

Two Splendid Complete Stories.

HORNER'S PENNY STORIES



THE COWARD *by* Bessie Reynolds

No. 1115.]

A Romance of Mary—the Red Cross Sister.

[January 30th, 1916.

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of King
and Country



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A Grand Complete Story of a Woman's Part in the Great War.

By **BESSIE REYNOLDS.**

THIS WEEK: THE COWARD.

"A BIT OF A PICKLE."

IT was not exactly a day for a walk by the sea on the East Coast. There was a strong wind blowing coldly, and under a leaden sky the waves tossed sullenly.

Yet Private Rand took his usual walk along the deserted sea front, wrapped warmly in the inevitable khaki overcoat; and only the bandage that came down beneath his cap showed that there was a reason for his remaining inactive at the East Coast hospital.

As a matter of fact, he was off in a day or two to a convalescent home, since they were expecting a fresh batch of wounded, and room had to be found for them somewhere. And in the meantime he was able to walk slowly down to the sea front, and look across the sullen waves to where "somewhere in France" the others were still "doing their little bit."

Yet this morning he found that the sea front was not entirely deserted. A small, childish figure, wrapped in a blue pilot cloth coat, whose brass buttons twinkled warmly, came running along, half-blown, indeed, by the wind that came howling along the desolate promenade.

He stopped when he reached Private Rand, and stood looking up at him with serious baby eyes of blue. And the man, drawn by an impulse, stopped, too.

"Hallo, youngster! What are you doing out here all by yourself?" he asked. His keen eyes had seen already that there was no figure following the small one.

"My daddy's a soldier man!" The child ignored the question, his blue eyes wandering over the khaki-clad figure with quiet confidence. "And they shooted him wiv a fing called a maria."

"Did they, though?" Mark Rand smiled. The child's version of the nickname of "Black Maria" was quaint.

"I hope they didn't shoot him badly," he went on. But the blue eyes had seen the bandage showing beneath the service cap, and he pointed a fat finger.

"Poor man!" he said. "Is 'oo shooted, too?"

"Looks like it," Mark admitted. And then a slim, black-gowned figure seemed to come swiftly down a side road, and across to the parade. She swooped down upon the small, blue-coated form, and grabbed him firmly.

"Naughty boy!" she said. But the small boy only smiled.

"You was a long time," he said, "so I putted mine coat on mineself."

"A bit of a pickle, evidently," Mark said pleasantly. His keen eyes saw the pallor of the sweet face beneath the sombre hat. Evidently the child had given her a fright. She was in deep mourning, too. Mark Rand, smiling down at the child, was putting two and two together quickly enough. The little one's talk of his soldier father who had been "shooted," the young woman in her deep mourning; it all pointed to one thing.

The girl was the little one's mother, and widowed—one more victim of the cruel Juggernaut of war that rolled on inexorably over human hearts.

Not that Private Rand exactly put it in that way even to himself. He only guessed at the facts, and gave them a thrill of pity from a kindly heart.

"Yes," she said, "he gets into mischief, rather." And then her eyes, too, went to the bandage beneath the service cap, and a pitying look crept into them.

They were eyes of deepest, darkest blue, very like those of the boy, as Mark noticed; the sort of eyes that a man liked to look pityingly at him, that a man would like—

He pulled himself up sharply. Mark Rand, meeting a young widow and thinking foolish thoughts.

"You have been wounded, too," she said. And then before he could reply, she caught sight of a woman on the other side of the parade; a rough, yet tidy woman who was evidently one of the fishermen's wives.

"There is Mrs. Best," she told the child. "She is looking for us. We are staying with her at present," she explained, and lifted those blue eyes to his in a glance as steady and free from self-consciousness as those of a boy might have been. "I hope that you will soon be quite well," she said, and turned swiftly away.

And because the child turned now and again to wave the other small hand in reiterative farewell to the "soldier man," who had been "shooted like daddy," Mark Rand stood there for a while on the wind-swept promenade and watched the little group blown unsteadily along, until they vanished into a small house that was one of a row at the further end of the sea front, and well away from the fashionable quarter.

After which he turned and went back to the East Coast hospital, to be haunted for the rest of the day by a slim, black-gowned figure, with a fair, sweet face.

Not that he was very likely to see the owner of the blue eyes again. He was off in a few days, and, besides, a fellow could hardly force his acquaintance upon a woman; and this woman in her deep mourning had probably another to think about—the man whom she had given to her country.

But he did wonder a little that night as he lay in his bed, and watched the night nurse and her little island of light in the distance, that seemed by contrast to accentuate the gloom of the rest of the ward. He wondered what it would be like to have just such blue eyes looking love into his own.

THE ATTACK ON THE HOSPITAL.

HE was back in the trenches, sleeping fitfully to the sound of the shells booming overhead, and screaming away somewhere behind him. They wouldn't let a fellow have the chance of a rest for five minutes. He grumbled that to himself as he woke.

And then, with a start, he was wide awake. All about him were the familiar lines of spotless beds, but for once the peaceful quiet of the ward in the early grey of a winter's morning was broken.

All the wounded who were able to move were sitting up, and those who were helpless lay looking out with eyes that held a haunting fear that was reminiscent. Only, whatever a man's eyes may show, if he is

Next week's number will contain another of these charming complete stories, entitled

"HER MAIMED HERO."

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not a coward, he has control over his tongue; and these men had proved themselves no cowards long ago.

Another shell went booming overhead and struck something near by with a crash. Men began to huddle on their clothes. The night nurse with a face that was white but calm went quietly to and fro.

She was waiting for orders; but in the meantime, there were all the last small tasks to finish before giving over the ward to the day nurses, and mechanically she went on with them.

Mary, the Red Cross sister, hurrying up with her dressing, came quickly down the stairs to her duty at the ward, and in the corridor she met her lover. Captain Wenderby gave her a glance and a smile. No need to tell Mary not to be frightened, he could see in a moment that she had her nerves well under control.

"What is it?" she asked. "Surely not another bombing aeroplane."

"Worse," he said quietly. "You cannot see it from here, but there are three German cruisers bombarding the place, and—ah—"

He stopped short on the little exclamation. From a corner of the building there came a crash, which showed that one shell at least had struck the hospital.

"Bound to shell us," he said; "hospitals are about their mark. You'll arrange about getting your wounded down to the cellars at once. I'll send you what orderlies we can spare."

Mary nodded gravely; and then, with an impulse, he put an arm about her and kissed her very solemnly upon the lips.

"We shall certainly meet again, somewhere," he said, and went off to his own duty.

Mary found the ward busy. Those who were able to dress had done so, and there was a general air of waiting for orders. But the night nurse was preparing breakfasts in a calm fashion that brought a light to Mary's eyes as she watched her.

"No time for breakfasts now," she said quietly. "Nurse Mann, the orders are that the patients are to be taken to the cellars as speedily as possible."

Another shell went booming overhead at that moment. There was such a pandemonium of noise, that Nurse Mann could only nod her understanding of the order. But she began in her usual calm way to prepare the patients for removal.

Two or three other nurses had arrived on the scene by this time, and a group of orderlies with the inevitable stretchers. Those patients who were able to help the others to hobble downstairs, made themselves useful.

Mary, giving her quick orders for blankets and mattresses to be taken downstairs for the stretcher cases, and warm wraps for all, looked round suddenly for Private Rand.

She rather liked the man who had always shown his readiness to help the nurses in any way. He was almost well; he would be able to help the man whom she had just assisted to his feet.

She turned just in time to see Mark Rand making for the door, and called him by name.

There was a moment's lull in the firing, and across the room her clear voice sounded.

"Private Rand, I want your help, please!"

The man she addressed turned to her a face that was strangely white, and yet stamped with a determination that was almost fierce.

"I cannot come," he said. "I—I'm going—"

There came the shrill, fierce scream of a shell overhead, and upon the sound the man had gone, fairly bolting through the open door.

He certainly might well have ran before the look on the faces of the men he had left behind, for they expressed almost unutterable contempt and disgust.

The man whom Mary had been supporting, took his hand from her arm and propped himself up by the wall.

"You git along, sister," he said. "You've got others worse off than me to look arter; I reckon I can make shift to git out some way. If I can't walk I can crawl."

But Mary quietly called up one of the nurses and put the man in her charge, giving her orders to help him down the stairs and then come back quickly. For herself there was more to see to in the ward before she could go downstairs into safety.

And even in the midst of that crowded hour she spared time for a thought of pity for the man who had failed. His nerve had been broken; of course, she was making kindly little excuses for him. He would hate himself when he grew calm again, and thought, and remembered.

But the man he had refused to help, hobbling painfully along now upon the arm of the younger nurse, voiced the feeling of the entire ward when he muttered:

"The dirty coward!"

Yet, if they could have seen the thought in the mind of the man they condemned they would not have called it cowardice. How our judgment of others would be altered, often enough, if we could see motives.

To Mark Rand, listening to the scream of the shells overhead, had come one thought that for him blotted out everything else. He seemed again to see that fair, sweet face, and the blue eyes that had looked so steadily into his own; he saw the slim figure, with the child clinging to her hand, go into the little house at the far end of the parade.

The most exposed part of the front, right on the curve of the bay! Something rose up within him that was the fierce fighting instinct of the man for his mate; only he did not put it like that even in his own thoughts. He had never even got so far as to claim in thought that slim woman for his own.

He only remembered that a woman and a little child were in danger; he only knew that he could not rest until they were safe—that his whole soul seemed on fire with a wild, hot fever of fear for them.

It was never for a moment of himself that Private Rand thought, as he went swiftly down the stairs and out through the open door of the hospital.

He had dressed hastily, but he was hatless and coatless as he plunged out into the grey, cold winter's morning; a pathetic figure enough, with the white bandage about his head, and not half hidden now by a service cap.

There were many others abroad beside himself. Little groups of crying women, and screaming, frightened children, came out of the little houses, as he dived down a narrow side street that led directly on to the sea front.

And almost recklessly Mark Rand thrust them one and all aside. These others needed help, too, perhaps, but he had thought for only one woman just then; he was going to save her at all costs.

As he reached the sea front, the early morning mist lifted a little. Never pausing in his hasty progress, he could yet see with a turn of the head the three ominous grey shapes out beyond the bay; strange, menacing shapes, that seemed half to melt into the mist.

They might have been dream ships, save for the dull reports, and the smoke, lighter than the mist, that punctuated it, and the death-carrying shells that hurtled screaming overhead.

He hardly knew how he reached the little row of houses, but he remembered that it was a house close to the end of the row into which the woman he sought had vanished on the previous day.

With an entire lack of ceremony he pushed open the door, and found himself in a small, bright kitchen.

A fire burned cheerily, and breakfast was laid on the table in the middle of the room, but the woman who sat huddled there had no thought of food. She had drawn the child upon her knee, his small, frightened face pressed against her breast.

In a moment she had recognised the new arrival. She sprang up, and put the child down. With the movement he looked up also, and as he recognised the khaki-clad figure, he ran forward with a cry of joy. It was as though woman and child both claimed him as their one help.

"What shall we do?" she cried. "Oh, this is dreadful! What can I do for Toddie?"

"Are you all alone?" he asked. He had put a protecting hand upon the child. "Anyone else in the house?"

She shook her head.

"The woman, Mrs. Best, must have run out directly; she had gone when we came downstairs wondering what the noise was. Is it safe to go out?"

"It isn't safe to stay where you are, unless there's a good, substantial cellar to this house," he told her quietly; and she shook her head.

"There's no cellar—nothing underground."
 "Of course not; silly way they build these places." He nodded cheerfully, and something of his quiet, matter-of-fact courage began to infect her. The first stupefied fear was passing, and she felt that she could begin to think again.

"Better get the boy's coat, and a wrap for yourself—pretty cold out of doors," he told her; but, for all his cheerful, matter-of-fact way, the man paced the little room in a fever of impatience while she was gone.

It seemed to him that the shells were falling nearer to the small house. At any moment a chance shot might blow house and inmates alike to pieces. What if he did not get her away in time, after all?

He heaved a sigh of relief when she made her appearance, and he swung the child up into his arms with a hurried movement. The din was almost deafening; no wonder he had thought himself back in the trenches for a moment when he awoke to it.

There was a door leading out to the back, and he nodded towards it.

"Way out to the street there?" he asked, shouting to be heard, and the woman answered with a nod.

The next moment, with the child in his arms, he was leading the way out through the little, sordid garden at the back, where a few frightened fowls huddled uncomfortably in the cold, too startled even to scratch among the cinders.

Behind him crept a slim figure, keeping close to him with a quiet self-control that seemed to contradict the fear that was written on her white face.

Out in the road, Mark swung her sharply to the left, keeping his own broad form between her and the huddled woman's figure in the road, whom his sharp eyes had seen at once. It occurred to him that there might be a reason why the woman of the house had not returned to warn her lodgers.

Round a bend of the road, and into one of the back streets, Mark pulled his companion beside him into the shelter of a tradesman's doorway, while, a little higher up on the other side, a shell struck one of the houses with a crash and a roar, and split it open as though by a mighty axe.

A moment later the fugitives crept quickly by the bulging wall that threatened each moment to collapse into the street, and then the grating in the pavement outside a little public-house gave Mark Rand an idea of a refuge. He led the way through the deserted bar, no one challenging him, and lifted the trapdoor and ushered his little party down the steep steps to where a faint light flickered below.

When he turned from helping the girl down the steps, a little group welcomed him with the freemasonry that is brought about by a common peril, taking his presence there for granted, and asking only one or two questions about the damage that was going on outside.

A strange, pathetic little company, they squatted upon the brick floor while the rattle and boom of the shells went on overhead, and the heavy, pungent smell of beer came queerly to the nostrils of the woman.

Someone had brought a lantern into the darkness, and it threw a fitful gleam upon the white faces that surrounded it, and threw up weird shadows of the huge casks in the background.

Mark found a place for his companion where she could sit and rest her back against one of those same vats, slipping off his own coat and putting it down for her to sit upon.

She would have demurred at that, but his attitude was peremptory, and she sat down meekly, while the coatless, shirt-sleeved figure with his bandaged head, drew the child to his knee and held him close.

No one seemed to have anything to say—perhaps they were all too stunned at this strange, unbelievable thing that had happened. The war here upon Britain's coast at last, shells hurtling over a seaside promenade, and rattling down houses like badly built houses of cards!

It was questionable even if they could have heard each other speak if they had tried in the almost ceaseless noise. To Mark it seemed that the enemy's snips were working against time—trying to do as much damage in as short a space of time as possible.

And then as he sat there a strange thing happened, for a slender, cold little hand was slipped into his as the girl drew closer to him as simply as a child, seeking him as her natural protector. Mark's hand closed over those slender fingers, almost crushing them in the emotion that swept over him.

He knew now that he loved this woman who seemed to have come so suddenly into his life, this woman whom he had never seen, of whose very existence he had been ignorant until yesterday.

The peril that they had shared had drawn them together in that hour as weeks of ordinary intercourse could not have done. Together they bent over the child and soothed him when he cried, frightened by the dark and the noise; together they smiled at him and tried to make him forget his fears. Mark, looking into the white face with its luminous blue eyes shining



IN A MOMENT THE WOMAN HAD RECOGNISED MARK. SHE SPRANG UP, AND THE CHILD RAN FORWARD TO HIM WITH A CRY OF JOY. IT WAS AS THOUGH WOMAN AND CHILD BOTH CLAIMED HIM AS THEIR ONE HELP.

like sapphires in the yellow glow from the lantern, told himself that this was the one woman in the world for him.

And she was another man's widow—carrying the thought of another man in her heart!

The firing gradually slackened, and finally stopped. Yet the little crowd of refugees in the cellar sat on for some time before they dared to move. There was always the possibility that the bombardment might begin again.

It was Mark who went out, with the landlord, at last, to see how things were outside, and he would have gone coatless as he was, but he felt a little touch upon his arm.

"It is cold outside," she said, and held out his coat for him to slip on.

Outside, everywhere there were traces of the damage that the shells had done. Past tottering walls and heaps

of rubbish the two men made their way on their tour of inspection until they reached the sea.

The sun had come out now, scattering the mist that had helped the enemy to approach unobserved; it shone upon a sea free from the invader, and smiling in the sunlight as though no grim, grey shapes had been spitting death and destruction upon a peaceful town.

Mark helped his companion up the steps again presently, and she and the child stood blinking in the sunlight helplessly for a moment.

