of a romantic young lover. So that I forswore tennis, and, as often as possible, persuaded Margaret to sit in a rustic chair under the trees, where she made an exquisite picture, and where I, in the grass at her feet, might read poetry. Sometimes I threw away the book and we talked of many things, she keeping deftly away from that one theme which occupied me. When I attempted to address her in the language of compliment, or to hint at the love which was consuming me, she instantly reduced me, in her own pretty, imperious fashion, to a wordless and despairing smoking of cigarettes.

It was the piebald nag who came at last to my rescue. I feel assured that the wise old beast had long observed the state of affairs, as was evi-

dent from the expression of his waggish face, and had determined to bring matters to an issue. Just about that same spot where I had seen Margaret first, and whither I made a daily pilgrimage, the nag kicked up his heels and shied, and, for the first time in his parti-colored career, ran away. I was promptly upon the scene, breathless, terrified at the sight of Margaret's peril, and I caught the flying steed, not, however, before he had contrived to throw me down and give me a blessed kick or two. I had some nasty scratches and a few moments of unconsciousness, from which I awoke to find Margaret weeping over me and calling me by some very pretty names which I had despaired of ever hearing from her lips. My recovery was very rapid. I drove that sagacious animal home. He was as quiet and tractable as a lamb, going, indeed, at such a snail's pace as proved him to be possessed of a preternatural wisdom. By the time we reached the door of the big house the dearest wish of our respective fathers was granted—we were engaged.

My own dearest wish was granted, too, and I discovered, wonderful, magical, as it seemed, that Margaret loved me. In her fear for my safety and in the excitement following upon the acci-

dent, she had revealed the secret which she had been at such pains to conceal. We conversed upon that subject and no other all the way to the big house, and I am free to confess that, in spite of the piebald's efforts, the time seemed entirely too short. When we were alighting at the door, Margaret cried fervently:

"I shall never forgive old Spot for having so nearly killed you. I think I shall have him sold."

"My dearest," cried I in alarm, "he is my chief benefactor. I wouldn't have him sold for the world. On the contrary I am deeply grateful, and feel that I owe him all my happiness."

Margaret smiled then comprehendingly, and oh, so bewitchingly, shooting a glance from under her long lashes, and exclaiming:

"The very idea! As if you could owe your happiness to an old piebald nag!"

Bruin and Her Baby

BY JEROMF HARTE

BRUIN belonged to the classes, as opposed to the masses. Bruin could not help it, she was born that way! Before she came north to college, she was Miss Deborah Dempster of the Dempsters of Dempsterville, Kentucky —you know the family. She could well afford to be a haughty lady, for the old family of Kentucky Dempsters had held for many generations a high place in the Southern heart. There had been soldier generals in that family from time immemorable—and Bruin's uncle had died fighting for the Confederacy. Her great-great-grandmother had been the *most* beautiful woman and the *greatest* belle of her day, and Bruin was much like her, in a modern sense. Men liked her and she was supremely indifferent to them; girls adored her and she cared very little for them; older people were nice to her because she was Miss Deborah Dempster of Kentucky, you know—and they bored her. She cared little or nothing for homage, having had a life full of it.

From infancy, Miss Deborah had had black attendants all her own, negroes with the rare old slave spirit still a part of them. Time was when the Dempsters could buy and sell a thousand slaves and pay them, freed, good money. That was the time when the Dempster coffers were full and the Dempsters lived in one round of opulence and glory. But when, in her twentieth year, Miss Deborah came north to college, she brought only a modest box of family jewels and some rare old lace in her limited wardrobe—and little else to speak of. People who knew said that the Dempsters of Dempsterville were beginning to want the merest necessities of life, and that Deborah, the only child, had sped North to work that she might stay the tide of family ruin. And work she certainly did! The college knew no better work than hers!

