

LITTLE MISTRESS SANS-MERCI.

Little Mistress Sans-Merci
Trotter world-wide, fancy free;
Trotter cooing to and fro,
And her cooing is command—
Never ruled there yet, I trow,
Mightier monarch in the land;
And my heart it leith where
Miss Sans-Merci doth fare.

Little Mistress Sans-Merci
She hath made a slave of me!
"Go!" she biddeth, and I go—
"Come!" and I am fain to come—
Never merry doth she show,
Be she wroth or frolicsome;
Yet am I content to be
Slave to Mistress Sans-Merci!

Little Mistress Sans-Merci,
She hath grown so dear to me
That I count as passing sweet
All the pain her moods impart,
And I bless the little feet
That go tramping on my heart;
Ah, how lonely life would be
But for Little Sans-Merci!

Little Mistress Sans-Merci,
Cuddle close this night to me,
And that heart, which all day long
Ruthless thou hast trod upon,
Shall outpour a soothing song
For its best beloved one—
All its tenderness for thee.
Little Mistress Sans-Merci!
—Eugene Field, in Ladies' Home Journal.



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CHAPTER XVI.—CONTINUED.

As North entered he perceived a gentleman in a richly embroidered dressing-gown, lying at full length in a reclining chair. In his first glance North recognized in this person the irascible invalid whom he had within the past hour encountered on the street.

This speedy identification of his assailant affected North somewhat as an earthquake shock might have done; but, concealing his feelings as well as possible, he advanced with the greeting:

"Good morning, Maj. Maynard. I believe this is the second time to-day that I have had this honor."

A silent, sneering scrutiny was at first his only answer, and North was beginning to feel seriously annoyed, when at last the major, motioning toward a chair which North declined, began in a mocking way:

"Oh, you're not 'preoccupied' now, eh? You recognize me, do you, Mr. North? Heavens and earth, sir! It's a wonder that you didn't come in pretending that you had never seen me before. Do you often get drunk, North?"

"Never, sir!" returned North indignantly.

"Never! Oh, very likely—very likely, indeed! Then I have no explanation of your extraordinary behavior this morning; none whatever. Now, North, I am going to ask you a few plain questions, and I expect you to answer them. Do you hear me, North?"

"Certainly, Maj. Maynard," returned North, with a delicate sarcasm in his emphasis, "I hear you." For the major's voice had been anything but "soft and low."

"Well," pursued that gentleman, imperiously, "are you going to answer me?"

"That will depend altogether upon the nature of your questions," said North, looking him steadily in the eye. "It is perhaps unnecessary for me to say that I shall use my own discretion in the matter."

"Oh, you will, eh? Use your own discretion, sir? Heavens and earth, I'll not stand this!" roared the major, perfectly furious at North's hauteur.

"You'll find, sir, that your best discretion will be to treat me with proper respect. Now, I've kept myself posted about this case. Oh, you needn't ask me what case! You know perfectly well that I allude to that forged will. It's a very mysterious affair, North, very mysterious, and I have my own suspicions about it. Now I want to know in plain terms, without any cowardly evasions, what share you and Mrs. Maynard have had in this business. It looks bad for you, North; don't deny it, now. Are you mixed up in that forgery?"

Even eyes less shrewd and unfriendly might have seen the gradual whitening of North's face, though he held every



AS NORTH ENTERED.

muscle in such iron control that its expression did not materially alter. It might have been anger alone that sent the color from the lips that were compressed like marble for a moment beneath the sweeping dark mustache.

"You don't answer me, North!" cried the major, exultingly, after a brief interval of silence. "You stand convicted without one word to say for yourself. Oh, I told you so! Heavens and earth, sir, you don't fool me!"

"Did you expect me to answer such an accusation as that?" demanded North, haughtily.

"No, I didn't expect it, North. I thought you would try to evade the charge, and so you did. But it will all come out yet, North, depend upon it, your iniquities will be exposed, sir. And now it appears that you and Mrs. Maynard are putting your heads together and trying to find that girl—that Annie Dupont. Isn't this so, North?"

"Pardon me, this is Mrs. Maynard's own affair. Whatever she is pleased to communicate to you, Maj. Maynard, you are at liberty to know. You are not at liberty to question me on the subject."

"Answer my question, North!" roared the major, in great wrath. "Are you doing this, or not?"

"I distinctly decline to answer."

"And I insist that you shall answer! I have a right to know."

"Then why do you not ask Mrs. Maynard?"