"Better get back to your home, or where you're staying—eh?" Mark suggested. "If the place is all right—"

Ho was thinking of the still form he had seen lying in the little road at the back, and he took the woman and child carefully round to the front of the house. Or, at least, he intended to do so, for when he reached the end of the little row of houses they saw what had happened. A shell had ploughed its way through the house, leaving behind it only a heap of rubbish.

The girl caught at Mark's arm with a cry.

"If we had been there—if you had not brought us away—we should have been killed. We owe our lives to you."

"Non cuse!" Mark said, though his own face had grown white. "You'd never have stayed on there."

"I don't suppose I should ever have had the courage to venture out, but for you," she replied.

"Anyhow, you can't go back there now," he told her; and, thinking of that quiet figure lying somewhere in the little road at the back, he was rather glad that it was not possible for them to go back to the house.

But when a kindly woman farther along had offered to take the homeless couple in, Mark shook hands with an emotion that made words almost an impossibility.

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"GOLDEN HOURS."

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"No, there's nothing to thank me for," he said. "But I shall see you again. I'll come round to-morrow."

And it was not until he was on his way back to the hospital that he remembered that he didn't even know her name!

The East Coast hospital was beginning to resume its normal aspect. Only a hole at the end of the house told where the peril had come close.

Patients had been brought up from the cellars, beds re-made, delayed breakfasts prepared, even though no one felt like eating just then.

Mark Rand found his own ward fully occupied when he made his way back to it, and it was not until he met hostile, contemptuous glances from one and another that it dawned upon him that his action in leaving the hospital had been misconstrued.

One man muttered as Mark passed the bed—muttered not so low but that he could hear the words, as perhaps he was intended to do.

"Dirty coward!"

Mark half swung round on his heel, and then he turned away again with heightened colour. Impossible to fight a sick man, equally impossible even to explain at all without talking about the girl whose name even he did not know, and whom he certainly did not intend to discuss with the fellows. She was shrined too sacredly in his heart for that.

So he simply held his head a little higher, and ignored the hot flush that burnt his face, even as he ignored the glances that followed him.

"You want some breakfast, Private Rand?"

It was Sister Mary who spoke to him, and he sprang round to answer her. He had never known until that

moment that he was faint with hunger, he had never even had time to think of himself. But now the look on her face, kind though she was, a look more pitying than condemning, seemed to hurt him more than the muttered insult of his comrade.

"Thank you," he said, and Mary lingered for a moment by his side. Somehow she felt that there must be a mistake somewhere. The man had not the furtive look of the coward.

"I suppose things are pretty bad in the town?" she said. "Did you see much of it?"

"There is a lot of damage," he answered—evasively, as she thought, and she went on to someone else. Perhaps he had played the coward, after all!

They had sent him to Coventry pretty thoroughly, and he was glad to get out of the ward presently—doubly glad that he would be leaving soon, though he was determined first to see the girl again—the unknown girl whose image seemed impressed upon his heart.

Because he had been thinking of her; it somehow seemed quite natural that she should rise up to meet him as he came into the ward later that afternoon. But he saw then that she had been sitting beside the bed of the man who had branded him coward that morning; the child was perched upon the bed within the circle of his uninjured arm.

"Oh"—the pretty colour came and went in her face as she came forward—"and I had forgotten that, of course, you must be in the hospital! Dick!" She turned to the man in the bed, but he looked up darkly.

"What do you know of the fellow, Margaret?" he asked. "He isn't fit for you to speak to—a coward—"

"Oh, how dare you!" She turned upon him almost fiercely; and Mark, in the midst of the tense scene, felt as surprised as though a meek dove had started fighting. "Why, he is the bravest man I know! He came to look for us this morning in the midst of all that dreadful firing, just because he had seen us yesterday, and Toddie had talked to him; and he brought us out, and took us to a place of refuge. And I should never have had the courage to venture out by myself, and we should have been killed; for when we went back afterwards we found the house in ruins—a shell had gone right through it. It—it is just perfectly horrid of you, Dick, and when he saved Toddie, too, and carried him in his arms!"

She had forgotten her shyness. The clear, girlish voice carried far down the ward—perhaps she meant that it should. Heads were raised from pillows, the group at the end of the ward by the fire rose up and turned to watch the little scene.

"Is—is that true?" the injured man asked. "Is that why you ran out of the hospital? Man, why didn't you say—why did you let the rest of us think, when half a word—"

He stopped. Perhaps he had his answer to that in that look that Mark cast upon the eager, flushed, girlish face.

"If—if you care to shake hands," he added, and Mark's hand came out swiftly to meet his outstretched one. "You saved my child, and my sister—"

"Your sister?" Mark echoed almost stupidly.

"Yes; she's been looking after Toddie for me. His mother"—his voice grew grave—"his mother died just before I enlisted, and—yes, come along, you fellows, and shake hands with him. We've misjudged him pretty badly, it seems."

But Mark, shaking the hands that were stretched out to him from all directions, was not thinking of the fact that he had been reinstated in the esteem of the ward. He hardly even noticed Sister Mary's pleased smile as she stood beaming like a charming guardian angel upon the little scene.

He was remembering that this girl—Margaret, her brother had called her, and he treasured the name in his heart—was not another man's widow, not a sorrowful woman cherishing some other man's memory, but just a girl to be won.

He met her eyes in that moment. Mark was humble enough in his love, yet even to him came the understanding that the winning was not going to be very hard.

THE END.

Another delightful complete story next week.

HER STRANGE INHERITANCE

A

Charming Romance

By L. C. DAVIDSON.



CHAPTER I.

THE INHERITANCE.

"MAGGIE—MAGGIE!" The curly head of a young man came up over the top of the low wall below

which the path ran. The girl, hanging out clothes on the line in the tiny garden that overlooked the little country village on the hill slopes, looked up, started, coloured, smiled.

"That you, Jim? What are you doing here of a morning?" The dimples in her pink cheeks went and came. She knew well enough what must have brought him round that way, when he ought to have been over at Cliffdean, helping in the lading of his new ship. She knew, but Maggie was in that happy state of being made love to when a girl can't resist a little, a very little inclination to tease.

"What's brought me? News, my girl! Can you come out along and have a talk with me?" Maggie regretfully shook her head.

"Can't, Jim. Not anyhow! I've got to get these all on the line and a lot more. Mother'd never let me hear the last of it if I didn't stick to it. It'll have to wait for another time."

The face over the wall clouded with a sudden blank, a sudden disappointment.

"Then when will you give me a chance?"

Maggie dropped her head. "I can get out for a stroll along the Nelby Road after the tea-things are washed up," she said. "I suppose you won't be round here then? Going back to Cliffdean?"

The head over the wall shook with an emphatic negative.

"I've got to nip back there now. We're tearing busy. But I'll come over again by six o'clock. Don't you fail, Maggie, will you? It's life and death almost."

And with a gesture that looked so like a kiss of his hand that the blood flamed in Maggie's pretty cheeks again, he dropped down from the wall and was gone.

Jim and she had been brought up together in that little country village, only five miles from the big seaport. They had gone to school together—he had carried her dinner-satchel, and fought bigger boys than himself in her defence, and been her protector and helper, and her little sweetheart as long as they both could remember. She had plenty of other admirers as she grew up into girlhood, but Jim was always first favourite. And yet he had never "said anything" yet.

There was something peculiar in Maggie's position. All the world knew, and she herself really knew, though she put the knowledge from her like a bad dream, that she wasn't really the child of Mrs. Macey, and her elderly husband. Maggie knew she had been adopted by them when she was a baby. But she shrank from the very thought that the people she called "mother" and "dad" didn't really hold any blood-relation to her.

The old people had been "rare good" to the child of their adoption, and she returned their affection with a daughter's love and duty.

Tea was over, and the things washed, and put back on the high shelf. Maggie looked at the clock, blushed faintly, slipped away, and tied on her new fur hat. She took the little egg-basket and slipped out up the bleak, country road. It looked better to seem as if she had an errand, rather than boldly to walk out to meet one's sweetheart.

Maggie went along, swinging the basket, and looking as unconcerned as she could when someone leapt over the low bank at the roadside, just ahead of her, and came hastily to her side.

"I thought you were a highwayman!" she said, with a little toss of her head. "What makes you in such a hurry?"

"I'm always in a hurry when I'm coming to meet you, lass," Jim said. "But the hurry's more this time, for I've got so much to say in a few minutes. Oh, Maggie, the new ship's ready, and they've offered me a berth in her as quartermaster! It's a rise, you know, and it means getting on up higher. But I've got to go away for two years, and it's like taking my heart out of my body!"

"Two years! But what's that for?" Her own face had paled a little.

"She's going to the South Seas, trading. We won't be back for twice a twelvemonth. And she's sailing tomorrow morning! I couldn't fix it all up till the last thing. It's because the chap they'd taken on has failed them, and they offered me it."

"Two years! Oh, Jim!" Her face, her voice, her look, all told him. He hardly needed to ask it in so many words.

"Maggie, do you mind? Maggie, you know it means me getting enough pay to marry on. I can start a little house when I get home. Maggie, won't you give me your promise before I go away? I can't go unless I know you belong to me, and nobody can't part us any more again!"

"Jim. Oh, Jim!" For just a minute her tell-tale eyes, brimming over, looked into his. Then he had drawn her to his breast, and his eager kisses were on the lips for which they had so long hungered.

"And you'll be true—be true, my lass? I know you will! You'll never let another chap part us?"

She looked at him with reproachful tenderness. "Do you think I would, then? I'll be true always."

She walked with him to the end of the road where the signpost pointed the way to Cliffdean. They parted with passionate good-byes. His ship was to sail in the early morning. It was the last farewell between them till he should come back to claim his bride.

"And I'll send you the ring from the first port I can get it," said Jim. "And you'll wear it till I bring the other back!" Then he was gone down the long, dark road that swallowed her last glimpse of him. And with a little sob she turned and went back.

There were lights in the cottage window, and streaming from the open door as she went up the paved walk to it. Voices mingled in the little parlour—never used except on Sundays, or for funerals, or weddings. As she came into the light she saw her father and mother sitting there with perturbed faces. And before them sat an unknown elderly gentleman, his hat in his hand.

"Here she is! Here's our Maggie!" It was dad's quavering voice that said it. Maggie came in, a little shy, a little astonished. The gentleman got up and made a low bow to her.

"Miss Brereton?" he said. "I've been waiting to see you."

"No, sir. I'm Maggie Macey. This is my father and mother." There was a look of queer defiance suddenly in Maggie's look. The stranger turned to Mrs. Macey.

"You had better tell her the truth," he said. "If she really doesn't know it. Is it possible you've brought her up in ignorance?"

Mrs. Macey threw her apron over her head suddenly.

"We didn't mean no cheating," she said. "Nor yet

to do her harm. She was just our own lass—our little daughter, and we liked to have her think so. Perhaps she has known it all along, but I couldn't feel I wanted her to. It might have made her feel a stranger-like, and out in the cold."

Maggie took a step forward. Her arm was round the neck of the woman she had always called mother. The touch seemed to give Mrs. Macey courage, and she spoke louder.

"The good Lord above knows we did our best for her. Maggie lass, you've got to know the truth. You ain't my child, no, nor yet dad's, though we love you as if you was." Maggie's hand went up and tenderly stroked the white cheek.

"Go on, please," said Mr. Dancock, the lawyer. And Mrs. Macey proceeded.

"'Twas on a stormy night years and years ago. We was just getting into bed when dad there heard a sound of someone knocking at the door, but so faint-like I couldn't think it was a real creature. He went down to open and look out. Then he called me, and I ran. On the threshold there lay a poor creature—a young woman, with a baby in her arms.

"She was just able to put the baby in my arms and whisper: 'Be good to her!' and then she seemed to faint right off. Dad ran and roused up the doctor, but before he was back I knew it wasn't no use. She lay dead and cold in this very parlour.

"There was some letters and papers in her pocket. And the baby had a chain and a queer sort of locket tied about its neck. The doctor, he tried to find out something about 'em from the papers, but there wasn't no address given, only names and such—and he wanted to take the baby to the workhouse. But by then I couldn't bear to let her go. I thought the good God in Heaven wouldn't bless us ever if I let her go. We hadn't chick nor child of our own, and we said to each other that God mus' have sent us this one to make up for the empty home. So we kept you, Maggie, and you've been like our very own daughter, and nobody couldn't have loved you better than we've done. We haven't been bad to you, have us?"

"Mother!" The soft, red lips were bent to the wrinkled forehead. Maggie's passionate kisses were on the old, tear-stained face.

"I can see that you have given the young lady all that was in your power," said the elderly gentleman politely.

"Of course, payment will be made."

"Payment! We don't want no payment. We didn't do it for payment!" ejaculated the old couple. Maggie's head was hastily raised.

"Money wouldn't pay what they've given me!" she said, "and it's a kind of insult to speak of it, sir, asking your pardon."

"I beg your pardon," the elderly gentleman's bow seemed to have something slightly ironical in it. He smiled slightly, and Maggie suddenly hated that smile.

"You are in a position to repay all that has been done for you, Miss Brereton. I have brought you pleasant findings. It's my turn now to speak and tell you the rest of the story, if Mrs.—ah, yes, Mrs. Macey has quite done!"

"Your mother made a marriage that angered her father," he began, with one eye fixed on the girl who stood there with varying colour, and eyes half frightened, half defiant. "Your father was in her own position; oh, yes, but he was poor, and your grandfather had other plans for his daughter. He refused ever to see or speak to her after her marriage. The husband was killed in a railway accident. Your mother, as far as we can now discover, knew herself to be very ill. She set out to take her child to her father and ask him to take it, and forgave her.

"She never reached her destination. She must have tramped here from the West of England. Her strength gave way when she reached this place. She died from exhaustion, so I find from her death certificate. No one knew what had become of her or her child, though her father had a letter telling him she had started to bring it to him.

"For years he was buried in a grief and remorse that came too late. It was only when he lay dying, some eight or ten months ago, that he began to wonder if the child had really died; or if some trace of it and of his daughter might be found even yet. He left instructions in his will to advertise for his daughter, or her child if she were no longer living. I was his lawyer, and

I have been searching half over England in pursuance with his bequest.

"I heard a rumour of her death here, and found her child was still alive. I have seen the papers and the locket. They leave not the slightest doubt that you are Miss Margaret Brereton, and you have inherited your grandfather's money—or will do so in two years' time, when you are of age."

Maggie was staring at him with wide eyes.

"Perhaps you don't understand me entirely," the lawyer went on. "Your grandfather was a rich stock-broker. You will come into a very comfortable fortune when you reach the age of one-and-twenty. In the meanwhile, I am your trustee and guardian."

"A fortune! Oh, mother—oh, dad! I can buy this cottage for you, and then you'll never be afraid of being turned out of it. Dad can have that little trap he's always wanted, and the horse to cart for him. And mother—oh, mother, you'll have a black silk frock and a new set of china!"

Her face was flushed with delight.

"Not so fast—not so fast, Miss Brereton! Of course, you can readily give your adopted parents those things—with my permission. I am anxious, as I said just now, to offer some compensation for their care and support of you. But you haven't control over your money just yet, you know. It is in my hands. Meanwhile, we have two years in which to fit you for your new position."

"To fit me?" Maggie stared at him, uncomprehending.

"Certainly! Your grandfather's position was very different from the one you have been brought up in. I know some very excellent people, who will be willing to undertake the charge of you, and show you a little the ways of a world you are not used to, and, in short, make you ready to use your fortune when it comes into your hands. I am going to take you to them at once, that no time may be wasted. I shall ask Mrs. Macey to get ready what you need to travel back with me to the Midlands."

Maggie's look at him was almost wild in its recoil of dismay and refusal.

"Me go away from here? Leave father and mother? Oh no, sir; I'll never do that! I'm not going with you!"

"I think you don't realise I have legal power to compel you." The elderly gentleman looked much put out. "I am your guardian, and I have full control of you and your actions. This is a step anyone would tell you is wise and necessary."

"Mother—dad!" Maggie turned from each to each in indignant appeal. "You wouldn't let me go! You'd never part with me!"

But her adopted mother held up a trembling hand.

"My lass, it's God's will. He has sent this gentleman here to find you. If it ought to be, it must—and that ends it for us. If you want ever to come back, here's your old home for you. It's only two years at the most. And the God Who brought you and your dying mother to our door will watch above you. He won't let harm nor sorrow come to you when you're trying to do what's right and proper."

Maggie's passionate embrace was round her.

"Two years! It's a lifetime! But at the end of them I'll be back here, mother darling. Oh, it's dreadful to have to go away at all!"

She burst into tears. Then she dried them quickly. One couldn't cry with that dreadful old gentleman looking calmly on!

