

#### LOVE'S MINISTRY.

BY WM. HAUGHTON.

I care not that upon thy brow  
The light of beauty glows,  
I only feel the comfort now  
Thy tender love bestows—  
A love like thine though passionless  
Hath more than passion's power;  
Its sheltering holy tenderness  
Can measure this sad hour.

The pressure of thy gentle hand,  
Thy silent sympathy,  
The troubled heart can understand  
Though voiceless it may be.  
I thought of all things fair on earth  
The fairest, best, wert thou—  
But never, never knew thy worth  
Till I have proved thee now.

Love, that sooths the sufferer's bed;  
That seeks the lone and lost;  
That lifts the heart that hope hath fled,  
And calms the tempest-tost.  
Thy thine to soothe life's sad unrest,  
To heal the broken heart;  
We know thee and we prize thee best  
When "comforter" thou art.

I deemed thee made for summer's bloom—  
A thing of joy and mirth,  
But found thee godlike, midst the gloom,  
An angel by the hearth.  
The sorrow must be sore indeed,  
The cross must heavy be,  
And sad the heart and deep the ne—  
That cannot lean on thee.  
Viroqua, Wis.

#### ELMER HAZEN'S ENEMY.

BY C. LEON MEREDITH.

Well back in the forest of Minnesota, twenty-four years ago, there stood a lone cabin occupied by three individuals.

Why these three chose to dwell in such complete seclusion no one could tell.

Not infrequently did hunters call at the isolated habitation, and on certain occasions had partaken of food at the woodman's table.

The cabin had stood there and been occupied for more than two years, and a knoll of several acres, destitute of timber, furnished at once garden and field, where vegetables and grain grew luxuriantly.

Elmer Hazen was the name of the cabin's owner, and his family companions were his wife and a little girl of five years.

At the time we visit this secluded spot, the Sioux Indians were making their bloody raids upon the settlers of that region of Minnesota.

Consternation and ruin had been spread broadcast wherever the banded warriors had seemed fit to go with firebrand and rifle.

The news of the terrible slaughter of the whites had reached the cabin of the recluse, and no little concern was felt by the family, for the red men knew very well of the hidden home in the forest wilds.

One evening, as darkness settled over the lonely abode, Elmer Hazen and his wife showed in their features uncommon concern.

Fresh news had come to them of the savages' devastating waste. Both felt a heavy weight about the heart, and their ears were constantly on the alert for any uncommon sound.

The windows and single door of the cabin were securely fastened as soon as it had become entirely dark, and the couple sat down at the hearthstone, where smoldered a neglected fire, and mused for a time in silence.

There was but a single apartment in the cabin, and but few articles of furniture.

A curly maple-stocked rifle hung upon pins driven into the logs, and nicely dressed furs hanging about the room told that the man who had dared inhabit that region alone was no inferior hunter.

The wife at length broke the silence:

"To-night, Elmer, I almost regret our leaving a civilized home to come into this life of deprivation and danger."

"Deprivations are not pleasant, to be sure," the woodman returned, "but as to danger, we are safer here than there."

"You think so?"

"Yes. The lives of ourselves or little Edie are no more sacred to that Spaniard, Morales, than to the Sioux. The hunting down of the red men is only for a season, and they will become friends, but the Spaniard's search will be perpetual and murderous."

"Would not the arm of the law be something of a shield there? It certainly cannot be exercised here."

"The law is of no value to a dead man, Eliza; Morales sought my life and drove me hither. He made a vow, and one he intended to keep. His bond to keep the peace was no protection to me or hindrance to him. He is a desperate man, more venomous than the serpent, more subtle than the adder, and more artful than the savage."

"But the reign of terror in Minnesota is terrible, Elmer," the wife said, a shadow of pain crossing her features, as she drew little Edie closer to her heart.

"I can fight a Sioux in ambush or hand to hand, but I cannot contend against a villain who stabs in the dark or administers poison. I feel safer here than in the old home."

The good wife felt really as did her husband, so she dropped the argument, and both again watched the glow of the dying embers in silence.

Three years before Elmer Hazen had been a resident of New Orleans and in easy circumstances.