The college girls nicknamed Deborah before the sun had gone down on the day of her arrival. She was tall and brown, lacking much of the deliberate grace and willowy slenderness of the Southern girl. She had inherited broad shoulders and a keen eye from her father, she strode rather than walked, her voice was deep, and its soft

Southern drawl took on in the North a quick decisive note that had some sharpness in it. She was plump and as trim as a severely tailor-made girl can be. She seldom lapsed into the trailing softness and fluffiness of a Southern woman's make-up. She had a fine old pink satin and lace bedrobe in her trunk, and Billie, her merry little room-mate, coming in unexpectedly one day, caught her dressed in this splendid creation. It fell about her feet and was low at the neck, and Bruin had done her abundant brown hair in a low coil at her neck. She was like some elegant painting. Billie, the irrepressible, screamed with delight and yelled for some one to come and see, but Bruin jumped up and tore the robe off and hid it before anybody else could come. Billie never saw her wear it again, but she loaned it for theatricals. In a ballroom she was a queen. She had only one ball dress, an ivory satin trimmed with rare old lace and yards and yards of fluffy flounces. It was stately and magnificent, and there was nothing like it in college. But as I said, she seldom lapsed into the trailing softness of such a gown. Everyday, she wore a short brown skirt, the same one always, with stitched bands and a chatelaine bag at the belt,

a bronze shirtwaist with linen collar and cuffs and a narrow long tie, and she wore her shining dark hair coiled on the top of her head. She seldom varied. On Sunday, she put on a lace collar and cuffs and slipped a little diamond pin into her tie. If there were guests at dinner, she would not come down, for her only dressy dress, the ivory satin, she said was too much trouble, and the matron was against shirtwaists in the presence of guests.

Because Miss Deborah was so big and brown and sleek-looking, the girls dubbed her Bruin. She took it laughingly—every girl had a nickname! Billie, her room-mate, teased her the very first week of college and Bruin growled. Billie howled with delight.

"You *are* a regular bear!" she cried.

Bruin laughed, too. She was not the girl to be annoyed by youthful banter.

The girl who roomed next door to Bruin was a plain little thing with pointed blue-white teeth and scrimpy dull black hair that never looked well. She was a bright girl and everybody liked her, but her friends called her Roddy, which only a college girl, I suppose, could elucidate as short for Rodent! She and Bruin were great friends.

All the girls said that Bruin would marry young. Most Southern women do. But Bruin said very quietly that she could not afford to waste her college training; she intended to teach. The girls applauded—and understood. They had heard about the financial dilemmas of the Dempsters of Dempsterville, Kentucky.

It would take time to tell of Bruin's many love affairs. Men came from the four corners of the earth to see her, and at every Glee Club concert or other college function, Bruin, in her ivory satin—or the bronze shirtwaist—faced at least two men. Most of the college girls had strenuous times inviting men up; but I think Bruin never asked one to come. Her father or her cousins sent them, and they jumped at the chance. The new men whom she met fell in love at sight and the Yale men—the big fellows—said she was a brick. She was. All the girls felt sure that marriage was her destiny, and they felt, too, that her family would not object—if the man had money enough. You see, the Dempster fortunes had to be mended *somehow!*

In her freshman year, Roddy's brother John came to visit. He was like Roddy, but big and broad. He was bald on top and the rest of his

hair was like his sister's. He was well-groomed and distinguished-looking, and his clean-shaven face, though not handsome, was good to look at. The girls had known all along that Roddy was rich. Her manicure lady and her shampoo lady and her washlady and her seamstress and her tailor were the envy of their lives, but her brother's touring-car and his chauffeur and his princely way of entertaining Roddy's friends took them quite by storm. Roddy had more friends than ever—and she was always a popular girl.

Bruin did not seem to make an instant hit with Roddy's brother, as she did with other men. Roddy suddenly treated her rather coolly and took her out with them but once. The girls wondered at it.

Roddy was a Roman Catholic. My story happened before the days of our own great girls' college of the present and Roddy, with a splendid Catholic preparatory education, had elected to take a course among the daughters of the Puritans. She often let Billie go to Mass with her. Billie had no faith, she was born that way; but also, she had little bigotry. She liked to go to church with Roddy and she liked to be told

about the faith of our fathers. After a time, Roddy—and other things—made a Catholic of Billie. But that, as you know, will make another story.

Billie had discovered that Roddy had a horror of mixed marriages, which she said, vehemently, were a curse. She had seen the folly of them in the case of a dead sister and she was very bitter. Bruin never went to any church, but Roddy once found out in a medieval history controversy that Bruin had stored up an amount of latent narrow-minded prejudice against the Roman Catholics. And Billie, the keen, guessed that Roddy did not want Bruin to captivate her big brother, and, in her good-natured, meddlesome way, set about helping Roddy prevent it. And would you believe it? They were so sure that Bruin would not be steel against his ducats, that they contrived to let brother John see her but the once during his visit! I know they both breathed more freely when he was gone.