"Don't you fear, mother; it's only for a bit. Then I'll come back, and you'll have the silk frock and the tea-set, and dad'll get the cart and pony," were the farewell words she could manage to say through her smothered sobs.

Old Mr. Dancock hid a furtive smile. Wait till she was out in the world, and had learnt her lesson! She must be fitted to make a suitable marriage, and manage the money that was hers in her own right.

CHAPTER II.

MAGGIE AT MRS. DAYTON'S.



LONG, low drawing-room, in a grey, rather shabby house on the outskirts of a Cornish town. Round the house old gardens badly in need of an outlay of money, yet lovely even in neglect. In the room, with its long windows and its view, two girls and an

older woman. The older woman, Mrs. Dayton, looking up from her letter-writing at the old carved table, said:

"Ralph comes to-day, girls. I've just had a wire from him."

Celia Dayton turned languidly.

"Ralph? Oh, good! It's ever and ever so long since one's seen him—isn't it? I wonder how long it is since he went to South Africa, mother?"

Mrs. Dayton's brows drew together.

"Two years, child—just before Madge came to us."

"Oh, I remember! You were sorry then that you'd let him take the offer of that place in Johannesburg."

"Yes. I hadn't an idea about Madge then, of course. It was a swindle. They expected the poor boy to work like a nigger! No wonder he's thrown it up, and is coming back to England!"

"But, mother"—it was Joan, the other girl, who looked up now. "What can he get to do here? You know the dear old chap doesn't like work. He isn't cut out for it. And Madge mayn't stay on with us when she's of age. Don't forget she's nearly one-and-twenty, and when she comes into her money we may lose her and her allowance."

"I don't forget it!" Mrs. Dayton's face took on its usual fretted look.

She had had years and years of trying to keep up a good appearance and live like a gentlewoman on means that were smaller than a clever operative's wages. And then had come that glorious chance, that suggestion from old Mr. Dancock, her late husband's lawyer, that she should take and train into shape that girl of the people, Maggie Brereton, born in a labourer's cottage, or brought up there. He had asked that Maggie should be taught the ways of good society, know how to behave amongst people who lived in big houses and kept servants. He had added that Mrs. Dayton must throw her into the society of eligible young men, and try to get her well married.

And Mrs. Dayton had smoothly resolved in her own mind that she would keep Madge, as they called her, with her as long as she could, and defer any marriage that might take away the handsome allowance they enjoyed for looking after her. It had only been within the last month or two, since Maggie had quietly but decidedly told her that as soon as she was of age she should leave them and go back to her own people—her adopted people—that Mrs. Dayton had got frightened.

Then she had thought of that splendid scheme. Ralph, the only son, the young man who couldn't settle to any hard work—why shouldn't he come home and marry the heiress?

She had cabled out to him. He had answered that he was taking the first boat home. And now—now, of course, Madge had only to see him to be ready to marry him. Nobody could resist Ralph. He was so good-looking, had such a way with him.

They were all at the door to meet the cab as it lumbered up from the station. A dark, good-looking, audacious face looked out of it.

Ralph Dayton jumped out, let an adoring mother and sisters kiss him, looked round.

"Well, where's the girl?" he said, without further greeting. "Trot out your heiress!"

His mother put her finger to her lip, and glanced at the open door. She took him through the passage, with her voice raised for the ears of the girl in the drawing-room.

"Hush! You must come straight in, dear. You'll want your tea. And you must meet dear Madge Brereton, a charming girl staying with us. I don't know if I wrote you about her. As dear as a sister to the girls, and like a daughter to me. Oh, here she is! Madge, dear—my son Ralph! Ralph, this is my adopted daughter, Miss Brereton."

Ralph Dayton was prepared for a plain girl—awkward, gawky, uneducated. Heiresses always had drawbacks. He saw a crown of golden red-brown hair, soft grey eyes, a complexion of milk and roses, the carriage of a nymph.

Maggie was adaptable. She had improved almost out of recognition in those two years with the Daytons.

"Mrs. Dayton has been very kind, and given me a place here," she said composedly. "But I've another adopted mother already. I can't lay claim to two, can I?" That was meant to show Mrs. Dayton Maggie understood her little stroke of diplomacy, and wasn't "taken in" by it.

Two years with the Daytons had taught Maggie much. It had taught her some things she hadn't wanted to know. She couldn't keep from the knowledge that Mrs. Dayton was only just as fond of herself as she wanted other people to believe—that the girls had no use for her, in spite of their politeness, except to buy them comforts. They had given her food and lodging, had tried to teach her things she didn't want to learn. She had paid for it



OUTSIDE, ON THE SNOW-SPRINKLED PATH, MRS. DAYTON TURNED EAGERLY TO JIM. "DID YOU SEE THAT?" SHE CRIED. "THAT'S THE MAN THEY SAY SHE'S GOING TO MARRY!"

by the money Mr. Dancock gave them. There the obligation of both sides ended.

It was nearly a fortnight later. That dreaded day of Maggie's majority was a fortnight nearer. Mrs. Dayton was counting the days now with a kind of feverish anxiety. She asked Ralph every night how things were going, and sometimes Ralph laughed complacently, and said:

"Oh, time enough! She's getting fond of me, of course. But she thinks it gives her a value not to show it!" But sometimes he would scowl, and say: "The little fool! She doesn't know which side her bread is buttered." His mother could only urge him to make his wooing brief, and settle matters.

"I say, Madge—I may call you that, mayn't I? The mater and the girls do, and somehow I can't remember that there's a handle to your name always."

Maggie was strolling in the garden; Ralph came out

to her. It seemed to Maggie she couldn't find a place nowadays where one was free from that lout-legged young man with his indolent ways, and his unwelcome attentions.

"My name is Maggie, really," she said; "I don't like Madge, somehow it sounds set-up, and affected." She had all her life long been called by her Christian-name till she came to live with the Daytons. It would have seemed to her stilted and queer if he had called her Miss Brereton. And, besides, she could never get used to that name. It always seemed to her she was still Maggie Macey.

"If I may call you Maggie, I'm going to be called Ralph!" He came boldly a step nearer, and his shoulder pressed hers. She stepped away from him.

"I can't do that. I—I don't want to! And, besides, if I did, Jim wouldn't like it!" She stepped back. He followed her, his face darkening.

"Jim, and who's Jim, pray? The old labourer chap that brought you up?"

"No." She held her head erect still and she spoke quietly. But the pretty crimson dyed her forehead. "My father—my dear adopted father, is called Maçoy. Jim's my sweethe rt."

"Your what?" Ralph couldn't believe his ears. His mother had not prepared him for a rival!

"My sweetheart. We're tokened—engaged, I mean. We're going to be married when he comes back from his voyage. The time's almost up now."

"What? A man in the Navy?"

"No; it's a merchant ship. She's been trading between the South Seas and Australia. A fine big ship; Jim's quartermaster. He's going to be promoted when he gets back. We can get married then. Oh"—with a sudden recollection, a sudden delight—"it won't matter now, though, not when I shall have my money!"

Was it for this they had brought him back from South Africa, only to find the heiress was already bound; only to be made a fool of, thought Ralph Dayton bitterly? His shock of disappointment made him speechless. Maggie, glancing at him, was almost sorry; he seemed to feel it, really! She made a brief excuse and hurried to the house.

"Well, that little game's up!" Ralph said, with an angry scowl, when later he met his mother alone. "You needn't have made me waste passage-money, coming home after a girl who's going to be married!"

His mother faced round on her chair and stared at him.

"Who's going to be married?" she demanded.

"Why, your wonderful heiress is, Maggie Brereton. She told me so just now, when I was working up to propose to her! Says he's a sailor-man; a common quartermaster in a merchant boat! Fough!"

His mother had paled. She was looking at him with set lips.

"Stuff and nonsense! Some disreputable acquaintance of her childhood, I suppose! Preposterous! That's all ended!"

"I give you my word she says she's going to marry him as soon as she is of age!"

"Oh, is she? I think not! There are two opinions about that!" said Mrs. Dayton.

"Well, she won't allow me near her in the meantime. I'm on a fool's errand," grumbled her promising son, his hands in his pockets.

"My dear boy, if I left things in your hands"—her patience was at breaking-point—"you'd have fine prospects! A marriage isn't a marriage till it's made. A thousand things can stop this one. I'll see to it she doesn't throw away herself and her money on this vulgar bouncer! Of course, it's out of all question now she's in her right position! Both of them must be made to see that."

"And if they won't?"

His mother looked at him steadily.

"Then there are other methods," she said. "You are very foolish, Ralph, if I have to be more explicit!"

Going through the hall that evening, Mrs. Dayton saw a letter lying on the table ready for the post. At any other time she would have passed it by unnoticed; now she stopped and looked. It was in Maggie's writing. Mrs. Dayton took the letter up.

It was addressed to "Quartermaster J. Browning, s.s. Alcestis, Devonport." Mrs. Dayton took it up,

walked into her own little sitting-room, locked the door, and deliberately tore open the envelope.

It was a girl's love-letter, a letter of trembling bliss and hope and devotion; the letter of a girl whose trust is in her Heavenly-Father.

"Oh, Jim dear! I've prayed for you every night of my life since you went-away; asked God, on my knees, to keep you safe and well, and bring you back to me, Jim. I've never heard a word for two years, dear; you never sent me any address that I could write to you. But I've been true, just as I promised. I'll go on being true to you!"

"Such strange things have come about just after you left. I'm living here with people called Dayton, till I come of age. I'll explain all about it when I see you. I'm going to have money when I'm twenty-one; not that that's anything! But even if you don't get your rise, you needn't worry; we won't need it.

"Oh, Jim, thank God! I can send this to the place you told me to when your ship was coming back. I saw in the paper she'd started on her voyage home. I can't wait till we meet. God bless you!"

"Your own loving MAGGIE."

Mrs. Dayton's thin red lips were pressed hard together. The little, senseless fool, to write like that to a common sailor, after two years of being taught to be a lady!

She stood with the letter in her hand. What should she do with it? It would certainly not go to its destination! Burn it? That might be dangerous. Put it back in its envelope, stick it again, hide it where it might be supposed to have been laid by accident? She stuck the flap down carefully; looked about. That old door that led into the cellars from this room, once the house-keeper's, in old times? That would do!

She opened the door with a little difficulty, for the hinges were rusted with long disuse, fung the letter into the dark, dim passage, as far as her arm could fling it; shut the door again. Nobody had been down there for years. Nobody would go again for years, probably.

Then she went to look for Madge herself. She found her in her room, printing photographs.

"My dear, I want a little talk with you." Mrs. Dayton sat down unasked, and looked at the girl, who turned from the window with a little change of colour. "I've come to ask you what made you so unkind to my poor boy? He's broken-hearted!"

"I wasn't unkind, indeed, Mrs. Dayton. I didn't mean to be."

"But you wouldn't listen when he tried to tell you how dear you are to him. A man feels unkindness like that very deeply, Madge darling!"

"I had to be frank with him; it was only right. I—I—when he said things I couldn't let him go on." She spoke with difficulty. "He—he said something that made me feel he ought to know I'm engaged to be married."

"Engaged, my dear girl? Impossible! You can't be that legally, you know, till you're of age—without the consent of your guardian!"

"Father and mother'd have given their consent if they'd known. There wasn't time to ask them! We had to wait the two years, anyhow, till his ship comes back from abroad. I'll be of age then!"

"His ship?"

"Yes; my Jim's a sailor. His ship's out in the South Seas—the Alcestis."

Her face glowed. It was easy to see what she felt for her sailor.

"Well, of course, you've written always, and he knows about your money, and you are certain he cares still," she said. "Sailors, you know, are apt to change their minds."

Maggie flushed up again.

"Jim never would! No, I've never had a line from him; but I know—I know! He never would go back on our promise!" And, had she but known it, a whole pile of letters lay at that moment in Mr. Daucok's office, addressed to her in Jim's writing, and forwarded by the old people at home to the lawyer. They knew no other address, for all Maggie's letters to them went through his hands, by his request. These ought to have been forwarded, but a careless clerk had stuck them

into a pigeon-hole as they came, and had forgotten them. Mrs. Dayton pursed her lips.

"My dear child! Never written in two years, and you still think he cares! Oh, ridiculous! No girl with any pride would go on caring, when she saw so plainly he'd forgotten you! My dear, sailors are all like that—a sweetheart in every port! Why, it's a perfect proverb! Do be self-respecting and put him out of your thoughts! Believe me, if this man tries to claim your promise now when he comes back and finds you've money, it will only be for that."

CHAPTER III.

THE RETURN.

"THE Coats have asked us to a party this afternoon." It was Celia who languidly remarked it to her brother as they left the lunch-table.

"Let's have old Gates' car from the garage."

With Maggie's money they were used to treating themselves to a carriage now and then, or even a motor for long distances.

So at four o'clock the car stood at the door, and the girls, with their dainty frocks covered, came fluttering down to get in beside their mother, dignified in her pale grey satin.

Maggie herself looked pale, and was silent under the pretty fur hat.

She was still chilled and oppressed by that talk with Mrs. Dayton yesterday. Not that she believed it for a minute—not that she credited that Jim could have forgotten her.

The Coats' party was rather a big one. They had a rambling old house, and a large, well-filled conservatory, tastily arranged for the guests.

The short winter afternoon had closed before Ralph had a chance to speak to Maggie alone.

"Have you seen the conservatory?"

She turned at his voice.

"No; is it pretty? I think I'll take it on trust. I want to find your sisters," said Maggie.

"I think they are there," he said brazenly. "You might as well let me show you." And she had nothing to interpose as an excuse.

They walked away from the laughing, chattering throng, but when they reached a secluded spot amongst spreading plants, Maggie stopped. His sisters were nowhere to be seen.

"You've made a mistake, Mr. Dayton!" she said.

"A mistake on purpose!" He was between her and the door, and it was narrow enough to make passing him impossible unless he stood aside for her. "I meant to have a little talk all by ourselves. Now I've got you!"

"You told me your sisters were here!" She faced him with indignation.

He shrugged his shoulders, and smiled triumphantly.

"I say, Madge, you know what it is I want to say to you. You've bowled me over—all of a heap! I'm dead gone on you! I want you for my dear little wife. Say you'll marry me!"

He had come a step nearer. His face was close to hers. With a sudden recoil she sprang back from him.

"I'm sorry you've made me listen to you," she said. "I tried to show you yesterday how impossible it is! I told you then I am engaged to another man. It—it's an insult even to speak of love to me!"

"Oh, I say, come now! No girl thinks it an insult to be told a chap loves her. What's that common fellow to you now? All well enough when you thought he was your equal! You know now you come of decent people."

"I love him!" Her little head was still up. Her eyes were full of tender light. "That's enough for both of us. Please never speak to me again of my sweetheart as you did just now! I won't stand having things like that said of him!"

"How do you know he wants you still?" he sneered. "I know you haven't heard from him in two years. You don't think a sailorman goes on caring for the same girl, two years, do you? Why, he's had a dozen sweethearts since you parted! If he hadn't, he'd have written!"

"Jim hasn't! He never could have! I haven't had any letters because he wasn't near a post-office, or—or

something. Any way, I'll never doubt him! I'll never believe anything of him but that he's good and true and dear, and next to God in my love—next to my hopes of Heaven!"

"Then you're making a pretty fool of yourself!" He lost his patience. "The world will laugh at you. Come, don't be a little silly! Take me, girl! I adore the ground you tread on. I can give you the kind of life you've grown used to here! Anyhow, I'm going to take nothing but 'Yes' for an answer!"

He was close to her now. A sudden swoop forward had brought his arm about her. She turned and tried to shake herself free.

"How dare you! How dare you!" She dragged herself further down the conservatory with his arm still locked round her. Her young strength made it impossible to hold her fast longer than the turn where the large drawing-room could be seen.

There she shook him off from her, and fled.

Mrs. Dayton also had been engaged in an adventure no less exciting. She had gone by herself to see some tropical plants in a corner of the Coats' conservatory.

She was intently looking at the plants, when she chanced to look through the glass to the drive outside. All at once she caught sight of a strange figure making his way to the old-fashioned porch. She looked, started, felt her blood chill, looked again with a sudden fear. Who could that be coming to the house? And a sailor, too!

What on earth could be his errand? Conscience makes us all cowards.

With a courage born of desperation, she let herself out by a small side door, so as to intercept the man as he went. As she got near she called softly to him.

"What is it, my good man? Do you want anything? There's a party on here. They're too busy to attend to you. If you've a message to leave, I'll take it for you."