"Because I choose to ask you. Don't interrupt me, North, with your impertinent questions! I disapprove of this whole business, sir—totally disapprove of it, and Mrs. Maynard is well aware of the fact. Yet she disregards my advice and goes directly counter to my express wishes, simply because, forsooth, you counsel such a course! Your conduct is reprehensible, North, reprehensible to the last degree, and I have a right to complain of it. I tell you, North, you and Mrs. Maynard are bent upon robbery—downright, deliberate robbery, sir—and it's time there was a check put upon your proceedings."

"Robbery?" North repeated the word with calm surprise, while he stood with folded arms, looking steadily and haughtily at the major. "Of whom, may I ask, sir?"

"Of whom?" retorted the major, angrily. "Of that orphan whose fortune you are trying to steal. Annie Dupont, sir—that's whom!"

"I am happy to assure you, Maj. Maynard, that nothing could be further from our intentions than what you suggest. If it should ever be my good fortune to discover that young lady I should do everything in my power to place her in possession of her legal rights."

"Oh, you would, eh? Place her in possession of her legal rights, would you?" sneered the major. "That's a likely story! Why are you trying so hard to find her, then, and keeping so very quiet about it, if you intend any good to her? Fair words don't cheat me, North. I know very well that you've a scheme in your heads to steal every dollar of that fortune from her. But I'll thwart you yet, North—Heavens and earth, I'll thwart you, if I have to bring disgrace upon the family name to do it!"

"Are you insane, Maj. Maynard?" cried North, white with the indignation that he could no longer control. "Your malice explains your bringing this preposterous accusation against me; but one would think that the very commonest instinct of chivalry would forbid you speaking thus of your wife!"

For one moment the major was silenced; catching his breath quickly he looked up at North, with a dazed wonder that presently gave place to boisterous and contemptuous merriment.

"My wife?" he repeated, almost choking over the words. "Heavens and earth, sir, do you intend this for a ghastly attempt at a joke? My wife? Hang me if I don't believe that you are drunk, after all! How dare you refer in this way to my brother's widow?"

If a man who has been pushing forward into an unknown country, believing himself to be on firm ground, should suddenly find that he was sinking in quicksand, he might perhaps imagine his sensations on making this discovery, yet find it difficult to describe them. To those whose imaginations are equal to picturing the details of such an experience we leave the task of divining Allan North's state of mind when he found the solid ground of his own conjectures thus suddenly giving way beneath his feet. Amid all the chaos of his thoughts these three words: "My brother's widow," stood out distinctly, pointing the events of the past few days with a significance that he had never before suspected.

Before he could collect himself sufficiently to realize either the startling fact that he had just learned or the magnitude of his own blunder, the major returned to the attack.

"Now I want to know, North, if you intend to keep on with your search for that girl, or if you'll agree to give it up—eh?"

The tone and words acted upon North as a sudden restorative. He spoke decisively and sharply in reply:

"I must refer you once more to Mrs. Maynard. As her lawyer I can have no discussion whatever with you on these points. It is dishonorable for you to question me with a view to eliciting information which she sees fit to withhold from you."

"Oh, dishonorable, eh? Heavens and earth, do you tell me that I am dishonorable?" roared the major, while his eyes sparkled with delight at having at last so tangible a grievance to seize upon. "Did you come up here to insult me, sir?"

"Neither to insult you nor to be insulted by you," returned North, coolly. "If your language has been courteous to me mine has certainly been respectful to you."

"You may leave the room, North!" exclaimed the major, ringing furiously for his valet; and North waited for no further dismissal. Bowing with ironical deference he withdrew from the room, hastened downstairs and left the house.

As he closed the gate behind him he cast a glance of mingled relief and yearning at the stately brown-stone mansion. In a flash the recollection of his first speculative survey of the place, scarcely one short week ago, returned to him.

"How little I dreamed then of what would result from this visit to X—" he exclaimed, mentally, as he turned and walked rapidly down the street.

"Before I cross that threshold again I shall have all the proofs of Annie Dupont's identity in my possession; and then—then, Myra darling, you shall listen while I plead my own cause before you!"

CHAPTER XVII.

Player King— "Tis not strange that e'en our love should change,
With our fortune change,
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or
else fortune love."
—Hamlet.