Bruin and Roddy seemed to keep up only a pretense of friendship after that, although the strained behavior was chiefly on Roddy's side. Bruin was calm and matter-of-fact about it

and treated Roddy as she had always treated her. And a year went by.

Then Roddy's brother John came again, and a strange thing happened. I believe Bruin had been waiting for him to come again! He came on Saturday night and Roddy had him to dinner next day.

The girls were waiting to go into the dining-room that Sunday when Bruin came down—in the ivory satin! She swept into the girls' midst and the lively chatter died a breathless death. She was a picture! Her beautiful hair was coiled as her college friends had seldom seen it, loose and low on her neck, and she had a spray of scarlet blossoms at her throat. Her brown cheeks were burning, and the fluffy loveliness of her trailing make-up made her a model of grace and beauty. The girls fairly gasped. She went straight to Roddy and her brother and put out her hand to the latter. She smiled her rare, white-teethed smile at him and her keen brown eyes looked frankly into his.

"I am glad to see you here again," she said, simply.

Billie and Roddy were helpless. Miss Deborah Dempster, the indifferent, the cold, had set out

to conquer, and there was no staying her. From that moment, brother John's fate was sealed, and I think he knew it!

Bruin did not wait to graduate. She married Roddy's brother in two months, and the family fortunes of the Dempsters of Dempsterville, Kentucky, were saved. Roddy's brother was indeed very rich, and the college girls said slily that he had paid a good price for Bruin. She was worth it. But poor Roddy's heart was broken.

"Oh, yes, they were married by the priest!" she sobbed to Billie, the sympathetic. "But how much do you think that means to a bigot like Bruin? She ought never to have married any one, especially a Catholic—and brother John!"

Billie agreed with her completely. Orphaned Billie was every day growing more sweetly enthusiastic about the Roman Catholic religion. It was indeed hardly a year before her conversion was complete. She said she wished she had married John herself. Roddy would have had nothing to worry about, then!

The girls sent Bruin wedding-presents and talked excitedly about her by candlelight in

their college rooms. There were things about Bruin that made the idea of her, married, seem incongruous. She had never shown a sign of sentiment. No one ever saw her kiss a girl or put an arm about her; she had always greeted and parted from her friends with a hearty man-like handshake. Even when her gallant old father came from the South to see her, she only shook hands long and heartily with him. The girls wondered how it would have been had her mother lived, but her mother was dead many years. When college freshmen got "crushed" on her, as so many of them did, and grew confidential and spoony, Bruin was coolly bored. She looked at them calmly, scornfully, and they fell on her neck but once. Now that she was gone, the girls asked themselves what she *could* have said to John when he proposed!

"You may be sure she made that strong enough, anyway!" Billie said, a little spitefully. "But I'll lay a wager she's been as cold as ice ever since!"

Bruin had a baby. She named him Woodward, after her father, and in her infrequent letters to the girls, she said that he was a splendid youngster and bald, like his father.

When Roddy returned from her Christmas vacation, her first holiday after the birth of the baby, she was down-hearted. She wept bitterly on Billie's shoulder. Bruin would not allow her child to be baptized a Roman Catholic! John was almost crazy and so was his family. John was not the kind to storm, but he had moved heaven and earth to give his child baptism in the faith. Bruin was stone. Quarrel she would if necessary, fight she could if forced, but she declared she would never have a Papist child!

"It's awful!" sobbed Roddy. "The baby isn't a bit strong and he has terrible attacks of croup! We are so afraid he will die in one of them! Bruin has never let him out of her sight, and has watched him like a dragon from the hour of his birth! John can't get his own baby alone a minute, she's so afraid that he'll be baptized in spite of her! She won't bring him down when we come to call and we've never had a peep into the nursery! We *ache* for a sight of John's baby, but she wouldn't let us get him in ou—our ar—arms if we—we were d—dying!"

That very winter, not many weeks later, Billie was called to Chicago on business. She was all alone in the world, and some distant relatives

were always in a legal row with her, over her modest little fortune. I guess they wanted a piece of the fortune. Some one of them had sued her in Chicago, and her lawyer advised her to go camp on the ground.

As soon as Bruin heard of it, she wrote Billie and asked her to stay at their suburban home during her time in Chicago. Billie showed the letter to Roddy, and they wept together.

"You'll see John's baby!" sobbed Roddy.