The sailor stood still, and took his cap off. He was a tall, athletic, splendid-looking fellow, bronzed and weather-worn, but with an eye like a hawk's that looked straight at you.

"I came to ask a question," he said. "I've been to the house of some people called Dayton, and they sent me on here, telling me they were at some sort of gathering. Can you tell me where I could get to speak with them? Or, better still, with a young woman they've got in charge—a Miss Maggie Macey."

That gave her her chance. She took it at once. She looked at him with her brows drawn together.

"Macey?" she said slowly and meditatively. "No! I never heard the name in connection with any girl they have there. Is she one of the servants?"

"No. She is living with them, I reckon. Kind of paying-guest business. Or do they call her by that queer new name they say she's a right to? Miss—Miss Brer—something?" He took off his cap to scratch his head, close-cropped and shiny.

Mrs. Dayton gave a little sound of understanding.

"Ah, you mean Miss Brereton! Yes, she lives with the Daytons. She's a kind of adopted daughter—a nice girl. Is there any message I could take to her from you?" Jim stood his ground firmly.

"I want to speak with her myself," he said. "I—she's an old and dear friend of mine. I came straight from my ship to find her. She's gone from where she used to live, and the old folks at her home told me she was living with people here called Dayton."

"I'm sorry. She's gone from here—only a little while back." His face fell blankly.

"Gone back to that house I've just been at! I say— Never mind; I've got a motor-bike outside. I'll soon nip back again!"

"No, she hasn't gone back; she—she—" Mrs. Dayton cast about for a lie. "She's gone to stay in the North with some friends. I—I don't know exactly where. They were going on a motor tour. I could tell her anything you wanted, or get the message sent to her."

Still he looked uncertain.

"I'll write, then. It isn't like seeing her, but she'll come back all right when she knows I'm home again. She won't keep me waiting."

Mrs. Dayton raised her eyebrows.

"I—I really don't know why that should upset Miss Brereton's plans," she said a little coldly. "She lives with the Dayton's now, you see, and they arrange things for her."

"But she'll come to me when I tell her! Or she'll tell me where to find her." His confidence irritated his hearer.

"I really am afraid she can't and won't," she said. "You can hardly expect to have a claim on Miss Brereton better than the people whose roof she's under."

His big, honest, handsome eyes widened.

"Why, she and me's sweethearts!" he said simply. "We're troth-plighted, though she don't wear the ring yet."

"Oh!" Mrs. Dayton's exclamation wasn't horrified; it wasn't angry. It was simply pitying. "What a pity! I mean on your account. Hasn't she written and broken that all off yet? It must have been because she thought it such wild folly in the past that now she'd rather not remember it!"

"What do you mean?" The honest eyes still looked into hers, but a sudden fear and alarm was in them. "If you're trying to make me believe Maggie isn't true to me, you're wasting your breath, ma'am."

"Then you don't know? They didn't tell you at her own home about the great change, about her fortune, and finding out she is a lady?"

He gave a faint little snort of disdain.

"She was always a lady, God bless her! One of the sort He makes!" he said proudly. "As for money—oh, yes, they told me she'd been found to have another name, and there was money coming with it."

She broke across his words with a little derisive smile.

"Then you did know about the money before you came to find her! I see!" she said, and there was a significance in her voice that was almost an insult. Jim flushed under his bronze at the sound of it.

"If you're trying to hint"—he faced her squarely—"that the money made me keen—why, you're talking folly, asking your pardon, ma'am. I've loved my lass since she was as high as the table, or lower. I'll love her till I die. If she's got a bit of money—why, what's that, either way? I'm making enough money to keep her now, and that's all I care about."

Suddenly Mrs. Dayton changed her tactics. She stepped towards him with her hands clasped together.

"Oh," she said, "I see I've misjudged you. You do really care for the girl! You are devoted to her. I beg your pardon for thinking it was the money. But oh, if you really want her good, if you want her to be happy, don't you see that your coming back would be the worst misfortune possible for her?"

Jim stared at her. He could not understand her.

"A misfortune for me to come back to my little lass that's waiting for me?" he said incredulously. "Oh, no! That it wouldn't be! Why, she loves me, I tell you."

"Perhaps she did when you went away. Everything's changed now. Don't you see that she's a lady by birth—a real one, not one of the kind you spoke about? She ought to be in her own position with every advantage and luxury and comfort. She's a rich girl now. If you married her you'd drag her back to a life she's left behind, that isn't fit for her, that she doesn't want, now she's tasted the one that belongs to her. You'd be doing her a cruel wrong to bind her. She might do it—she might sacrifice herself because she promised—but oh, it would break her heart! Be a man, show you care enough for her to give her up! Go away, and don't try to force her into what she loathes and hates now, even if she thinks it's her duty."

His arms had dropped to his sides. His face was pale under the sunburn. He was staring at her still as if he couldn't comprehend.

"But she'd rather! I know she would! She loves me! My little sweetheart! She's as true as the good God makes them! I'll never believe till I hear from her own lips that she wants me to release her!"

The powers of evil indeed favoured Mrs. Dayton. Behind the brightly-lit glass for a moment came the figures of Maggie and Ralph. His arm was about her, his head bent to hers. Then they vanished behind a big plant. Mrs. Dayton turned eagerly to the sailor, dumb beside her.

"Did you see that?" she cried. "She hasn't gone yet, after all! That's the man they all say she's going to marry! She must be going to! He had his arm round her! Did you see? After that are you going to try and force yourself on her?"

And Jim, dropping his head on his breast with a groan, said under his breath:

"No, God forgive me! No! If she's found another chap she likes better, I won't raise a finger to hinder her!"

"Then you'll go away and not try to see her? You won't spoil her life?"

She asked it eagerly, her heart beating high with triumph.

"I'll never spoil my little lass's life. You can count on that," he said between his set teeth. It had been a blow that had knocked all hope and courage for the moment from him.

But he didn't promise he would never try to see once more the girl whose image had been his guiding star those two years; whose name had been on his lips and in his prayers night and morning. He took a fierce resolution in his heart to have one more sight of her—to set her free with his own lips, to have the bitter, agonising comfort of another look into the face that was no longer for him.

His Maggie, his little lass—the girl he had loved all his life! Only the pitying God above Who read his heart, knew how he suffered as he stood silent with his cap crushed in his hand, before that lady in her gay party gown, and heard the doom of his hopes and his love—the loss of his Maggie!

CHAPTER IV.

FORCE.

"WELL?" The woman in the grey satin gown was waiting. Jim paused a while, and then he said gravely.

"If so be as it will hurt her—if it's truly better for her that I don't marry her," his dry lips gave out. He moistened them with his tongue and swallowed. "If that's so, I can let her go, God knows, rather than bring unhappiness on her!"

Mrs. Dayton pursued her advantage.

"You saw! You saw that she's got a new lover! Leave her to him! She doesn't want the old one!"

"Maybe it's true!"

Jim's head sank on his breast. He turned away with another groan. It was too bitter, too cruel, this breaking of his dream of hope and love and joy. He turned and walked down the snow-powdered drive from her. She stood and watched him, triumph and elation swelling in her breast. She had won the victory! He would not try now to push his claim. There was nothing to keep them from enjoying Maggie's money. She would marry Ralph.

She saw nothing more of Maggie till the guests were taking leave. Then the girl came to her with hot cheeks and a furried manner.

"I am going to drive home with the Mannings if you don't mind," she said. "They—they asked me—and I'd rather."

Mrs. Dayton looked at her in astonishment.

"My dear girl, why? Why should you do such an odd thing! It would look so funny! Of course you must go home with us! Why shouldn't you? It would break up the little party, and look"—she tried to speak archly, and she laughed a little—"as if we had quarrelled! Preposterous! Besides"—rendered bold by that glimpse she had had of Ralph's arm round Maggie's waist in the conservatory—"somebody would be dreadfully disappointed! Poor Ralphie! You wouldn't spoil his drive home for him, surely?"

"It's because of Mr. Dayton that I want to go back with the Mannings," she said very low. "Please don't ask me to drive with him, Mrs. Dayton; I'd rather not."

"My dear! You haven't had a little tiff, have you? How absurd! But you know what lovers' quarrels mean? Kissing and making it up after!"

Maggie's look was distressed as well as impatient.

"Please don't speak like that!" she said earnestly. "Please don't talk as if there were anything like that between me and Mr. Dayton! You know I'm engaged to somebody else."

(Continued on page 15.)



NATIONAL MELODIES for the HOME

FIRMLY STAND FOR GOD.

A HYMN FOR THE TIME.

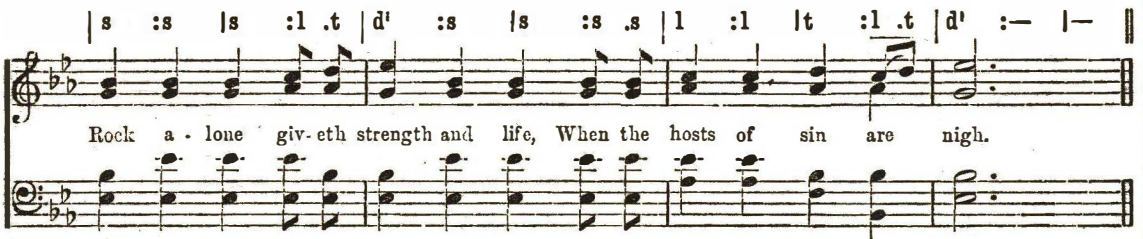
Key Eb. *With spirit.*

:m f | s :s | s :l .t | d' :s | s :s .l | s :f | f :s .l | s :m | m :m .f |



1. Firm-ly stand for God, in the world's mad strife, Tho' the bleak winds roar, and the waves beat high ; 'Tis the

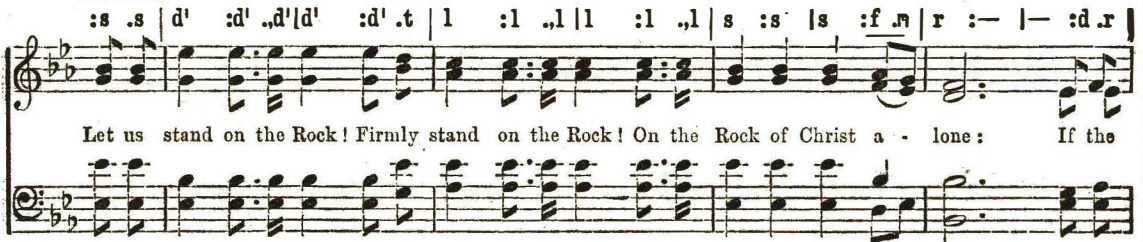
| s :s | s :l .t | d' :s | s :s .s | l :l | t :l .t | d' :- | - ||



Rock a - lone giv-eth strength and life, When the hosts of sin are nigh.

CHORUS.

:s .s | d' :d' .d' | d' .t | l :l .l | l :l .l | s :s | s :f .m | r :- | - :d .r |



Let us stand on the Rock! Firmly stand on the Rock! On the Rock of Christ a - lone: If the

| m :m .m | s :s .s | l :l | d' :d' .l | s :s .f | m :r | d :- | - ||



strife we en-dure, We shall stand se - cure 'Mid the throng who sur-round the throne.

2. Firmly stand for Right, with a motive pure,
With a true heart bold, and a faith e'er strong ;
'Tis the Rock alone giveth triumph sure,
O'er the world's array of wrong.
Let us stand on the Rock ! etc.
3. Firmly stand for Truth ! it will serve you best ;
Though it waiteth long, it is sure at last ;
'Tis the Rock alone giveth peace and rest
When the storms of life are past.
Let us stand on the Rock ! etc.

A LIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE.

AN EVER-POPULAR SONG OF THE SEA.

Key G. *Vivace.*

s, | s, : d : d | d : - : r | m : - : - | : d : r | m : m : m | f : - : m | r : - : - | - : r : t, | s, : - : t, | r : - : m |

f 1. A life on the o - cean wave, A home on the roll - ing deep, Where the scat-tered wa - ters

f : - : - | : f : s | l : - : s | f : m : r | d : - : - | : s, | s, : d : d | d : - : r | m : - : - | : d : r | m : m : m | f : - : m |

rave, And the winds their re-vels keep! A life on the o - cean wave, A home on the roll - ing

r : - : - | - : r : t, | s, : - : t, | r : - : m | f : - : - | : f : s | l : - : s | f : m : r | d : - : - | : d : t, | l, : - : t, | d : - : r |

deep, Where the scat-tered wa - ters rave, And the winds their re-vels keep! Like an ea - gle caged I

m : - : - | : d : t, | l, : - : t, | d : - : r | m : - : - | : - : m | m : m : m | m : - : m | m : - : - | : - : m | m : m : m | m : - : m |

pine, On this dull, un-chang-ing shore; Oh, give me the flash-ing brine, The spray and the tem-pest's

CHORUS.

f : - : - | : - : || s, | s, : d : d | d : - : r | m : - : - | : d : r | m : m : m | f : - : m | r : - : - | - : r : t, |

roar!..... *f* A life on the o - cean wave, A home on the roll - ing deep, Where the

s, : - : t, | r : - : m | f : - : - | : f : s | l : - : s | f : m : r | d : - : - | : - : s, | s, : - : - | : - : s, | s, : - : - | : - : s, |

scat-tered wa - ters rave, And the winds their re - vel's keep! The winds, the winds, The

Ped.

$s_1:- :s_1 | s_1:- :s_1 | d :- : - | :- :s_1 | s_1:- : - | :- :s_1 | s_1:- : - | :- :s_1 | s_1:- :s_1 | s_1:- :s_1 | d :- : - | :- : - ||$

winds their re - vels keep! The winds, the winds, The winds their re - vels keep!.....

Ped. * *Ped.* *

2. Once more on the deck I stand,
 Of my own swift-gliding craft;
 Set sail—farewell to the land—
 And the gale blows fair abaft.
 We shoot through the sparkling foam
 Like an ocean-bird set free;
 Like the ocean-bird, our home
 We'll find far out on the sea.
 A life on the ocean wave, etc.

3. The land is no more in view,
 The clouds have begun to frown;
 But with a stout vessel and crew,
 We'll say, "Let the storm come down!"
 And the song of our hearts shall be,
 While the winds and waters rave—
 "A home on the rolling sea!
 A life on the ocean wave!"
 A life on the ocean wave, etc.



GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY

A HYMN OF COMFORT FOR THOSE PERPLEXED.

Key G.

$d | d :- r | m : r | d : f | r : r | m : s | s : fe | s :- | - ||$

1. God moves in a mys - te - rious way His won - ders to per - form;

$:d | f : f | m : r | d : r | t_1 : m | l_1, t_1 : d | d : t_1 | d :- | - ||$

He plants His foot - steps in the sea, And rides up - on the storm.

2. Deep in unfathomable mines
 Of never-failing skill,
 He treasures up His bright designs,
 And works His sov'reign will.

3. Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take!
 The clouds ye so much dread
 Are big with mercy, and will break
 In blessings on your head.

4. Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
 But trust Him for His grace;
 Behind a frowning providence
 He hides a smiling face.

5. His purposes will ripen fast,
 Unfolding ev'ry hour;
 The bud may have a bitter taste,
 But sweet will be the flow'r.

6. Blind unbelief is sure to err,
 And scan His work in vain;
 God is His own interpreter,
 And He will make it plain.

W. Cowper.

THE VACANT CHAIR.

A BEAUTIFUL SONG OF DEEP PATHOS.

Key B \flat .

1. We shall meet, but we shall miss him, There will be one va-cant chair; We shall

lin - ger to ca - res him, While we breathe our ev-'ning pray'r. When a year a - go we

ga-thered, Joy was in his mild, blue eye, But a gold - en cord is sev-ered, And our

f. B \flat CHORUS.
 hopes in ru - in lie. We shall meet, but we shall miss him, There will be one va - cant

chair; We shall lin - ger to ca - res him, When we breathe our ev-'ning pray'r.

2. At our fireside, sad and lonely,
 Often will the bosom swell
 At remembrance of the story,
 How our soldier laddie fell;
 How he strove to bear our banner
 Through the thickest of the fight,
 And uphold our country's honour,
 In the strength of manhood's might.
 We shall meet, etc.

3. True, they tell us wreaths of glory
 Evermore will deck his brow;
 But this soothes the anguish only
 Sweeping o'er our heartstrings now.
 Sleep to-day, O early fallen,
 In thy green and narrow bed,
 Dirgos from the pine and cypress,
 Mingle with the tears we shed.
 We shall meet, etc.

HER STRANGE INHERITANCE.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10.)

Mrs. Dayton looked at her with pitying ridicule.