In Mrs. Maynard's drawing-room a soft glow from the sea-coal fire in the grate was filling the early twilight with sparkling ruddy tints. Seated in a low easy chair just within the glow, during the leisure hour before dinner, Mrs. Maynard was musing bitterly, with no interruption save the tinkling melodies that Miss Hilary's idle fingers were sweeping from the gleistering white keys of the piano-forte. But soon the player rose from the instrument, and, coming toward the fireplace, she stood revealed in the fitful red light, a slender, queenly figure in her softly-clinging black gown.

Mrs. Maynard quickly roused herself from her reverie on Miss Hilary's approach and addressed her with a slight nervous tremor in the voice that she vainly strove to keep in its usual sweet, low, even tone:

"My dear Miss Hilary, if you will permit me, I should like to speak to you about Mr. North. Is it quite true that he is an old friend of yours? You know, my dear child, you are in a certain sense under my social guardianship, and I feel responsible for you—for anything affecting your happiness."

The proud girlish face changed color slightly during this address, and the red lips were firmly compressed for an instant as if to control a sudden quiver of pain; but the eyes remained dreamily fixed upon the glowing fire and there was no indication of emotion in the low voice that presently answered:

"Pray, do not include Mr. North among any of the possibilities affecting my happiness, Mrs. Maynard. His existence even is a matter of indifference to me."

Mrs. Maynard was too thoroughly a woman not to understand the exaggeration in this statement. She immediately decided that she would be justified in renewing the attack upon the same line.

"I wish, for his sake, that I could say as much for him," she said, slowly, affecting to be absorbed in her idle twirling of the dainty hand-screen that she held before her eyes, but in reality watching anxiously the play of expression in Miss Hilary's changeable face.



WITH NO INTERRUPTION, SAVE THE TINKLING MELODIES.

"But he betrayed to-day, when off his guard for a moment, a degree of interest in you which, under all the circumstances of your recent meeting here, seemed to me very singular, to say the least; and when I commented upon this fact he attempted to explain it by saying that you were old friends. It seems strange, does it not, that he should have resorted to a declaration that is so easily proven to be mistaken?"

Miss Hilary was now pale as ashes, and in the soft shining of her eyes, as they were still fixed upon the coals, there was a suggestion of repressed tears. But she spoke in a firm, calm manner, after a little silence, and with scarcely a perceptible unsteadiness in her voice:

"It is quite true, Mrs. Maynard, that we were once friends—and more than friends. If I had dreamed that it would result in my meeting Mr. North, I should never have come to you at all. No, I mean if I could have foreseen that our meeting would be what it was, for I confess that I had expected something very different if Fate should once more throw us together! But it is far better to have all illusions swept away than to waste one's time in useless dreaming; is it not, ma chere?"

"My dear Myra!" It was the sweetest and most delicate sympathy that was mingled with the surprise in this low-breathed exclamation.

"Oh, I am forcing a disagreeable confidence upon you!" cried Miss Hilary, with a sudden little laugh of self-dedain. "I forgot how uninteresting such things are to a third person. Pray forgive me, Mrs. Maynard."

"Not forcing, my dear Miss Hilary," protested Mrs. Maynard, reaching up quickly and clasping the fair hand that hung listlessly at Myra's side. "Did not I invite your confidence? But indeed, I have no wish to intrude upon any experience that is sorrowful or sacred; do not misunderstand the feeling that prompted me to introduce this subject."

Withdrawing her hand quietly after a moment, Miss Hilary drew a low hassock forward into the glowing firelight and seated herself near the chair in which Mrs. Maynard was reclining. For a moment she remained silent, with her gaze once more dreamily intent upon the fire, where a fairy castle, glowing from the very heart of the white coals, reared its fantastic towers; then she began slowly, in a voice in which a little effort was betrayed:

"It seems strange for me to speak so freely of this affair, and yet, after all, there are sufficient reasons why I should confide the story to you. Since we have been thrown together under your roof, and especially since Mr. North has chosen suddenly to depart from the cold formality of a perfect stranger, with which he first met me here two weeks ago, and assume the attitude of an old friend—to which privilege he has forfeited every claim—it is only right that you should know the little that there is to tell concerning my past acquaintance with him."

"I shall be glad to know all, my dear Myra," interpolated Mrs. Maynard,

softly. "It may serve as a guide to my own future course."