Bruin was very luxurious in her new home. She sent her coupé to the station to meet her old room-mate, and the coachman was buried in furs, and the carriage was all satin and shiny inside. Billie sighed. Roddy's brother John certainly was very rich, and he had rather fancied Roddy's little friend Billie before that eventful Sunday that brought Bruin down to dinner in her ivory satin. But Billie's tender regrets were more for Roddy's sake, and her thoughts quickly turned to curiosity concerning Bruin and her baby. She longed to see them both.

A butler in livery admitted Billie, and a trim little maid was waiting to escort her to the guest chamber. The guest chamber had a lighted grate fire in it and a vase of cut flowers upon the

high marble mantel, and it was splendidly furnished. Billie took in its beauty as the maid helped her off with her wraps. Her own modest fortune suddenly dimmed. It could never afford her even one room like this!

Mrs. Hanavan would see her in the library as soon as she was ready, the maid said. Billie followed her across the richly decorated hall to the library, and Bruin got up from the fire to greet her guest. Bruin was much the same Bruin of college days. Her hair was coiled smooth and high on her head, her bronze shirtwaist and belt and tie were silk, as was also her trim tailor skirt, and her collar and cuffs were lace. She had the baby on her arm.

She wrung Billie's hand and told her that it seemed like old times to see her again. Billie begged at once to take the baby. She bounced him and kissed his bald head and "couch-a-couch-a-ed" and called him "ittie bittie sweetie" names. Bruin laughed at her.

"He'll think you crazy," Bruin said. "He's not used to that!"

Billie laughed and blushed and hid her face in the baby's wrinkled neck. She had always thought that the way to treat babies! Then she

handed him back, reluctantly. Bruin took him much as she might have taken a delicate bundle and sat with him on one arm. She rocked serenely, and he rocked with her, shaking his little rattle. Bruin did not laugh at him nor play with him nor kiss and fondle him, as Billie was longing to do. Once he cried a little and Bruin shifted him to the other arm, gently, but without a word. Billie looked about the palatial room and at Bruin's jeweled left hand—and at the baby. She had always felt that there were noble depths beneath Bruin's coldness, but—was this being a mother? Now, if she had a baby—

John came home at dark. Dinner-time was at hand, and the house was brilliantly lighted. John was thinner and not so trim-looking; there was an air of carelessness about him and his shoulders drooped; a line had come between his brows and his eyes were tired and old.

Bruin greeted him coolly and in a matter-of-fact way. The baby began to coo and gurgle and guggle when he saw his father; and after John had wrung Billie's hand and told her in a tense, tired voice how genuinely glad he was to see her, he bent down and took his wiggling son to his heart. His eyes grew suddenly moist and

he kissed the little fellow's soft head and neck and shoulders. The baby got one hand in his scant back hair and with the rattle in his other hand, battered his father's bald head, gooing and squealing the while. John smiled, his eyes half-closed. Bruin coolly leaned over and rang for the nurse. She came almost at once. John went white and shut his lips hard. Then he handed up his son, who straightway began to bawl. John sat back dully and tried to talk. Bruin did everything so calmly that a stranger might never have suspected the situation. But Billie understood, and her tender little heart ached in sympathy. She wondered, suddenly, if her prayers would help John any! She determined to write that night and ask Roddy if a person who was not a Catholic, really, but who knew it was the only right thing and expected to embrace it just as soon as she understood fully, could help a good Catholic sufferer by praying for him, too! Billie felt that John was as good as men were made, and she knew that Roddy and he believed implicitly in prayer. She knew that his family were praying for him, and generous Billie had an intense desire to help him, too.

Before Roddy had had time to answer that

letter—two days later, in fact—a great thing happened. It was queer that it should have happened while Billie was there; but who will say that God's ways are not queer in their very wisdom? He answers our prayers in His own good time; and He was ready just at that time to reward John's faith in Him and the faith of his family. It was a good lesson for Billie, hovering on the brink of the true belief.

Bruin's servants were quite a family. The trim little maid was the coachman's wife and baby's nurse was her sister. The butler was the coachman's brother, and only the cook was an alien. When the nurse's and the maid's father died in the city that morning, they went with the butler to the city on the first train. The coachman followed them in the late afternoon, bidding the girls not to worry about the horses until his return in the morning and leaving only the cook to look after them. John was at business in the city, as usual, until the evening train. The snow was coming down fast and heavily, but the coachman said he did not think the trains would be delayed by the storm.

