

ONE-HALF WAS BLACK.

BY EUGENE L. NELL.

A worthless wog was Philo Fester, A vagabond, scot and queer, Who did as little as he could To earn a living, and, A shirking, luckless, lazy lout, Who hunted, fished, and loafed about, ran wild, and was a scoundrel, Who never had a cent about— A being of that curious kind, That's always in the mud, On coming to a country town, Before the tavern, sitting down.

One day a swoman passed that way, An easygoing sort of man, A man who had a "caravan"— Exhibiting a small, tattered tent, A tattered, rusty canvas tent, Two-legged men, three-legged men, A woman, and a Tartar girl with fourteen toes, That bashed a brier on her nose, A snake and a scorpion, A snake and a scorpion, And other things as red and strange.

He who had come gained his change, Great things from little nothing grow, Like "Bray's" Bethlehem Moral Show.

One sultry day, Freeer meeting Bray, Said to him, "I'm not in the way."

"I'm always in the way."

A spendidly dressed for your show—

A man whose face was half black,

The moment I have told of it;

A man whose face was half black,

That bashed a brier on her nose,

A snake and a scorpion,

"You see," said Freeer, with a accent keen,

"Both halves are black and you are green."

"SHE WOULDN'T MARRY A FARMER."

The old house at Stonecrest was the most ancient mansion in the county. Its walls of dark gray stone were almost entirely covered with ivy and climbing rose vines. Year after year, Mr. and Mrs. Thornfield toiled to keep the ivy down, but he failed to do it, until the roses were over the second-story windows, and the ivy clear to the roof.

Perhaps they were spared because Mrs. Thornfield loved them. And indeed they did give an air of beauty to the square, gray old house, which one could fail to notice, and which resembled the ivy of a grown English hedge very strongly.

When Edith, the Squire's pretty niece, came down from the city for a long visit, she chose for her room the corner one in the second story, the coolest room in the house, wide, light and airy, where the windows were nearly covered with vines, and every breeze sifled a shower of rose-leaves across her floor.

Pretty Edith, proud as pretty, was Mr. Thornfield's niece. Her father was a rich business man in the city, who knew far more about stocks, bonds and mortgages than he did about his only daughter. Her mother died when Edith was a baby, but kind Aunt Rachel, Mrs. Thornfield, of Stonecrest, had supplied her place as far as she could, and much of the girl's lady-like bearing had been acquired from her. Edith often came down for a long visit, and the old house was the brighter while she remained.

Joining Stonecrest was another fine estate, belonging, at present, to young Robert Bolton. A fine, well-rounded specimen of a country Squire he was, without good mental cultivation and intelligence, and any girl might be proud of his favor. Even Edith admitted that he was a splendid-looking fellow and good company, and she very well, indeed, liked him one day, but Robert Bolton's eyes were then on her. But when they rallied her upon the devotion of her cavalier, she declared that nothing upon earth would induce her to marry a farmer and live in the country for good. To do her the justice, she let Bolton himself see that, in fact, she did not care for him.

"Well, I'm sorry for the poor fellow—he is nice, and if it wasn't the way it is, I might—possibly—say yes," said Edith when she saw at last that she could not keep him from speaking much longer. "I dare say he'll soon get over it and forget all about it. And Robert Bolton makes some—country girl who will take care of his pigs and chickens for him." And Edith laughed a gay little laugh, and then felt as if somehow things were not fixed up quite right in this world, and she didn't know just how to straighten 'em. She tried no longer to keep him from speaking. "Just as well have it, and done with it," she said.

He did repeat, however, when she had been over to visit his sister, and he walked home with her. A few words, but right to the point:

"I wish you wouldn't," said Edith, more than once, that she had ever been in her life. "I'm very sorry, but indeed, Mr. Bolton, I can't."

"Do you mean you can't like me?" said Robert, turning a little white, but trying to smile.

"Oh, I do like you very much! But not—not in—"

"In the only way I wish to be liked. Is that what you mean?"

"I'm afraid it is, Mr. Bolton."

He was silent a moment. Then he said, huskily: "If any amount of waiting would alter it, I could be patient, at least I'd try, if I might have a hope—"

"I am sorry I once pained you. I'd be glad to do anything for you to say to me."

"I'd be very glad to hear it, then, I know."

"Well, I shall be down at the Three Oaks at 4 this afternoon. If you choose to come, I have something to say. If you don't choose, go to Australia or any other place, for all I care, Robert Bolton!"

The pretty head disappeared in an instant, the window went down among the roses, and was passing on to the door, when a fresh voice above him said "Good morning!"

He came in, turned at the corner of the house, and was passing on to the door, when a fresh voice above him said "Good morning!"

He looked up. Edith, as sweet and blooming as the roses which were all around her, was leaning out of the window toward him. But he couldn't know that she was thinking what a fine, nobly handsome face he was turning up to her.

Instantly his hat was lifted. "Good morning, Miss Thornfield. I hope you are well."

"Quite well, thanks. I hear you are going away, Mr. Bolton."

"Yes. I go Monday."

"And without a good-by to your friends?"

"I don't suppose any one cares much about saying good-by to me."

"Perhaps not. You don't deserve it, if that is what he would have seen it. But he used to take the evidence of his enemies, perhaps, laid it to the score of maiden modesty and liked her all the better for it."

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"I wish you wouldn't talk so," said Edith.

"It isn't very manly, is it?" said the poor fellow. "Well, I won't. Forgive me."

Miss Edith had got the most out of him. "They were just at the gate now, and Edith gave her hand, saying, "Oh, yes, of course; I know you will come. We would all be very sorry if you didn't. And I hope you don't blame me?"

"Not in the least. There's no one to blame but myself. I'll come if I can. If I can't, I can't. Why, that's all, God's will. May God bless you, my dearest!" He raised the small hand to his lips, pulled his hat down over his eyes, and was gone.

Edith ran straight upstairs to her room, and took a good hearty cry—and then scolded herself for crying.

"But I did feel awful sorry for her," she said. "Though I'm sure he'll get over it, and be back in a day or two."

Robert Bolton did not come again in a week or two. Uncle Thornfield in the meantime, about sending him away, and, though she declared she had not done so, they all understood very well he came.

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