"I met Mr. North," continued Miss Hilary, musingly, "in the White mountains, four years ago. We were guests at the same hotel, and through the introduction of a common friend we were made acquainted. From the hour of his introduction he became one of our select party, and wherever we went, whatever we did, he was sure to be with us—with me," she added, in a lower tone, while the fire-light flashed more redly for an instant over her pale cheeks, "for he devoted himself to me from the first. He charmed mamma by his constant and delicate attentions to her, and when, after a six weeks' acquaintance, he asked for my hand in marriage, he readily won her consent. He had told us little about himself or his family, but mamma understood from some New York friends that his antecedents were irreproachable, and she never thought of questioning the worth of his personal character."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

AN ELEPHANT'S EMOTION.

He Was Overcome by Vestiges of His Deceased Mother.

Some of the European newspapers are telling a truly veracious story of the sagacity of a trained elephant which adorns a French traveling show. The proprietor of the circus announced that on a certain night his elephant would play the Russian hymn on a piano with his trunk. Intense interest was aroused and when the evening came the expectant public crowded the circus to the roof, says the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette.

After the usual performances four men carried in a cottage piano, which they placed in the center of the arena. Then the intelligent animal was brought in, paraded with much dignity three times around the ring and then, amid the keenest excitement, advanced to the piano. With a movement of his trunk he touched the keyboard, but hardly had he done so when a surprising change came over him. He trembled with fear and rage, whirled his trunk into the air and then with a scream of terror rushed out of the arena.

There was a great hurrying to and fro of the employees of the circus proprietor and the elephant keeper left the ring for consultation. In a few minutes the proprietor returned and announced with regret that the performance could not take place. The fact was, he said, that the elephant had recognized in the key-board of the instrument a portion of the tasks of his long-lost mother, who had fallen a prey to the ivory hunters of Africa. He had suggested to the keeper that another piano might be procured but that expert had informed him that the animal was so overcome with emotion that it would be impossible for it to perform that evening. Under these circumstances he suggested that the "Russian Kyma," followed by the "Marseillaise," should be played by the band. The entertainment was thus brought to a close amid the frantic applause of the audience.

THE GRIPMAN'S ARM.

Work at the Lever Makes His Biceps Grow to Mammoth Proportions.

The introduction of cable cars in this city has been responsible for the rearing of a peculiar race of people, says the Philadelphia Record. Every gripman employed by the Traction Company finds himself so peculiarly developed after a few months' work at the lever that one-half of him would weigh about twice as much as the other.

A West Philadelphia physician tells of a frail young man of his clientele who accepted a place in the bay window of a cable car. After six weeks of work at the lever he came puffing and panting to the doctor's office one evening to say that he was suffering from a one-sided case of elephantiasis. He hastily stripped to the waist and showed one arm that would be the glory of a prize-fighter, while any girl would be ashamed to display the other one because of its puny outlines. The young man was assured that his malady was not at all serious, and was nothing but an overdevelopment of one arm by constant exercise. It is known by physicians as the "gripman's arm." The arm of this particular gripman continued to grow until it became so weighty that he said that it was only with difficulty that he could walk straight.

This same condition of affairs is experienced by clerks and persons employed much at desk work. In this instance the right shoulder is several inches above the level of the other one, and the deformity can only be hidden by the tailor, who puts an extra layer of padding in the other shoulder.

Children of the Caucasus.

In the Caucasus mountains there are many wild, uncivilized tribes of people whose terribly rough ways would make the heart of a civilized mother stand still with fear if her child were to be treated as the people of the Caucasus treat their children every day. The first thing that a Caucasian baby is given for a plaything is a dagger. This is presented to him as soon as he can walk. For an hour or two each day his mother spends her time teaching him how to use the weapon, so that he will some day become an expert. He is taught to stab water so that it makes no splash, and is made to hurl his dagger at a mark again and again, until he cannot miss his aim. And all this is done during the time that other boys are spinning tops and studying a spelling book. When the Caucasian boy grows up he knows just one thing—how to use a dagger—while civilized boys know—well, some of them know a great deal.

The name of Dvorak, the celebrated Bohemian composer, is pronounced in English as though it were spelled Vorshawk. This is only approximate, and there is a slight accent on the second syllable.

WOODEN railroads were built in England in 1602; iron rails were first used in 1789; the first iron railroad was laid in America in 1827.

DEFICIT IN WHEAT.

Half Way Between the Extremes Places the Deficit at One Hundred and Fifty Million Bushels.

While the price of wheat in Chicago is at its lowest point in thirty years and farmers are correspondingly depressed, it is interesting to note that the best authorities estimate that for the world at large there will be a big deficit in the wheat crop this year.