"John's train gets in at eight," Bruin said. "He can take a public conveyance if the walking

is too bad. It's lonesome out here, isn't it?"

They had had an early dinner, the custom when John could not return until eight, and the baby was tucked away in bed. It *was* lonesome. The maid and the butler wore felt shoes, but they made some noise, and the house seemed empty without them. Bruin played the piano and Billie sang. Then they played a game of ping pong. But it was horribly dull. They listened for the train's whistle and went many times to the window. The wind had risen and the snowstorm was a blizzard. But they heard no whistle, and at nine o'clock John had not come.

"Do you suppose the train is late?" Bruin said. "John usually telephones from the city when it is."

Billie suggested 'phoning and they went out from Bruin's room adjoining the nursery, where they had been sitting, into the high, echoy hall. Bruin turned on all the switches and flooded the halls with light; it made it a little less lonely. The whole house was as still as only a heavy winter night could make it.

Central did not answer Bruin. She tried again and again, and finally asked Billie to try it. Billie was just as unsuccessful.

"Could you hear any sound at all?" Bruin said.

"Not a sound!" cried Billie.

They looked at each other soberly.

"It's just as I feared," Bruin said, quietly. "The snow has probably broken our wires."

Back in Bruin's room they lifted the curtains and gazed out upon the stormy white world. It was a bad night. The cracking trees outside were ghostly sentinels and flying snow hid the hedges at the street gate. Timid Billie sighed and shuddered; Bruin shrugged her shoulders.

They sat down again and sewed and read and read and sewed and listened to the baby's gentle breathing. At ten o'clock Bruin yawned.

"We'll go downstairs and see what cook has for breakfast," she said.

Billie followed her down the winding, soft-carpeted staircases, two stories of them, to the basement. The kitchen was dark and silent. Bruin called and receiving no answer, groped around for the matches and lighted up. The supper dishes stood on the sink, unwashed, and the lids, half off the stove, showed the gas going full tilt. The top of the stove was strewn with

utensils that had cooked the late dinner and what was left of the dinner itself.

"What on earth—" gasped Bruin.

They searched the basement parlor and library that John had fitted up for his servants and all the comfortable little bedrooms, but they were dark and silent and empty. The cook's room showed some confusion. There was an empty hatbox on the bed and one worn-heeled slipper beside it. The mate to this footgear lay in a corner tossed up against the wall, as though it had landed there when kicked off. The clothes-press door was opened and most of its contents pulled off the nails and out upon the bedroom floor. Bruin laughed at Billie's frightened eyes.

"Cooks are uncertain quantities!" said she. "I'll lay a wager ours has gone to the wake with her friends! Her best hat and her fur cape are gone."

So Bruin and Billie were quite alone in the great house. Billie was frightened, but Bruin was calm and collected about it. They went upstairs.

"Don't you feel it a little chilly?" asked Bruin, as they passed through the halls. "It must be a terrible night outside."

They went to bed. Billie told Roddy after-

ward that she would never forget just how creepy she felt that night as she gazed about the whiteness and elegance of the high, sumptuous bedroom she occupied. The wind outside made the only sound in the winter world that hemmed them in, alone. When she closed her door, its squeak made her start. She crawled beneath the covers and sighed. Somewhere in the hall below, a big clock struck eleven in deep, solemn tones. Then another timepiece took up the sound and chimed the hour in silvery tinkles, and then another, and still another, here and there throughout the house. It was very pretty, but weird. As she cuddled down, Billie thought her nose felt cold. It occurred to her that that was rather queer in John's well-built steam-heated house. The weather outside must indeed be terrible to produce this noticeable change in the atmosphere indoors. Billie said her prayers —the prayers Roddy had taught her. Then she blessed herself, and kissed a tiny cross about her neck; Roddy did that.

"Poor Roddy!" she said to herself. "If only John had married a Catholic, we could all teach that precious baby to bless himself!"

Then Billie fell asleep.

Some time in the night, she awoke with a start. Bruin was calling her and her voice sounded queer and far away.

"Billie!" she was crying, "Billie! come quick!"

Billie threw back the downy quilts and bounded out upon the floor. She bounded back as quickly again. The floor was like ice and the cold of the room struck a shiver through her!

"Oh, Billie, come, come, come!" Bruin was screaming.