"You silly, silly, little girl!" she said. "Don't put on shy airs like that. It sounds so absurd! My poor, dear boy! Don't make him unhappy because of a man not in your position, who's forgotten all about you!"

And eventually Maggie had to submit, as she always did with the Daytons, and drive back home with them, not with the Manuings.

That evening, as she was going upstairs to bed, the parlourmaid came after her down the passage. Maggie turned at the door of her room.

"What is it, Lizzie? Did you want to speak to me?"

The parlourmaid held out a note.

"This came for you, miss, a bit back. I didn't bring it up before, for I thought I would be interrupting."

Like mistress, like maid. In that household, where truth was thought little of, and God was not feared, the maids, too, grew careless over lies.

Lizzie had left the note lying on the kitchen dresser because she was settling down to her supper, and didn't want to get up from it. Maggie took the note and looked at it in a minute's wonder. It had no stamp. Yet the writing surely, surely was familiar. She turned to her own room quickly.

"Oh, thank you, Lizzie!" she said. And then, as she turned on the gas and lit it, her heart burst out into glad thanksgiving. "Oh, Father! Father! I bless Thee! I thank Thee! He has come back safe to me! Safe!"

She sank into a chair. She didn't seem able to stand somehow in that tremor of joy that set her limbs shaking. She tore open the envelope. How strange that there was neither stamp nor postmark! How had it come then? She sprang to her feet, and opened her door. Lizzie was at the top of the stairs. Maggie ran after her.

"Lizzie! Lizzie! How did it come? Who brought it?"

Lizzie looked back over her shoulder.

"A sailor it was. A brown, burnt kind of chap. He came round to the kitchen door and handed it in there."

"Thank you!"

Back to her room sped Maggie, holding the precious letter fast to her heart. He was back! He had written! She tore open the envelope, standing under the gas-light to read the written page inside. Why, how short! Then, as her eyes glanced down it, her colour paled, her eyes widened.

"Dear Maggie,—I give you up. You ain't bound any more to me... You're free. That's all I want to say. Good-bye, and God bless you, even if it's all over between us."

That was all, except his name. Not even love—not even that he was hers for ever! Just that and no more! Short as a death-warrant, and as bitter, in its cruel doom.

She bent her head upon her clasped hands, and burst into a storm of weeping. He had cast her off—and her heart was nigh to breaking.

"Couldn't I go home, Mrs. Dayton?"

It was a pale-faced, haggard-eyed Maggie that asked it one day. Mrs. Dayton turned on her a look of surprised disapproval.

"This is your home, my dear girl! Surely, I don't understand you!"

"I—I mean—" Her lip quivered. "To my dear father and mother—I want so to see them."

Mrs. Dayton lifted her eyebrows.

"You are in my charge till you are of age," she said. "You are not that yet. If you still want to go then, we will talk again about it," and to herself she added:

"You'll be my Ralph's wife before then, you young torment!"

There was a sale of work over at Breasley. Mrs. Dayton had told Maggie that she really must come with them, although the girl's white cheeks and languid looks made her excuse of a headache one nobody could have doubted.

When they reached the house where the sale of work was held, Mrs. Dayton stopped at the door. She looked back at Maggie just getting up to leave the hired car in which they had driven over.

"If your head aches," she said, "you'd better have a little longer run in the air. Ralph, drive Madge round a little. You needn't come in here till later." And she and the girls vanished under the porch of the door, and before Maggie could retrace, Ralph had turned the car he was driving, and had set its head back to the town through which they had just run.

In that last week or two Maggie had let herself be dragged by the Daytons where they wanted. She seemed to have no power to resist, to fight. Only she had struggled never to be alone with Ralph, never to let him renew those hateful attentions. Now there was a look of triumph on his face as he turned the motor. He and his mother had arranged this little plot. He was going to carry it through to its end, whatever came of it. He turned into a side-street and stopped before the door of a house whose wire window-blinds had a name in rather shabby gold letters on them. He sprang down from the car, came round to where she sat, opened the door, and held his hand out to her. She started from the thoughts that had absorbed her, looked at him with startled eyes.

"Why should I get out here?" she asked. "What is it?" He gave her his hand and drew her out without answering. Then, as she stood on the pavement by him.

"Come inside here, just a minute! There's some business of my mother's she wants done." Surprised, wondering, Maggie obeyed him. They went in through the door with the quaint old panels of glass, and along a narrow little passage into a door that stood open on the left. The small room was furnished like an office, but it was empty!

Maggie looked round her with a growing fear, a growing amazement. She was spelling out that gilt lettering backwards on the wire blind, and as she spelt her consternation grew. "Surrogate for marriages."

"What do you want? What have we come here for? What are you doing with me?" she demanded. Ralph turned round to her, with a face of complacent triumph.

"My clever mamma's idea," he said. "She thought of it! We're going to get married, my lovely girl. Just a quiet little marriage. Then we can have the real thing in church afterwards, with bridesmaids and all the fuss you women like."

"But I won't! How dare you? I won't marry you!" Ralph shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, yes, I think you will! Why, there'd be an awful talk if you came here and didn't go through with it! You'd never be able to hold up your head again."

Of course it wouldn't be legal, but it would make Maggie believe she was bound, and that was the main thing. She'd have to marry him by and by, and the money would be secure. He walked to the door, and looked out. Nobody seemed about the place. He strolled to the front door and stepped across the threshold.

"That fool promised to be here by this time!" he said half to himself. "What on earth is he keeping us waiting for?" Maggie came after him to the door of the office. She was frantic with terror and indignation.

Down the passage that led to the back of the house a door stood open. Through it she saw a little untidy garden, neglected and dirty. A door was in the further wall. Quick as thought, like a creature trapped, a way of escape seemed to open to her. She sped noiselessly down the passage, through the door, across the garden. The door in the smoke-begrimed wall gave at her touch. She was out in a little narrow alley-way. She shut the door to after her, and ran down it breathless, trembling.

Beyond she saw open fields through the unevenly-placed houses, a road. She ran down a short street, up another, was over a low fence with a spring, and along the road that bent almost at once and hid her.

When Ralph walked back into the office, elated, to say that the registrar was coming down the street as fast as his legs could carry him, he stared in incredulous dismay. The room stood empty.

CHAPTER V.

MAGGIE IS RECAPTURED.

DOWN the long road, along through the open country; Maggie did not know the neighbourhood here. She must try to find a station. This broad road would surely lead to safety and shelter and escape.

She ran for miles and miles, and still she saw no station. What was that? The hoot of a motor-horn

behind her. She stepped on to the grass that bordered the road to let it pass. Instead of shooting by she heard the grinding of brakes. It slowed up, and halted. She turned with a jump.

It was the car in which the Daytons had come over. Ralph sat at the wheel, and from the seat behind, his mother's angry face looked out at her.

"You wicked, wicked girl! What a fright you've given us!" she said, and all the old smooth politeness had dropped from her voice. "Get in this instant! First you pretend you've a headache, and then you run away from the car, and give us all a fright that might have killed us! I'm ashamed of you! Get in this minute!"

And too stunned to resist, knowing well how hopeless would be resistance, Maggie obeyed, helpless and crushed. They went on without another word from any of them.

At the door of the house the car drew up. Mrs. Dayton got out, and so did the girls. Ralph turned the car's head to take her back to the garage. There was an ugly look of malicious triumph on his lips.

Tremblingly, she followed Mrs. Dayton's imperious beckoning, and went after her into her little room on the ground floor. The two girls in stony silence went up the stairs. Mrs. Dayton shut the door and turned and faced the culprit.

"I hope you are ashamed of yourself!" she said. "I know all about it! You've been to a registrar's office to make a secret marriage! Then you played a nasty trick on my boy, and ran away from him. But you should have thought of that before! The whole place knows you were at the registrar's. You must marry him now. There's no other possible thing, otherwise you'll never live down the talk about it!"

"I will not marry him! I will not! Not if there were no other man on earth!"

Mrs. Dayton shrugged her shoulders.

"Don't speak so loud, unless you want the servants to say what all the rest of the world is saying. I tell you the marriage is a necessity! You've got to marry him, after what's happened! You'd better come to your senses soon, and stay in here till you're calmer. After supper, Ralph shall have a little talk with you, and you'll see the need of being sensible. I'll leave you here to think it out."

She passed out of the room, and shut the door behind her. She turned the key in the lock, or thought she did; but it was old and disused, and it slipped. Maggie looked round her frantically.

The windows were bare—silver had once been kept there. No one could get out between those rusted irons. What was that door over there in the corner by the chimney-piece? She ran to it, dragged it open with difficulty, looked down into the dark, cavernous entrance, that led she knew not where.

Desperately she darted in, pulled the door to, hurried along in the black gloom along a passage, struck steps, and felt her way down them. When Mrs. Dayton made a leisurely return to the little room, an hour or two later, she found to her dismay that the door was not secured, as she had believed, and that Maggie was missing. She had vanished, and there was no trace of her.

CHAPTER VI.

LOST!

HIS mother met Ralph as he came in from the garage where he had taken the car. She was white and scared-looking. He flung his cap on the table and opened his lips to speak, but she cut across his words.

"Have you seen that girl? No! What's come to her then? I left her in my room here. I thought I'd locked the door, but I found just now it hadn't caught the fastening; now she isn't to be found!"

"Oh, she's somewhere about, I dare say!" Ralph's curiously indifferent tone aroused his mother's attention. She looked at him sharply.

"Why, Ralph, you aren't getting cool over this affair, are you?" she asked, in amazement.

He thrust his hand in his side pocket, took out a torn, brown envelope and thrust it at her.

"A telegram? Why—what—"

Ralph merely said between his set teeth: "Read it!"

She took out the flimsy pinkish paper. As she read, her face paled more than it had done already.

"Gone! Her money gone! Madge's money! Im-

possible!" she ejaculated. The square hall in which they stood seemed spinning round.

"That's what the old man says, anyhow. Old Dancock! You see the wire's from him. Miss Brereton's money gone in smash of Clydesdale Bank. Break news to her. That's where she had everything, isn't it? I think you said so once when you were talking of it."

"Yes. He told me so—Mr. Dancock. Oh, let me think! This is too dreadful!" She sat down suddenly on the carved hall-chair, and covered her eyes with a hand that was shaking.

"A good thing it came just now, anyhow!" It was Ralph's grumble. "If we'd pulled that business off, and she and I were married, there'd be a pretty kettle of fish, eh? I with a wife I didn't want, and she with no money! A near thing! She'll have to go now, eh? The sooner the better! One can't go on keeping a girl in the house when one won't be paid for her bread and butter!"

His mother lifted a despairing face to him. "But that's just what I've been telling you! She has gone! She's slipped out of the house when I was upstairs, and that door wasn't locked. It was more than an hour ago! She's got to the station by now, I expect, and we'll never see her again."

Ralph shook his head doubtfully.

"She hasn't gone to the station. No, nor out of this place! I've been close to the gate for the last hour. The car went wrong just after I'd gone out of the gate. I sent a boy for a man from the garage, and I was with him there till he'd put the thing right and taken it off my hands. I was just coming back when the telegraph-boy overtook me with that wire for you."

"But where can she be, then? She isn't in the house, I feel certain. And you see what Mr. Dancock says: 'Let me know when I can see her if I come down to tell her particulars. She ought to be consulted at once.' If he comes and finds her gone, there'll be no end of a fuss and a scandal."

"I don't see what it will matter if she's lost her money and there's nothing else to be got out of her," he said.

She made a sound of impatient irritation.

"Don't you see that Mr. Dancock will never send me another girl to look after? I've been depending on him to do that even if you married Madge Brereton."

"Oh, well, ask the maids! She must be somewhere!"

But asking and searching were all of no use. It was as if the earth had opened and swallowed Maggie.

The night was a miserable one for Mrs. Dayton. She was tormented with fears and dreads. Where could Maggie have betaken herself? What would Mr. Dancock say when he came down?

And all this time there was no touch of pity for the poor girl, persecuted and driven in terror from the house that should have given her shelter.

All the morning they sought again and again. Then Mrs. Dayton put her hat on. She and her two girls and her son set off with determination farther afield. They would beat the whole neighbourhood, making cautious inquiries. Then, if those failed, Mrs. Dayton would run up to town and see Mr. Dancock. She would try to keep him from coming down till they had news of the runaway who had given them so much alarm by her flight.

CHAPTER VII.

FOUND BY HER LOVER.

THE train had run into the junction whose station was the one nearest the Daytons' house. A sailor, in his sea-going clothes, got out of a carriage, cast a glance at the place, and drew his brows together. It had a memory so bitter that he grudging the hour he would have to wait there for his train. For he had come there only a week or two back, and gone away again, feeling that his heart was nigh to breaking. He had lost his sweetheart, and his life's hope was over. He set his lips together, and strolled up and down the platform.

Presently a lad came out of the telegraph-office, passed him, looked again, turned, and spoke, with a smile:

"Hallo, you! You don't remember me, I see. But I saw you not long ago. Couldn't make a mistake, with your sailor-rig! You come here asking for folks called Dayton, and a young lady that lives with them—isn't that so? I showed you the way down to their house."

Jim, for it was he, started, and his face took a sharp look of sudden suffering, as if the other had stabbed him.

"I remember, matey!" he said.

"Are you going to look up that young lady here again this time?"

Jim's brows drew together. He answered shortly:

"Not me! And, anyhow, there isn't any time."

"I say!" The boy dropped his voice, and looked over his shoulder. "Have you heard the news of her? Is she a friend of yours? I ain't supposed to speak about what's in the telegrams, of course. I wouldn't if you hadn't an interest in the party. Did you know about her losing her money—straight—sudden off?"

"Her money? I didn't know anything."

Jim would have shrunk back from the subject, but the boy went on:

"Yes. I sent up the wire yesterday evening to the old lady—that Mrs. Dayton her very self. It said to tell Miss Brereton some bank had smashed she had her money in."

"And, I say, there is something queer going on up there, too, for the old lady she's been down here just now in a kind of flurry, asking if Miss Brereton'd gone off from here in a train. She let out that they didn't know where she was. Do you suppose she's gone and drowned herself, finding she hadn't any money, after all?"

"Great Heavens!" said Jim.

He gave such a start that the boy looked at him in wonder. Then he pulled himself together sharply.

"Don't talk such rot, lad! She isn't that sort! She's a God-fearing girl, and it's a shame to say such things. What do you mean by her going away? It's wild talk."

"It isn't, then! The old lady she let drop that the young lady'd been missing since last night. I say—what's up?"

The sailor had turned, and was hurrying from him as if he had been shot from the mouth of a cannon.

The boy shouted after him, but Jim neither turned nor faltered. He was running hot-foot through the little gate of the station along the high-road. One thought possessed him. She was lost—little Maggie!

Along the road he raced. There was the house before him, the house where he had called that day—so long ago, yet so like yesterday. Was it only a week really? If she were not there, where was she? He hurried through the gate and up the drive. The house door stood open. He rang. Then, as no one answered the bell, he stepped inside the empty, silent little square hall, and looked about him on every side.

A green baize door swung open suddenly. A frightened-looking maid-servant came through with her capstrings flying. At sight of Jim standing in the hall she gave a faint exclamation of terror, and backed as if she would run away again, but Jim hailed her with decision.

"Look here, miss! Can I speak to some of the family? Is it true what they tell me—that Miss Macey—Maggie Macey's gone away?"

She stared for a minute.

"There isn't any Miss Macey lives here," she said. Then she corrected herself. "Oh, I remember now—you asked for her that time before when you came here! It's Miss Brereton you're after, most like—isn't it? Well, it's true enough she's gone, and we're all in a fright and a fuss here. Mrs. Dayton and—the young ladies, and—Mr. Ralph—they're all out looking for her. They haven't been in since breakfast. It do seem strange what can have happened to her! Left in that room there just for a bit, she was. And the mistress thought she'd locked the door—"

"What!" It was almost a roar.

The maid started under it. She glanced up, to see a scarlet face of wrath bent over her.

"I said the mistress locked the door," she faltered. "I—I heard her tell Mr. Ralph so. There'd been some quarrel like with Miss Brereton. We could hear a wrangle of voices all the way down in the kitchen. Mrs. Dayton left her locked up in her sitting-room while she went upstairs a bit. When she came down again, Miss Brereton'd gone, and they found the lock hadn't caught in the fastening. She must have slipped out."