One evening he found an old man in the clutches of a villain, and he boldly interfered and warned the old man of his danger.

The name of the blackleg was Morales, and he became enraged, and muttered curses from between his gritting teeth. Hazen paid no other attention to this at the time.

The aged gentleman, who had taken the name and number of his protector, called upon Elmer Hazen the next day to express his thanks more fully than he had done under the excitement of the evening before.

At this interview some facts were revealed that put more importance upon the matter than Mr. Hazen had at first thought of.

On the day that the sharper was found with the veteran, the latter had arrived by boat from San Francisco, where he had been a lucky speculator, and amassed a small fortune, which he carried in currency upon his person.

Morales had met him upon the boat, and, in a friendly and most affable manner, volunteered to aid the new-comer, as he was employed by the city, he said, to protect travelers of wealth who did not know the wicked ways of the place.

"It is not safe for you to carry so much money upon your person," Mr. Hazen had said, after hearing the veteran's story. "That scoundrel is well known, and, by some device, will get possession of it. He is not too good to take life."

"No danger," was the confident reply. "I have placed the money in a bank, and have taken a certificate of deposit."

The certificate was shown, made payable to the order of Anson Gale.

Mr. Hazen was gratified at this, as the money was beyond the reach of Morales. He expressed his pleasure, and the old man departed.

The next day Mr. Gale called again, looking pale and agitated.

"I am sick," he said, feebly, "and I fear my days are numbered. A strange feeling has taken possession of my heart, and I know the grim monster is at work there."

An hour later a physician called, left a sedative, and said the patient would be better in the morning.

Elmer Hazen remained with the sick man until a late hour.

"I have not a blood relative in all the wide world that I know of," the old man said, "and you are the Good Samaritan, my only friend I have in New Orleans. Should I die I must leave what I have to you."

"You must not think of dying," the benefactor returned; "long years may be before you. I hope so, and the doctor says you will be better in the morning."

"He don't know as well as I," the sick man said, feebly. "Bring me a pen and ink, then go to your rest."

The next morning Anson Gale was found dead in his bed, but the large pocketbook that had held his papers was gone.

Believing that Morales had poisoned the old man the day before and robbed him at night, Hazen had the villain arrested, but through the lack of evidence he was acquitted.

Twice Elmer Hazen came near losing his life at the hand of a masked assassin, and once his whole family came near dying through poison that had been mysteriously introduced into their food.

Through the earnest solicitations of his wife and friends, Mr. Hazen converted his property into money and went to Chicago, but scarcely had he reached that city when a detective informed him that Morales had followed.

The next move was to a town on the Upper Mississippi.

A few days after reaching that place the burning eyes of the Spaniard were believed to have been seen peering through a window upon Hazen.

Procuring a teamster, he bought a few articles for pioneer housekeeping, and was driven away across the country, far to the west, where lies the broad, wooded belt.

These facts, briefly told, were the thoughts of the exile family as they sat in the lone cabin the night I have mentioned.

The hands upon the little brass clock over the fireplace moved on and on until they indicated the hour of midnight.

Still the couple did not retire. Little Edie lay upon her rude cot all unmindful of danger, but father and mother were in no mood for sleep.

The silence had been long at the fireside when it was suddenly broken.

Both man and wife started to their feet at the same instant, and stood gazing into each other's faces with apprehensive stare.

A heavy footfall had been heard from without. The tread came nearer and nearer, and finally ceased at the doorstone. A loud, quick rap on the thick planks followed.

"Who can it be?" the wife whispered.

"Heaven only knows! It may be the Spaniard; an Indian would not come in that way."

"I will not leave you here alone; prowlers may be about," he said, seating himself upon a great moss-covered rock.

The wife and child stood beside the bowler and gazed upon the scene of destruction.

The volume of smoke increased, and their small, forked tongues of flame flashed out.

Just then a volley of firearms broke the quiet of the morning hour, and a yell of anguish followed.

The trappers were armed with rifles and revolvers, and the battle was sharp and decisive.

The savages in their gloatings over the work of the fire-fight were taken by surprise, and four of them went down at the first onset, the fifth plunged madly, wildly away.

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