Billie had her cold bedroom slippers in her hand. She crowded her bare feet into them, and catching her icy bathrobe from the chair, ran with chattering teeth and shivering flesh across the dark, dead-cold hall to Bruin's room. Bruin was in the nursery. It was lighted and she was on the floor beside the baby's bed. She was in her nightgown and her feet were bare.

"What shall I do?" she cried to Billie, "Baby has the croup!"

The baby coughed, a harsh, rasping cough. He struggled for breath and the phlegm in his throat seemed choking him. Bruin was not her cool, collected self. The room was like a barn and the baby's little hands, as he tossed them outside the coverlet in his paroxysms of coughing,

were ice-cold. Bruin had a bottle of camphorated oil in her hands and she was trying to put some of it on the baby's throat, but she was putting most of it on the coverlets.

Billie pulled on her bathrobe and wrapped and tied it tightly about her.

"I don't know a thing about croup, Bruin," she shivered. "I wish we could get the doctor!"

"And the 'phone won't work!" cried Bruin. "How could the fire have gone out! What shall I do?"

"I've heard that bathing—" began unsophisticated Billie.

Bruin looked at her, dubiously. Then she jumped up and ran into the bathroom. Billie heard her scream. She came back with a very white face.

"The water won't come!" she said.

"The pipes are frozen!" gasped Billie.

Bruin stood, uncertain. Then she ran into the bathroom again, and Billie heard her tear open a window. She rushed back with a chunk of ice and snow in her red hands. The front of her nightdress was wet. She got the pan of her chafing-dish and put the snow in it. She found the wood alcohol and lighted the chaf-

ing dish. The baby broke into another fit of coughing.

"Put some oil on him!" cried Bruin.

Billie's hands were shaking. "What will we do, Bruin?" she sobbed.

"Oh, I don't know!" Bruin said. "Nurse and the doctor have been here every time he has had croup, and Billie, I don't seem to know what to do myself! What makes you think I ought to bathe him?"

"Oh, I heard, somewhere—" began Bruin, vaguely, "but I don't know whether it was croup or convulsions!"

The baby went off into another fit of coughing and Billie thought he was choking. Bruin snatched him from the cradle with a scream, and tried with her finger to get the phlegm from his throat.

"If I could only help him!" cried Bruin.

They tried to get some of the oil down him, but he only strangled and did not vomit, a thing Bruin said she knew would have helped him. He was very weak, and lay, white and exhausted, in his mother's arms. Billie wondered if babies really did die with croup and she recalled Roddy's words, the baby was not baptized.

"Bruin," Billie said, in a hard little voice, "he is awfully cold! Where—where does the doctor live?"

Bruin stared at her a moment, wild-eyed. Then she wrapped the baby in the quilts and thrust him into Billie's arms.

"You could never find the way," she said, dully. "I must go. Give him oil and—don't let him die while I'm gone."

Billie was crying. "Put on some clothes!" she sobbed. "You'll freeze to death on the way!"

The baby's deep croupy cough sounded, and Bruin tore away. Billie heard her get out John's high boots and drag them on, and she heard her get something out of the hall clothes-press where the heavier wraps were kept, but she knew that Bruin had not stopped to dress. She wondered, stupidly, if they would find her frozen body in the storm and she wondered, too, if the baby would be dead by that time.

Billie sat gazing down at the heavily-breathing child. She was very much afraid of him. Suddenly she started and looked wildly at him. Then she put him on his bed and ran across the hall to her room. She got her dress-suit case and wrenched it open. In the bottom was a

catechism of Christian doctrine. She took it and ran back to the baby.

"It doesn't say that the person must be a Roman Catholic!" she said. "God knows there isn't a soul I can ask and the baby must be baptized!"

The only water in sight was the melted snow and ice in the chafing-dish and it was warm. Trembling Billie dipped her fingers in it and with the catechism open in her other hand, sprinkled the drops upon Bruin's baby's little bald head.

"I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," she said. "Amen."

Then she fell to crying, and the child's faint, wheezing wail sounded, too. She warmed the oil over the chafing-dish fire and rubbed the cold little feet and hands. The minutes were hours, but Roddy would thank God when Billie wrote her that John's baby had been baptized out of a Roman Catholic catechism!