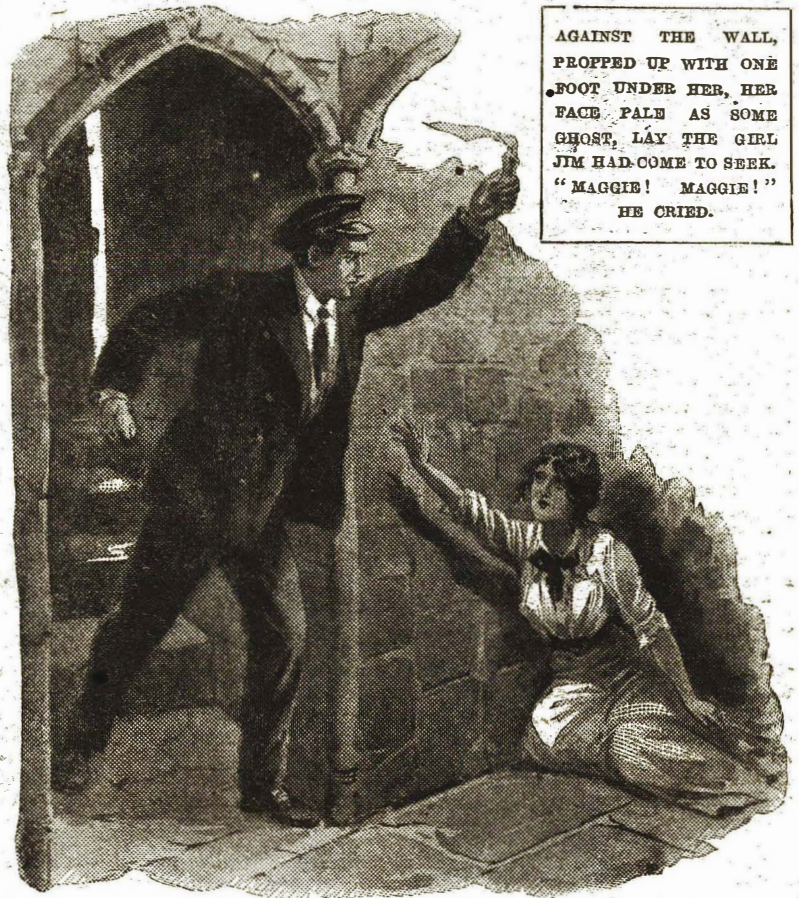
"Show me the door—show me!" Jim's eyes were blazing.

At the maid's heels, he strode to the door of Mrs. Dayton's sitting-room, stepped inside it, stared round with wrathful indignation.

Jim looked round him with close attention. Suddenly he made a step forward, and pointed to the door by the chimney-piece.

"Where's does that go to?" he demanded of the maid.

"Oh, that's just an old door that hasn't been opened



AGAINST THE WALL,
PROPPED UP WITH ONE
FOOT UNDER HER, HER
FACE PALE AS SOME
GHOST, LAY THE GIRL
JIM HAD-COME TO SEEK.
"MAGGIE! MAGGIE!"
HE CRIED.

since goodness knows when. It used to go to some old cellars, but they haven't been used in ages."

Without another word, Jim strode to the door, tugged at it. It yielded to his strong touch with reluctant gratings and groanings. At his back the maid still fluttered, curious, hesitating.

"It's a big passage." Suddenly he turned his head. "Got a candle?"

She hadn't. But there were some in the kitchen. She'd go and look. She went from the room, and Jim stepped farther inside the gloomy passage, where no light filtered.

A small, square, white object lying a little way in caught his attention. He stooped and picked it up. With a rush of feeling that passed description, he saw that it was an envelope directed in Maggie's writing, and as he turned it in his hands his own name on it struck him like a stab. He stepped back into the light, rent the envelope, and began to read the closely-written sheet.

Another Splendid Selection of National Melodies for the Home

Will be published in next Monday's issue. Please tell all your friends who like music.

Suddenly he lifted his head with a smothered cry. It was the letter Maggie had written to him, and that Mrs. Dayton had intercepted. Her love, her devotion, and her trust breathed through it. Eagerly he looked at the date. Not a fortnight back!

He crushed it in his hand, while bewilderment, speculation, and hope chased each other through his beating heart.

The maid came fluttering back with a candle and matches. Jim sprang to her, and almost snatched them from her grasp. She shrank back as the black mouth of the passage yawned before the candle's yellow radiance. He said something to her over his shoulder.

"You needn't come. I don't need you. But she's down here somewhere as sure as there is a good God above. She wouldn't have dropped that letter of hers if she hadn't gone along this passage. Stand clear! I'm going to find her."

And then the yellow light was dancing into the distance, and she lost sight of him round a turn in the narrow passage. She stood and held her breath. He must be mad, surely! Nobody had ever been known to enter that old, disused passage.

But on and on and on Jim trod, cautiously for fear of pitfalls, eagerly, for his love might be ahead there somewhere. Now and then he lifted his voice and called.

Hark! What was that? An echo? Or did some human voice answer him in truth? He called again. Again came the faint answer. With renewed zeal, he pressed onwards, the low, arched passage-top making him bend his tall head.

On and on and on! At last he rounded a corner, and his sharp eyes glimpsed something dimly white ahead. He leapt forward. Against the wall, propped up with one foot under her, her face pale as some ghost, her eyes weary with their dark watching, lay the girl he had come to seek.

"Maggie! My Maggie!"

And she, with eyes that widened in incredulous joy and amazement, cried back to him:

"Jim! Why, Jim, it can't be! Oh, Jim, how did you come here? My dear—my love!"

He was on the ground beside her, and her arms were tight about his neck. He would have lifted her, but that she shrank with a little, stifled exclamation:

"My foot! Jim dear, I think I've broken my ankle—or, anyhow, I've sprained it. I fell down that last flight of steps back there. I couldn't see them in the dark. I lay and tried to drag myself back. I meant to come out when the house was still at night, and get away from them. But I couldn't—I couldn't. I was just beginning to think I must die here of hunger, alone in the darkness, when I saw the far-off flicker of your light. Oh, Jim—Jim!" And again she clung to him.

He held her fast and tight.

"What had they done to you, my sweetheart? What made you try to run away?"

She buried her face on his broad shoulder.

"They—they wanted to make me marry the son; and, oh, I hate him! Even if there hadn't been you I'd never have! He tried to force me into a marriage yesterday, and I got away from him then, and his mother said she would make me. Oh, Jim, I've wanted you so badly—so badly! I thought you were never coming home again! Why didn't you write? The two years were so long, so weary!" Her voice ceased suddenly, and her head fell back against him. He had her up in his strong arms in a second, and scrambled to his feet.

"My love, my little love!" He said it over and over in distress and pity, as, with her in his arms, he picked his careful way back to the passage's entrance. They had done this to her—his little Maggie! His heart was hot even while it was raised in thanks for God's mercies—God, Who had brought him to her in time to save her life.

CHAPTER VIII.

TOGETHER.

THE girls and Mrs. Dayton had come in from their fruitless search of the neighbourhood. They and Ralph stood talking together now in Mrs. Dayton's little sitting-room, with anxious, bewildered faces. Not a trace was to be found anywhere of the missing girl.

Suddenly, as they were talking, a strange scuffling, stumbling noise was heard on the other side of the closed door that led down to the old, long-disused cellars. Mrs. Dayton started violently.

"What's that?" she said. "Ralph, there's something in there! What on earth—" Her son strode valiantly forward, and dragged the heavy door back.

"Please, m'm, he would go in!" It was the parlour-maid, hovering apologetically in the background, afraid she herself would be blamed. "I couldn't stop him!"

And with that there emerged out into the light of the room—two figures linked together—a sailor in his blue clothes, dirty and soiled from the damp walls of the narrow passage, and in his arms, clinging to his strong young neck, the girl they had been hunting for! There was a cry of mingled amazement and indignation from the whole party.

"What on earth— Then she was in there all this time, while we were scouring the country for her! You wicked, wicked, tiresome girl! Who in the world is that man? How did he come here?"

Jim stepped into the circle, and set Maggie down gently on the broad, chintz-covered sofa.

"Get her something to eat!" he said. "Soup or something! She's half-starving!"

"This is a nice sort of thing!" Ralph stepped forward. "Have the goodness to explain what you've been doing down there in our cellars?"

"I was looking for the girl you drove there, all of you, by your cruel unkindness," Jim said steadily. "But for my finding her she would have died down there, where she'd run to get away from your treatment of her."

"You're talking absolute nonsense!" said Mrs. Dayton, summoning all her forces. "This is a most tiresome girl. She ran away and hid to frighten us! Then she too fell back from the steady eyes of Jim."

"It's the lady that told me my girl was false to me!" he said. "That tried to make me give her up. If you're not telling more truth now than you did then, you can't expect me to believe you!" His tone was indignant.

The maid came fluttering back with a bowl of soup in her hand, and some dry biscuits. Jim knelt down by Maggie on the sofa, and lifting her head tenderly on his arm he held the basin to her lips. She drank a little, took some more. The colour began to come back to her cheeks. He held it till she had finished. Then he set the bowl down on the table. He turned to the silent group about them, and his voice quivered.

"But for the mercy of God above," he said, "she'd have died down there hiding from you all, because you'd made her afraid of you!"

Mrs. Dayton moved uneasily.

"Oh, nonsense! If she chose to do a silly, senseless thing, she must expect the consequences! She'd better go to bed." She moved to the bell. Jim's quick gesture stopped her.

"Begging your pardon," he said, "my girl doesn't stop a minute longer in this house! I'm not going to let her. Since you've rung the bell, perhaps you'll be good enough to send for some sort of a cab or a carriage. I don't go away without her."

"Impossible! Absurd! The girl is with me as her proper guardian. She isn't of age. You can't take her away like that. It would be against the law!"

He faced her without moving.

"Maggie's one-and-twenty to-morrow," he said. "You haven't any right over her after that. I expect a day won't make much difference. Anyhow, I don't leave

her here. I'm going to take her home to her father and mother till we can get married." He slipped an arm round Maggie on the sofa. Mrs. Dayton fell back with a gesture of hopeless disgust.

"Oh, take her, then!" she cried. "I'm sure I don't make any objection. She's been a bother and a worry from the minute she came into this house! What could anybody expect, with her bringing up, and her early surroundings? Take her! I'm glad to be rid of her. I suppose you know she's lost all her money? If that's what's making you so keen after her."

"Maggie's money doesn't matter to me one brass farthing!" His voice rang with a fine scorn in it, before which even Mrs. Dayton felt her cheeks burn suddenly. "I'll have enough for the two of us."

He raised his voice, and spoke over his shoulder to the maid, who had fluttered back at the sound of the bell.

"Will you get some kind of a trap for me, miss?" he asked. "Anything with wheels that can take us two to the station. And ask it to be sharp, please."

The maid fluttered over the threshold.

"There's Mr. Brewer, the baker, at the back door," she said. "He's got a tidy big cart with a hood over the front seat. Shall I ask him?"

And Jim nodded. "Do. There's a good girl."

Ralph stared at him, shrugged his shoulders, and walked across the room with his hands in his pockets.

"The bouncer seems to think this house belongs to him," he sneered. "Would he like to give any further orders?"

"I ask your pardon if I've been bad-mannered." Jim still spoke without temper. "I'm forced into it, you see. Is that the cart coming round? Can you walk, my pretty? Ay, but I'd better carry you."

He stooped and lifted his precious burden once more in his strong arms.

The others fell back as he walked straight between them, looking neither to the right nor to the left. Maggie put out a trembling hand as she passed the girls and their mother.

"Good-bye! I'm sorry all this happened. Thank you for being nice to me at first." That was all even her generous spirit could find to say. They turned their heads away from her in stony silence. Only Jim caught the little rejected hand in his own, and carried it to his lips, and showered kisses on it. The baker was willing to give them a lift as far as the station. He and Jim lifted Maggie in.

"And if there's a doctor on the way we'll stop and have him look at that poor ankle," Jim said tenderly. He had bound it up already in skilful fashion. But he wouldn't trust his own surgery where Maggie was concerned.

They had quite a halt at the doctor's house. It was fortunate that Mr. Brewer had finished his round, or he couldn't have waited so long for them. When Jim carried Maggie out again, with her foot in a plaster-bandage, they drove on to the station. There Jim lifted the girl into a chair the porter ran to bring. And standing near her together they waited for their train.

Out of an incoming train alighted an elderly gentleman. He was fussing across the platform, bag in hand, when he caught sight of the girl sitting there in the chair. He turned sharply, and made straight for her. As he reached her side he lifted his hat and spoke cordially.

"How are you, Miss Brereton? Pleased to see you here! I'm just on my way up to the Daytons. Shall you go up with me? I've come especially to see you."

"I've hurt my foot, I can't stand!" She pushed out the bandaged foot from under her frock. "No, I'm not going back to the Daytons, Mr. Dancock."

"Not going back? My dear Miss Brereton! Oh, I see, you mean you are on your way somewhere! I'm afraid you'd forgotten your coming of age to-morrow. Perhaps I should have warned you that I would come down and

see you. I've travelled to-day, that I might be here the first thing in the morning."

"Oh, I'm so sorry you took the trouble. I think I know what made you anxious. I know from Mrs. Dayton that all my money's gone!" She spoke so cheerfully and so gaily that he stared at her in amazement. "But really it doesn't much matter! I got on so well before I thought I was going to have it! I'll be just as happy, happier—for I'm going to be married."

"Indeed!" He looked more astonished. "But my consent is needed for that, isn't it?"

"Oh, is it? Mrs. Dayton said hers was. But, anyhow, I'm my own mistress after to-morrow, am I not? You won't say anything? This is my fiancee, Mr. Dancock. I've been engaged to him for two years, only we didn't say anything till he came home from sea. He's got enough to give me a home now. I've known him all my life. Father and mother both approve of him. I love him, and he loves me. I'd choose him out of the whole world. You gave me my chance of being a lady, Mr. Dancock. I'd rather be Jim's wife—oh, a hundred thousand times! He doesn't mind that I haven't got any money."

"Well, but indeed!" The old lawyer looked dreadfully puzzled. "If you are sure you aren't making any mistake! Of course, I've no control over you when you are one and twenty! I suppose I can't prevent it, if you are set on it. I only trust you will be happy!"

"Don't you worry about that, sir! If a man can bring that about I mean to!" It was Jim who gave that assurance.

"But about that money—there's some mistake. I'm very glad to tell you there is. That's part of the news I was bringing down. The bank has smashed, but only a trifle of yours was in it. The bulk is left in a safe investment. You will still be a very well-to-do young lady, Miss Brereton."

"Oh!" said Maggie. She turned her head, and her eyes met Jim's.

"It doe n't matter much, does it, dear?" she asked.

And Jim answered stoutly:

"Not a brass farthing, Maggie girl! But I'd rather work to keep you!"

"Tut, tut!" said Mr. Dancock. "That's ridiculous! Money is a very good thing. You must try to use it sensibly. Is thi your train? Why, then, I'll just see you into it. There isn't very much use my going on to see the Daytons if you won't be there!"

Jim cleared his throat, stepped back, beckoned the old lawyer to him. For a minute or two they spoke hurriedly. Mr. Dancock's face expressed horror.

"You don't say! Treated her like that! Incredible! Well, then, I will go on and see them! I've a piece of my mind to give. They'll never have help from me again as long as they live! Disgraceful! Good-bye, good-bye, Miss Brereton!"

And the train moved slowly from the station, Maggie and Jim alone in the empty carriage. She was sitting upright in the corner, and he was close to her. As they swept out beyond the platform he slipped his arm about her and drew her closer.

"Foot easy, sweetheart?"

"Oh, yes, Jim dear! It doesn't hurt a bit now."

"And my girl, my own darling girl is all mine again! Nothing but death shall ever part us! God's been good to both of us."

And looking up in his face with her gentle eyes, she echoed:

"Oh, so good, Jim! We must spend all our lives together thanking Him, and trying to live as He'd want us to live! We owe each other to Him! But for Him we'd never be here this minute!"

It was not long after that old Mr. Macey received a horse and trap—just what he wanted; and there came also a rich, rustling black silk frock, and a pretty set of new china for Mrs. Macey. And there was a little note, ending, "From your loving daughter Maggie."

THE END.

NEXT WEEK—"IN GOD'S GOOD TIME."

A delightful complete romance by ERNEST ACHESON.
READY NEXT MONDAY.



THE MAN I MARRIED.

The pathetic story of a rector's daughter, who married against her father's wish. Told by herself.

HOW I MET MY HUSBAND.

My father, who was the rector of Great Burgrave, gave most of his meagre salary to his parishioners, so we led a very quiet life.