Meanwhile, Bruin, John's greatcoat wrapped about her nightgown, and his high boots drawn over her bare limbs, was fighting her way through the snow. The wind had died, but it was a bitter night and the way was wellnigh impass-

able. Bruin, up to her waist in the snow, fell many times, and her breath came in hisses through her drawn teeth. Bruin would never forget that night. She met no one. The doctor's house was only two streets away, but the panting woman was some time reaching it. She fell up the snow-heaped steps and rang the nightbell. Presently, a woman's sleepy voice answered her. The doctor? He had gone on a call to Westfield and would not be back until morning.

Bruin dragged herself around and staggered down the steps. There was no other physician for miles! She went very, very slowly through the snow now. She was not so cold, but she was tired and sleepy. Around the corner was the Roman Catholic church and next to it the priest's house. They lay white and silent in the winter world. Bruin noticed a dim light in the lower hall, and, when she was abreast, fresh tracks through the snow to the front door. Bigoted Bruin stood before the parted snow-drifts and stared at the point of light. They called the priest *Doctor* Kennedy in the town and many poor people blessed him for his healing. Fierce hatred struggled with the mother-love in her breast and she stood, battling.

The door opened and Father Kennedy peered out. He had his coat on his arm. Indeed, he had just taken it off, having returned a moment since from a sick call. A woman's tall form stood swaying in the snow piles at his gate. He started toward her, putting on his coat as he went and leaving the door ajar behind him.

"My child," he said, "what is the matter?"

Bruin straightened herself, numbly. "I am John Hanavan's wife," she said. "My baby is dying and the doctor is away. I want a doctor."

"I will be with you in a minute," the priest said.

He rejoined Bruin in a fraction of time. She was almost exhausted. He said little to her, but he took her arm and half-led, half-carried her through the snow. They were soon at the Hanavan house.

The baby was unmistakably worse. His little face was blue and red by turns and his hoarse breathing could be heard all over the big house. Billie was trying to give him air as he coughed and choked and struggled for breath. Father Kennedy sprang across the room and took the baby from Billie's weak arms.

"Has this child been baptized?" he demanded, sternly.

Bruin looked at the priest and shook her head, dumbly. She put her hand to her throat—and the baby caught his gasping breath in a racking whoop. All the hard, dogged lines of Bruin's face were distorted with fear, and a quivering sob escaped her lips.

"Quick!" she moaned, "I—I'll name him John!" She had evidently forgotten altogether the name of Woodward.

In a flash, it came to distracted Billie that there was nothing for her to say. Perhaps, being a Protestant, her baptism was not valid, and anyway, Bruin ought not to be discouraged in her yielding. So she shut her lips firmly and in a moment it was all over, and John Hanavan, junior, had been really baptized a Roman Catholic!

Then Father Kennedy became another man. His orders were quick, sharp, and decisive. He sent the girls scurrying for needed things, and he knew exactly what to do.

"We must have heat!" he cried. "Where are your fireplaces?"

They remembered the grate-fire in Bruin's room, and in an instant, he had the gas lighted

and Bruin holding the baby close to it. He had medicine with him, and he sent Billie running to the basement for onions for an old-fashioned remedy. He held the baby while they heated blankets and hot water bottles at his direction; and in a little while, the child began to breathe more easily. It was a fight! Billie forgot that a priest, not a doctor, was at work!

"I was afraid it was going to be membranous," he said, "but he's all right now."

The room grew warmer. Bruin sat holding her son close to the gas logs. The priest had forced some brandy on her and Billie had wrapped a bathrobe about her. She had stopped shivering, and her face showed a great relief. The baby was breathing quietly.

"Now," said the priest to Billie, "get dressed as soon as you can! We must have water and an even heat throughout the house if the baby is to recover. I'm used to steam heat and water pipes!" he laughed to Bruin. "They are as common as snow!"

Billie lighted his way through the cold halls to the basement and to the cellars, and they both set to work. The water pipes were frozen, and the fire had been dead many hours, perhaps

since the previous night, when the cook had left it in such a hurry. Billie brought and held things while the priest shovelled coal and melted the ice-filled water pipes. They toiled for it, but when they came upstairs after two hours of work, the water was running and the steam was sizzling through the radiators. Father Kennedy was begrimed, and Billie's little face was black. At the foot of the basement stairs, Billie faced Father Kennedy. She was a timid girl and a priest had always seemed more of heaven than of earth to her.

"I—I'm not a Catholic, Father," she ventured, "but I have a Catholic catechism and I knew the baby hadn't been baptized and I was afraid he'd die, and so I baptized him before you came!"

The priest gazed at her, curiously. "Did you, my child?" he said.

"Yes," said Billie. "You see, his aunt told me that Mrs. Hanavan would not let her baby be baptized and they were all so afraid that he would die in an attack of croup. I was sure he was pretty ill—and you know, the catechism doesn't say a Protestant *couldn't* baptize a Catholic child—does it? I thought I'd better risk it, Father. But when you came, I did not

know what to do! I thought if she was willing I might spoil it by telling her that he had been baptized; and anyway, it's surer when you have baptized him, isn't it? Bruin would never understand if I told her!"

The priest smiled, thoughtfully. "Perhaps not, my child," he said. "You did quite right, anyway." He paused. "Why is it that you are not a Catholic?" he asked.

"I wasn't born one!" she laughed. "But really, Father, Mrs. Hanavan's sister-in-law has been trying for ages to convert me and I guess she has just about succeeded. After I'd studied history at college, I could not see how any one could think any other religion right. It's funny how many of us are blind, isn't it, Father?"

Father Kennedy left a warm house, a quiet baby, and two happier women when he went away at daybreak. He sent his housekeeper over to get breakfast for them; and when John Hanavan, alarmed that his repeated efforts to get Bruin by 'phone had failed, came home on the early morning train, the events of the night looked like a dream of the past. Billie saw John coming and she ran to the front door to meet him.

"The baby's baptized, the baby's baptized by Father Kennedy!" she cried. "Just think! He was dying of croup and Bruin went after the doctor with scarcely any clothes on—I thought she'd die before she got there!—and he wouldn't be back until morning and she brought back the priest and the fire was out and the water pipes were frozen and he didn't do anything until the baby had been baptized! Then he cured him and did everything! And oh! Bruin *told* him to *hurry* and name the baby John! He's John, junior! Did you ever know anything so glorious, John! why don't you say something!"

How could he? Billie followed him up to Bruin's room and peeped in.

The gas logs were going brightly and the room was very warm and a little steamy. Bruin still sat holding her blanketed baby to the fire. Her robe had slipped back from her nightdress, which was opened at the neck and badly bedraggled; her hair tumbled about her shoulders and into her heated face. She was holding her cheek against the baby's little red bald head, when Billie looked in, and she had thrown her free arm about John's shoulders, as he knelt

with his arm about his wife and child. Bruin spied Billie sidling away.

"Billie, come here!" she cried, and Billie hardly knew her soft, rich voice. "Didn't you play godmother to the baby, Billie? and didn't we name him John? I was so shaky, John, I didn't know what was happening, but really, Billie is no kind of a godmother to have, is she, John? She's a Protestant! You're a Protestant, Billie, and how can you have a Catholic grandchild! Poor baby! he'll be a great Catholic if much depends on Billie—and me! John, we must tell that wonderful man that perhaps Billie needs only an attack of croup to make her a Roman Catholic!"

John turned his face to Billie. It was beautiful in its relief and shining happiness. "Billie," he said, "what have you to say about it?"

Billie faced them, her hands behind her back. "That's all right!" she said, saucily. "You can just lay a wager I'll see that John Hanavan, junior, has a proper Catholic training! All he needs is a converted mother! As for his godmother, don't let that worry you! I always knew it was the only Right! Why, any one who has studied history must see which is God's

church! I *am* a Roman Catholic! You ask Roddy! I'm looking for a godmother of my own!"

Bruin looked at her, soberly. "Father Kennedy is an angel," she said, softly. The baby stirred and gave a little hoarse cough. Bruin kissed him, lingeringly. "Muzzer's own!" she whispered.

"Bruin!" said Billie, "he'll think you're crazy! He's not used to that, you know! Bruin, do you mind waiting until I get out? I've a very weak heart!"

Bruin, the cold, the indifferent, had turned from John, junior, and had kissed John senior tenderly. His face changed, and Bruin laughed at Billie's speech. Billie could detect no note of sharpness in that happy laugh.

"I thought baby was going to die!" Bruin said, smoothing John's bald spot. "Do you think to-night has turned my head, Billie? You are looking at me so strangely."

"I think to-night seems to have done many beautiful things, Bruin," Billie said. "Don't kiss that baby again, he'll get microbes. Bruin! anybody'd think you were a sentimental freshman!"

"Keep still, tease," Bruin said, sweetly. "I've been through John's purgatory to-night and the joy of release has intoxicated me. Perhaps you can't understand, Billie. You've never had a baby."

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