My dislike for my humdrum existence was lessened when I met Sir Howard Burgrave, and fell in love with him. My father forbade me to see him, on account of some foolish act which Howard was said to have committed about seven years before, when he was living at Burgrave Hall. Sir Howard proposed, and then one night we stole away to London, where we were married. My father and sisters forgave me.

One day I came home from a reception to find my husband raving like a madman. He had had a slight accident, and my sister Peggy, who was staying with us, had given him brandy, which, the doctor said, had brought about this state; but I knew he was not telling the whole truth.

Howard was almost well again when a loud, vulgar man came to see him. Accidentally, I overheard them talking.

"You've got to come. She's been asking for you."

I was passionately jealous, and this widened the breach which had been growing between us. Then I met Hartley Rashwell, and Howard disapproved of my friendship with him. We had a violent quarrel. I was to blame, as I was too proud to tell Howard that I had forbidden Rashwell to see me again.

We decided it was impossible to go on living as we were, and I determined to run away. I packed my things ready for departure, and was waiting for night to fall, when my maid brought an urgent message that Mr. Rashwell must see me. It appeared that he had forged a cheque, been found out, and given a certain time to refund the money and clear out of the country. He had come to me for help. I felt sorry for him, and wrote out a cheque for the amount required, £300; the amount that Howard had placed to my credit in the bank.

The next morning, very early, I did what I had resolved to do; secretly left the house and husband I loved so well.

MY NEW LIFE.

I CAN hardly remember the events of that grey morning now; I only remember that I walked on and on, that the bag I was carrying grew heavier with each step—heavy as my heart was. For already I remember that sometimes all my courage seemed to leave me, the longing to return came to me; then I would stop, hesitating. With all my soul I longed to go back, yet I would not. I would not be false to myself; my pride held me up. I fought off the inclination and walked on.

Gradually the day began—the first day in my new life, the life that I had chosen for myself. I was in unfamiliar surroundings now. The streets were all strange to me; the shops looked mean and small. But I walked on and on. It seemed to me that my one desire now was to put all the miles I could between myself and Howard's home—my home no longer.

The street that I entered now was a little less mean and miserable than most of the others. The houses were semi-detached, each with a scrap of front garden and a narrow side path. I summoned up courage and knocked on the door of one, in the window of which I saw a card.

The woman who answered the door to me looked good-humoured. She had a room to let. It was a bed-sitting-room combined, she said, and the rent was ten shillings a week. I was glad to rest. The room looked clean and the woman was kindly. I was glad to stay. I paid her the first two weeks in advance, and took possession of my new room then and there.

The woman—Mrs. Martin—would willingly have stayed and talked to me. It was easy to see that she was curious as to who I was, and from where I had come, and what I meant to do. I had taken off my wedding-ring before I left Howard's house, and I wore it now suspended by a cord round my neck. I noticed that she glanced at my left hand almost as soon

as I had entered the house, and thereafter she addressed me as "miss."

I told her that my name was Hallington. I was not good at inventing or telling untruths perhaps, and yet, though this was an untruth now, for I was Howard's wife, Joyce Hallington had been my name before I married him, and I was resolved, now that I had left him for ever, it should be my name again.

But soon she saw that I wished to be left alone. She asked me if I would like a little breakfast, and I said I would; so she went. And then I threw myself down on the sofa under the window and cried. I cried my heart out. I felt lonely—terribly, horribly lonely.

I found myself longing, longing with all my heart, for the sound of Howard's voice. Perhaps I had never realized till those moments how deeply I loved my husband, even though he loved me no longer.

And then I think I must have fallen asleep from sheer weariness, and when I woke Mrs. Martin was standing by my side.

"Your breakfast is all ready, miss," she said. "I didn't half like to wake you. I expect you've come a long way now; you've been travelling all night. I shouldn't be surprised—"

I knew it was a hint—a question. I knew she was waiting to hear. But I did not satisfy her curiosity. I drank a little tea, I nibbled a scrap of toast, and then I went back to the sofa again. The window was open; the sounds of the street came to me. It was so different to anything I had known—this little house in this noisy street.

That evening I could not bear my hideous loneliness any longer. I rang the bell, and Mrs. Martin came.

"I wonder if—if you could spare me a little while?" I asked.

"Of course I could!" she said. "I'm only too pleased, miss."

"I wanted to ask you—" I hesitated. "I—I have to earn my living. I have a little money," I added quickly, as I did not wish her to think that I could not afford to pay her rent.

"Of course," she said.

"But I must earn my living," I said.

"You don't look as if you'd ever had to run out and work in your life, miss."

"I never have before."

"Family troubles?" she suggested. "A loss, perhaps?"

"Family troubles," I said gently.

She sighed. She was eager for me to go on, but I did not.

"I have been obliged to leave my—my friends," I said. "Now I must help myself; I must earn enough to keep me. Could—could you help me with your advice, Mrs. Martin. I am very ignorant!"

She sat down, uninvited, and stared at me.

"I s'pose you've never thought of the stage, miss?"

I shook my head.

"Not—not the stage," I said decidedly. "I don't care for that."

"No. I don't suppose so. Well, there's"—she paused—"there's places sometimes like nursery governesses and companions and lady housekeepers going, but at the best they ain't much of jobs, I should think."

"No," I said.

"Then there's the shops and the public— I beg your pardon, miss, I mean barmaids!"

I suppose I coloured foolishly, for she apologised again.

"I've got a niece of my own in Holland's!" she said.

"In Holland? But that is a long way!"

(Continued on page 22.)

WONDERFUL "HAIR-BEAUTY" LESSON.

FAMOUS HAIR SPECIALIST PROVES THAT BEAUTIFUL HAIR DOUBLES ATTRACTIVENESS AND CHARM.

A Free of Cost "Three-Minutes-a-Day Test" to Prove How Every Woman Can Grow Abundant Healthy and Luxuriant Hair.

How many women realise that it is possible to spend many guineas on their dress without in the least adding to the charm of their appearance!

Elegant and fashionable dresses, of course, make a difference, but, curiously enough, the woman who spends only a few shillings on her hats and dresses may quite easily do so to far greater advantage than the woman who spends two hundred a year. It is all a question of knowing how to grow beautiful and abundant hair—hair that idealises and sets off every item of the dress. That is why Mr. Edwards is making the splendid free-of-cost hair-growing offer to readers described on this page.

Even an unpretentious little hat, costing but a shilling or two, looks far better and infinitely more attractive resting upon a head of lovely abundant hair, than a hat at ten or twenty times the price on scanty or unbeautiful tresses.

BEAUTIFUL HAIR FOR THE ASKING.

A woman should no more think of neglecting her hair than of neglecting to wash her face. And after all, there is such a simple method of making the thinnest, duldest head of hair really beautiful. At the theatre, in the drawing-room, or elsewhere, when you see a woman with clusters of rippling hair, you may be sure that she is one of those who have learnt the "Harlene" Hair-Drill secret of growing hair in abundance—probably commencing her hair re-awakening by accepting such a free gift as is offered here.

"It is all very well," the busy housewife, the society woman, or business girl, will say, "but how can I spare the time for 'Harlene' Hair Drill, with all the day's tasks to get through?"

TWO OR THREE MINUTES EACH MORNING.

But the daily enjoyment of "Harlene" Hair Drill, that literally trebles the beauty, abundance, and lustre of your hair, occupies no more than a few pleasant minutes each morning and evening.

This two-or-three-minute "Hair Drill" at once commences to re-awaken and re-invigorate each separate hair root, to free your hair from all weakening, clogging hair troubles, scurf, etc., and to make the whole bead of hair speedily double its beauty, length, quantity, and lustre.

But again you may ask, "What about the expense?" Here, again, is a question disposed of at once, because there is no expense whatever in commencing this delightful method of growing hair. Mr. Edwards, the famous discoverer of "Harlene" and the "Harlene" Hair-Drill method of restoring Hair beauty, offers to each and every reader of HORNER'S PENNY STORIES a full trial "Harlene" Hair-growing outfit entirely at his own expense.

TO OBTAIN YOUR HAIR-BEAUTY GIFT.

Simply fill in, cut out, and post the special coupon below, as directed, and immediately you will receive this triple toilet gift:

1. A liberal trial bottle of "Harlene," the most successful hair-grower and tonic dressing ever prescribed. This free bottle contains a sufficient supply of "Harlene" to last for a full test of "Harlene" Hair-Drill—the delightful toilet exercise that will overcome all your hair troubles and grow for you in a short time a luxurious mass of delightful wavy, lustrous tresses.

2. A Free copy of Mr. Edwards' famous Book of Rules for "Harlene" Hair-Drill showing in clear, simple language how to spend your three minutes each morning in awakening the hair to new life and new beauty.

3. A Free trial packet of "Cremex" Shampoo Powder, which thoroughly cleanses the hair and scalp and prepares the way for the full benefit of your "Harlene" Hair Drill.

No matter how thin, loose, or imperfect your hair, "Harlene" immediately commences the splendid work of cleansing, cooling, refreshing, and invigorating each separate hair root.

If your hair is falling out, dull, greasy, too dry, scurfy or straggling, "Harlene" will make it perfect. Even if your hair is already free-growing and healthy, "Harlene" prevents it from becoming loosened or imperfect, and at the same time enhances its lustre and proves an ideal hair tonic dressing.

When you have realised just how wonderful the "Harlene" Hair Drill

Method is, how delightful it is to follow out, you will surely want to continue. You can then always obtain supplies of "Harlene" from all chemists at 1s., 2s. 6d., & 4s. 6d. per bottle.

"Cremex" Shampoo Powder at 1s. per box of 7 Shampoos; 2d. per single packet; or direct on remittance from the Edwards' "Harlene" Co., 20-26, Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C. Postage extra on foreign orders. Cheques and P.O.'s should be crossed!

But decide to make a hair-growing test to-day by sending the form printed here.

FILL IN AND FORWARD THIS COUPON TO-DAY FOR FREE OUTFIT.

To Edwards' "Harlene" Co., 20-26, Lamb's Conduit St., London, W.C.

Please send me, free of cost, the triple "Harlene" hair growing outfit described above. I enclose 3d. stamps for postage.

Name

Address



There is a Free Gift for every reader of this paper who desires a beautiful head of hair and who wishes to double her charm of appearance. To obtain this gift at once simply fill in and post the coupon below.

"I don't mean Holland, miss; I mean Holland's, the big drapers. If you'd care, I'd speak to her. She's got a good place there; she's forewoman in one of the departments. She might be able to put in a word for you."

"I would be grateful to her if she would," I said.

But I put little faith in this offer. It would have to be a shop. A shop seemed the only thing open to me. I must get work as a shop-assistant somewhere. I slept very badly that night. The little bed was hard and uncomfortable. I thought of my own luxurious bed, and my beautiful room, which I had left for ever. I turned and twisted the whole night through. I thought of Howard. I wondered if he knew yet. I thought of Hartley Rashwell.

I was glad I had been able to help him. I was glad he had gone out of my life. As a matter of fact, he had never entered into my life at all. I had never cared for him, hardly even liked him. I had always had that same pitying contempt for him in my mind. How could I love and marry such a man as Howard, and then fall in love with so poor and weak an imitation of a man as Hartley. I laughed at the very thought.

In the morning Mrs. Martin brought me some daily papers, and I looked through the advertisement columns. There were very few situations vacant such as might suit me, but the few there were I answered, and went out myself and posted the letters. All that day I spent alone, trying to read.

Mrs. Martin came whenever I rang the bell, and would have stayed and talked; yet I knew that she was curious, and I could not satisfy her curiosity, so I sent her away again.

So that day passed, and the next, and the next, and the next. Every hour of every day seemed an eternity to me. I knew Howard must know by this time. Now I wondered what he was doing, what he had said when they had told him.

No replies came to the letters I had written—not one answer; though I watched eagerly for the coming of the post, there was never any letter for Miss Joyce Hallington.

I had been with Mrs. Martin nearly a week now when she came into my room one morning.

"I have heard from my niece Jane," she said. "She's coming round this evening. I wrote to her the day after you came. Miss, about finding you a place, she says she'll do her best. Perhaps you wouldn't mind seeing her this evening."

"I shall be glad to," I said.

Jane Martin came that evening. She was a good deal older than I had expected. She was a thin, bony woman, with rather a hard face and a large, loose-lipped mouth, but her eyes belied the sternness of her face. Afterwards I found out that a kinder-hearted creature never breathed, but her appearances were against her.

She had a sharp, abrupt way of talking, very different from her aunt's plausible, polite methods. Perhaps it came from her having so many girls under her charge, as I found out afterwards she had.

She stared hard at me when Mrs. Martin brought her into the room. Her eyes seemed to go through and through me, and made me feel vaguely uncomfortable.

"My aunt tells me you're wanting a place," she said briefly.

"Yes. I have to earn my own living."

"Well, there's no shame in that, is there?" She spoke briskly and sharply. "Do you mind standing up?"

I obeyed her wonderingly. She looked at me again keenly.

"That will do," she said. "I dare say I might." She paused. "I don't promise anything. It's no good making promises one might break. Anyhow, I'll see what I can do. You've never been in a shop before?"

"Not—not to serve. Not as an assistant," I said.

"I didn't suppose you'd never been inside a shop," she said tartly. "I've got some sense, I suppose!"

I felt crushed and humbled. This woman whirled me off my feet.

"Well, I'll do what I can. I don't promise nothing, remember."

Jane Martin stared at me again, looked me up and down as though taking stock of me.

"That's a nice-made dress you've got on," she said

suddenly. "I know it come from a good place. We couldn't turn out a better ourselves."

I don't know what I said. I stammered and flushed, perhaps, for she laughed.

"Oh, I'm not asking for information! Other folk's secrets don't worry me. I don't want to know where you got it from, nor what you paid for it. Only, as I say, it's a nice dress. The stuff's good."

She reached forward, and felt the material between her finger and thumb.

"If you bought that under twelve guineas; you bought it cheap," she said. "I'll do what I can, only remember, I don't promise anything."

And then she went, leaving me ruffled, hurt a little—angry, perhaps. And yet I felt I liked her.

After she was gone, Mrs. Martin came in to apologise.

"It's her manner," she said. "Jane's like that! Pick you up and drop you down, like, miss. She don't mean anything. She's good-hearted, Jane is, though she doesn't look it, perhaps. She's a good soul, Jane is, miss, and she'll do anything in her power for you, I'm certain. She says you are the prettiest lady she's seen for years, and she says that they ought to ju p at you in the mantle department because of your figure."

I flushed again. I felt as a slave might feel when she is offered for sale. I began to hate my own looks and my figure.

And after then the days passed on wearily again. I always wrote letters in answer to the advertisements. Sometimes I got replies, but they were not of the nature that I expected. Some were from registry offices, asking for a fee, and promising all sorts of places; others were from people who had things to sell.

And then, one evening, the unexpected happened.

Mrs. Martin bustled up to my room.

"Jane's here, miss, and wants to see you," she said.

"She's been speaking about you to the manageress of the mantle department, and she believes it's all right."

"I never said so!" It was Jane's harsh voice. "You jump at conclusions, aunt. I just said I'd spoke to Miss Wilkinson, and she's willing to see Miss Hallington—that's all."

"I understand," I said.

Somehow I always felt crushed and rebuked in Jane's presence, even though I myself had said nothing.

"When can you come—that is, leastways, if you want to come!"

"I could come any time," I said.

"To-morrow, at ten, then. Go straight to the mantle department, and ask for Miss Wilkinson. If she approves, you'll have to see Mr. Richard. Mr. Richard Holland, that is. It's him as does all the actual engaging, only it's in Miss Wilkinson's hands. I've told her all about you as I can think of."

"Thank you. You have been very kind," I said.

"Don't mention it!" she snapped.

I was at Holland's a little before ten the next morning. I had indulged in the luxury of a cab, partly because I did not know my way, partly because I was anxious to be there in good time. I found it was near Sloane Square—a huge building, with many shop windows.

I felt a little nervous and depressed as I asked the polite shopwalker the way to the mantle department. I wondered what he would have thought if he had only known the truth—that I had come here hoping to get work to do—as he bowed, and begged me to come that way, and politely showed me to a lift, and ordered the boy to take me up to the first floor.

I know that my cheeks were burning as I reached the mantle department.

A very pretty girl languidly came forward to meet me. She was dressed in silk that rustled. As she moved, she scarcely seemed to walk, but rather to glide over the thickly carpeted floor.

"What can I show you, madam?" she asked.

"Miss—Miss Wilkinson!" I gasped. "I want to see Miss Wilkinson, please. I have an appointment."

"Oh, certainly!" She put a chair for me, and glided away again.

There was more rustling of silk this time. It was a tall, commanding-looking lady who came to me.

"I am—am Miss Hallington," I said

The smile on her face seemed to fade. She froze instantly.

"You are the young person Miss Martin spoke to me about?" she said.

"Yes," I said.

I suppose I hung my head a little.

"Hold up your head, please!" she said sharply.

I obeyed her wonderingly. She was taking stock of me. She looked at me keenly, as a dealer might look at some prize beast at a show. She even walked round me, and examined me from head to foot.

I felt ashamed. I felt a burning shame. I—Howard's wife—I, the wife of Sir Howard Burgrave, to be treated like this. Then I remembered that it was my own doing, that I had left his home and his protection, had cast away even the name that he had given to me. I was no longer Lady Burgrave, but simply Joyce Hallington, in search of work!

"Let me see you walk, Miss Hallington," she said.

I walked across the room under her eyes. The pretty girl who had first received me and another stood watching me, talking in low voices. I heard one of them laugh, and I knew that my cheeks burned horribly.

"A little awkward," Miss Wilkinson said, "but doubtless you will improve. I think it possible you may suit. One of our mantle young ladies has been obliged to leave suddenly. I am disposed to take you on a month's trial."

"Thank you," I said.

I stood before her, very meek, feeling smaller and of less importance than I had ever felt in my life.

"You will come with me to Mr. Richard," she said.

I followed her down a broad, carpeted stair to the ground floor, to an office where several clerks were at work. I followed her through this office, and she tapped on the door of an inner one.

There was a man there, alone. He looked young, though his head was bald. He was reading a letter. He looked up as Miss Wilkinson entered.

"Well?" he asked sharply.

"I have brought Miss Hallington," she said. "You know I want another hand in the mantle department, sir. I think Miss Hallington might suit, if you approved."

Gone was her brusque, authoritative manner. She seemed to cringe and fawn before the great man.

"Very well, where is this Miss—er—Hallington?" he said.

"Here, Mr. Richard," he said. She stood aside, and I stood before him.

He put on a pair of glasses, and stared at me, for a long minute in silence.

But it was less an exclamation than a grunt: "So you are Miss Hallington—eh? Very good, Miss Wilkinson, I will speak to this young lady. There is no need to detain you." He waved her off, and she went.

"Sit down," he said to me, his voice seemed to tremble. "So, Miss Hallington, you want work to do—eh? Is that it?"

"I have to support myself," I said, "now——"

"Now," he asked—"now? You mean that it was not always necessary?"

"It was not necessary till now," I said.

He paused, evidently expecting me to go on. He wore magnifying glasses, that gave his eyes a strange, distended, horrible look. Somehow they fascinated me. I hated him from the first moment I saw him.

He was leaning back in his chair now, still staring at me, the tips of his thick, fleshy fingers brought together.

"How old are you?" he asked suddenly.

I stammered and flushed. I could hardly remember for a moment.

"Nineteen," I said.

"You look older. I should have taken you for twenty-one or two, Miss Hallington. Well, well, I think you will do. We want pretty girls—as many of 'em as we can get. Pretty faces, and beautiful figures—like yours—are an asset in our business, you see." He leaned towards me confidentially. "We get old women here, and young ones, too, who are—well, not good-looking. You know the sort. They want something—a mantle, a cloak, a coat, a dress." He waved his hand. "You, for example, will put on the article, and wear it before them. They see you, and imagine they will look something like you themselves, only they never will. It's not given to many women to look like you, Miss Hallington."

(Continued on the next page.)



'Wood-Milnes' save 10 times their cost

Fit the family's boots with 'Wood-Milnes,' and there'll be greater comfort and less repair costs.

'Wood-Milne' Rubber is not only softer, more resilient, more easy than ordinary heel-rubber—it is vastly more enduring.

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When We Write "P.M." to Life.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—The other day I received a letter from a friend in Tintagel, and in the course of it she used a phrase which struck my attention at once.

"I have arrived," she says, "at the age when one writes 'p.m.,' and feel I have so little to show."

She has come to the time in her life which we call evening, and although she says that she has little to show, yet I somehow feel, from the bright and helpful tone of her letter, that one who writes thus cannot have really failed in the task we all have to do of shedding some brightness and love on those whose paths have lain next ours.

Evening time is star time. As, indeed, we all love those bright, unclouded nights when the stars can be seen in the deep blue of heaven, so we all love to be associated with those who, at the eventide of their lives, can remain clear and unclouded, shedding around them the brightness which comes from a good life, well lived.

Evening time is the time of quiet, peaceful trust, waiting for the call of the Master to a service higher and better than earth's. I think there is nothing purer than the peaceful serenity which comes with the white head to those who have lived for the highest things.

WHY don't you throw away that old cracked plate? It is really not presentable, and you have so many pretty dishes, that you surely do not need it."

So questioned and argued a bright young lady who was taking tea with her aunt one day.

"My dear, I'd rather lose every piece in my new tea set than that same disreputable looking old plate," answered the aunt. "It belonged to my grandmother. It was the plate on which she always liked her toast served. It grew cracked and burnt and stained in the service of a dear old saint, and it has

(Continued from previous page.)

It was a compliment from him, but it did not bring a flush to my cheeks, nor a sense of pleasure to my heart.

"That's how we do it," he said.

"I understand," I said coldly.

"Of course you understand. You are no fool—eh?" He sat staring at me. He seemed to forget the reason why I was here. Suddenly it dawned on him. "Well, you'll do," he said. "You're the sort we want. Now, about terms?"

"I'm willing to pay you eighteen shillings a week," he said. "Hours, eight-thirty to eight-thirty, except Thursdays and Saturdays. Thursdays you finish at one. Saturdays at twelve, midnight. If that's agreeable say so?"

"I shall be pleased to come," I said.

"That's all right, then, my dear," he said. "That's settled." He held out his hand to me suddenly. I did not know but that it was the usual thing for him to shake hands with a new employee.

It was soft, warm, flabby—the kind of hand that is most detestable in a man.

"To-morrow," he said, "at half-past eight." And I went out—engaged.

I suppose I should have felt more glad about it than I did. To find work was an absolute necessity to me. My little stock of money could not last for ever. I had hoped to be able to earn more than eighteen shillings a week. It meant, I supposed, that I should have to find other and cheaper rooms, and some perhaps a little nearer to my work. But that evening, when I told Mrs. Martin, she expressed her anxiety for me to stay on.

"I could give you another little room," she said, "and if you was not above having your meals with me in the kitchen, Miss Hallington, I'd take you all in for fourteen shillings a week. That 'ud leave you four shillings clear. A twopenny 'bus would take you almost door to door, and that would leave you two shillings a week clear, after paying everything."

enough memories connected with it to earn it much more than the small bit of room it occupies."

I THINK there is a lesson in this little incident which we all need to learn. The age in which we live is one of action and progress. We are always being told that it is the day of young people, and sometimes those who now write p.m. after the time of their day, are given to feel that it is not an age when they are of much consequence.

Greater mistake could never be made. We can never dispense with the experience of the aged, their gentle counsel, beautiful serenity and trust. White hair can constitute as true a crown of glory as the proudest garland ever worn by monarch or warrior.

It can be the crown our Master presents to those who have lived their lives honourably and well.

You lived life bravely!

*And though the fight was hard and long,
You never flinched from what was right,
But through the watches of the night
You filled the hours with song.*

You lived life bravely!

*Your presence brightened all the day:
Though so much sorrow crossed your path,
You met it with a quiet faith
That swept all bitterness away.*

You lived life nobly!

*For by your generous self-denial
Others were taught to see the light
That makes men strive for what is right,
And meet life bravely with a smile."*

If when we write p.m. to life's day, this can be said of us, we shall receive the higher praise, the "Well done, good and faithful servant," which is the highest praise of all. It will be worth striving for through the morning, noon, and till the evening's shadows begin to lengthen and merge their shades with those of night.

I am always glad to hear from any of my readers. Kindly address your letters, "Under the Evening Lamp," HORNER'S PENNY STORIES Office, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.

Your sincere friend, JOHN EARNEST.

And so it was arranged.

I went by the twopenny omnibus the next morning, and reached Holland's in good time.

I found I was expected to wear a black silk dress, like the other two girls in the mantle department, but this was provided for me.

The other two girls were not disposed to be friendly, and Miss Wilkinson from the start treated me with harshness.

That first day Mr. Richard Holland came to the mantle department three times. I was not to know that it was not a usual thing for him to do; but I found the other girls staring at me, and muttering, and giggling under their breath when he was gone. Once he came to me and stood talking for some minutes, but he took no notice of me, and went out again.

Holland came sometimes twice and three times in the day. He never came to the department unless he spoke to me; sometimes he stood talking to me for some minutes. It was always about the work about the shop, the models, and things connected with the business. There was nothing that he ever said to me that all the world might not have heard. But I could see sneering amusement on the faces of the other girls.

Yet still I did not understand that Mr. Richard Holland was choosing me for unusual honours.

It was one morning, when I had been here nearly a week. It was close on midday, and Mr. Richard had come up as usual. He was standing near me, as I was arranging a model on a stand. I knew that he was watching me, and I did not look up purposely. Miss Palmer was serving some customers who had just come in—a lady and gentleman. The latter spoke.

"All I know is, I ain't going to no more'n twenty pound for the 'ole thing," I heard the voice say. The voice was so familiar that I started. I puzzled my brain for a moment, but I did not look up, as I knew Mr.

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Holland was watching me. "If you can't get fixed up inside twenty pound, Bess, 'ere, we'd best go to 'Arrows, or one of them other big places," the voice continued.

"There is a model here, madam," Miss Palmer said, "that might perhaps suit you. It is quite reasonable in price, and—" She came towards me, to the model I was adjusting, and I stood aside.

"Why—why it is—" I heard a shrill voice cry. "Father, look here! Oh, it is Lady Burgrave! It is! I'd know you anywhere!" I stood upright, rigid. I clenched my hands. I had been found out already—found out!

It was Mr. Smithson and his daughter—Mr. Smithson from Burgrave Hall. The girl stood in front of me, looking at me with delighted eyes. Her voice, loud and shrill, sounded through the entire room. I could see that Miss Wilkinson was staring at me—that Miss Palmer was looking at me, and Mr. Holland.

"I—I think," I said—"I think you are making some mistake, madam."

"Oh, I'm not—I'm not!" she cried. "Father"—she turned to him—"father, look! Here is Lady Burgrave!"

Mr. Smithson strode forward, his face had gone very red. He gripped his daughter by the hand suddenly, and dragged her away.

"Father, surely you—you know Lady Burgrave?" she said. "She says it is a mistake, but I—I must believe my own eyes. Father, you know her?"

He stared at me, looked me full in the face. "Yes, I know 'er," he said; "but you don't, and ain't going to. I ain't one of the strait-faced sort myself,

but there's a limit, and 'er ladyship 'ere 'as stepped over the limit. You come with me, Bess. We'll go somewhere else for what you want."

I stood erect. It had been a deliberate insult, a cut direct—and all there in that room had seen and heard. And now I stood waiting for what must follow next.

I knew that Mr. Smithson must have been surprised to see me standing there, and I blushed that he should find me so. But I could not understand his remarks. What had I done that his daughter Bess might not be allowed to speak to me? What had I done?"

(A very fascinating instalment of this story will appear next week. Look out for it.)

RESULT OF OUR PUZZLE LETTER CONTEST NO. 13.

Our examiners find that two readers have qualified for the first prize in this contest, and we have therefore divided the prize money, £2, between them. The names of these readers are:

Miss S. Downs, 27, Oakley Road, S. Newwood.

W. E. Jenkins, 52, Sultan Road, Portsunmouth.

Eleven competitors came next in order of merit, and we have therefore added together the second and third prizes, making £3 10s., and divided the sum amongst these eleven readers. They will each therefore receive the sum of 6s. 5d. Their names are:

Miss L. Alder, Butte Decks, Cardiff; Mrs. E. Reading, Bourneville, Birmingham; W. H. Grounsell, Fulham, S.W.; J. S. Temple, Edinburgh; Mrs. H. Litch, Edwared, Kent; Mrs. C. A. Whiteley, Lintswate, near Huddersfield; Miss L. Wright, Peckham Rye, S.E.; Miss P. East, Kingston-on-Thames; Mrs. Stewart, Belfast; Mrs. Clarrutt, Brixhill, near Tunbridge Wells; A. Thorne, Rotherham, Yorks.

The correct solution of the puzzle letter was as follows:

MY DEAR MARY, Our company has just been moved out of the firing line for a day or two for a rest. A little time ago I had a good wash, the first for a week. But I know we shall soon be in it again. We are marching off in single file across the country to relieve other troops. It is dangerous work. The other day a shell burst a few yards from me, and my bayonet and rifle were smashed to atoms. News has just arrived of the great Russian victory. You should have heard the men cheer.—Your devoted
TONY.

CAN YOU READ THIS SOLDIER'S PUZZLE LETTER?

1st PRIZE, £2. 2nd PRIZE, £1. Ten 3rd Prizes of 5s. each.

Can you read this soldier's letter "from the front?"

Thousands of our readers are enjoying these entertaining weekly contests. Are you? If not, enter this week.

All you have to do is to solve the puzzle letter, write your solution out clearly on a piece of paper, then cut out the puzzle picture, pin it to your solution, and forward it to the Editor.

You should keep by you, for reference, an exact copy of your solution.

Show your friends the puzzle, and ask them to help you. They will be very much interested in it. Remember a picture may represent a phrase of one, two, or three words, but not more than three.

Our handsome prizes will be awarded as follows:

The First Prize of £2 will be awarded to the reader whose solution is correct, or most nearly correct, in accordance with the original in the possession of the Editor. The Second Prize of £1 will be awarded to the reader who comes next in order of merit, and the same rule will apply in the case of the Ten Third Prizes of 5s. each. The Editor's decision is final.

The Editor reserves the right to add any or all of the prizes together should the number of readers qualifying render this course advisable. No reader can receive more than one prize.

This contest is being conducted by HORNER'S PENNY STORIES, "Horner's Weekly," "Sunday Circle," and "Golden Hours," and all readers of these journals may take part. All members of families may compete, but each must send in a separate solution. Readers can send in as many complete solutions as they like, but each solution must be accompanied by a puzzle picture taken from either of the journals named above.

Remember each week's contest is complete in itself. When you have solved this week's picture puzzle, do not wait until next week, but send your solution at once to: Puzzle Letter No. 19, HORNER'S PENNY STORIES Office, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. All solutions for this week's contest must reach us not later than Friday, February 5th. The result of this contest cannot appear in this journal for five weeks.

Cut this out and send it with your Solution, as directed. Competitors should keep a copy of their solutions for reference.

The Special

RECRUITING NUMBER

of the

PENNY PICTORIAL

includes the following features:—

"The Reckoning for the War."—A remarkable article, illustrated with striking cartoons, contributed by

H. G. WELLS.

"Kitchener."—A capital article about the man who is just now mainly instrumental in

Making British History.

"The Brutal Bombardment."—An Eyewitness's account of the barbarous attack on the Yorkshire coast. The first full and authentic story published.

Edited by

WALTER WOOD.

"German Frightfulness!"—Remarkable photographs of the scenes of desolation wantonly caused by the Kaiser's hordes.

THE GREAT CRIME.

Two pages revealing how Germany had deliberately planned to plunge Europe into a dastardly war.

OUT ON
TUESDAY

ONE
PENNY

Pocket Testaments

FOR

OUR SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

An Appeal to Readers of "Horner's Penny Stories."



WE want every brave British soldier and sailor to have a pocket edition of the New Testament, and we appeal to our readers to help us to present copies of the Word of God to every brave defender of our land. An illustration of the Pocket Testament we have in mind appears here. It is printed on India paper, is beautifully illustrated, contains the words and music of several excellent hymns, and a guide to the way of Salvation. It is published by the Pocket Testament League, and we are hoping that every brave soldier and sailor who receives one of these Testaments will sign the membership card, which is also contained in the Testament, and join the League. The members promise to read at least one chapter of the Bible every day, and to carry a Testament or Bible with them wherever they go.

If we are to go forward with this grand work of distributing the Word of God to the brave men of our Army and Navy, we shall need funds, and we appeal to our readers to help us. (1) By themselves giving donations towards this splendid effort. (2) By collecting from their friends. We shall be glad to receive large or small amounts from our readers, and we will send collecting cards to those who are willing to help us. All letters should be addressed as follows: "Pocket Testament," care of HORNER'S PENNY STORIES, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.