The report of the department of agriculture for May renders it reasonably certain that the American wheat crop will be below the average of the years of 1880-90, or less than 450,000,000 bushels. This will be true even should the remainder of the season be so favorable as to insure a yield of spring wheat quite up to the average. The winter wheat has received irreparable injury and will afford a very meager harvest in the more important states.

The New York Sun has printed an exhaustive review of the crop prospects of the world and the estimated demands for wheat, based upon the most reliable data, and concludes that existing conditions indicate that the following is the most optimistic view of the situation permissible:

European requirements, 1,400,000,000; product of average European harvest, 1,230,000,000; possible American export, 120,000,000; possible Indian export, 40,000,000, total, 1,390,000,000 bushels. Deficit, 60,000,000 bushels.

A pessimistic prognostication, based upon estimates of a minimum European crop or an American crop no greater than that of 1885, or 357,000,000 bushels would be this:

European requirements, 1,400,000,000; minimum European harvest, 1,147,000,000; American exports, 40,000,000; Indian exports, 40,000,000; total, 1,227,000,000 bushels. Pessimistic deficit, 283,000,000 bushels.

Those inclined neither to optimism nor the opposite might find a safe position midway between these extremes.—Mystic (La.) Breeze.

[Note the fact that India, for the year 1898-9, will be able to export 40,000,000 bushels. For the year 1890-91 India exported 86,500,000 bushels, and she exported 54,133,000 bushels in 1891-92. Cheap silver is performing wonders for India.]

A CENTER SHOT.

A Calamity Howler Gives a Group of Business Men a Lesson in Finance.

During the exciting run on the Illinois Trust and Savings bank of Chicago, a group of business men stood near by discussing the financial situation and suggesting such remedies as to them seemed best calculated to "restore confidence" to bank depositors.

"The president should at once put a stop to any more gold leaving the country," said one. "That's what is playing the mischief."

"A special session of congress should be called at once to repeal the Sherman act," said another.

"Another issue of bonds is the only thing that will save the country now," said a third.

"Gentlemen, there is only one way to restore confidence to the people on money matters and do it effectually," said an old "calamity howler," who has been howling for the last ten years about this very calamity that has just fallen upon the banks, and through the banks upon the people. "Substitute the credit of the government for bank credits by a sufficient issue of greenbacks. Then establish government depositories for money where a man can have the entire wealth of the country behind every dollar he deposits. Then, and not till then, can you put an end to money panics and such scenes as this. You have all got to come to it in time."

Saying which the C. H. squared himself for another round. But not a word of dissent followed. The single populist cannon had completely silenced the old party batteries. It was a center shot.—Chicago Express.

WE MUST VOTE OUT.

The Ballot Is Mightier Than the Sword, and the Offspring of the All-Powerful Pen.

The questions now confronting the American people must be solved by sober reflection. We do not need hot-headed passion so much as intelligent thought.

We want to win people by reason, not prejudice. Hence all talk of any labor war is ill-advised. If bloodshed unfortunately should come in the course of the industrial revolution, let it be brought about by the plutocracy. Education is the "open sesame" of our movement—the magical word which will throw back the gates upon the road to the new era.

The ballot is the most powerful weapon ever put into the hands of the people. It is more powerful than the sword. It is more powerful than the torch. It is more powerful than the dynamite bomb. And by its intelligent use we must solve the problems which now confront us.

We must draw men to the new ideas, not frighten them by wild utterances. The way to get out of our difficulties is to "vote out."—Alliance Independent.

Pennsylvania, Too.

Pennsylvania has a per capita mortgage indebtedness of \$117, and in this respect stands high among the other states whose mortgage statistics have been tabulated, as appears from the following comparative statement:

State	Per Cent	State	Per Cent
Alabama	1.16	Missouri	14.15
Connecticut	30.14	Nebraska	28.88
Illinois	14.46	New Hampshire	11.84
Indiana	7.70	Pennsylvania	117
Iowa	17.61	Rhode Island	10.98
Kansas	28.13	Tennessee	12.13
Maine	1.25	Vermont	8.97
Massachusetts	19.42	Vermont	19.21

In the ratio between the debt and the estimated true value of all taxed real estate Pennsylvania is represented by 18.91 per cent, and compares with other states as is shown below:

State	Per Cent	State	Per Cent
Alabama	1.16	Missouri	14.15
Connecticut	30.14	Nebraska	28.88
Illinois	14.46	New Hampshire	11.84
Indiana	7.70	Pennsylvania	117
Iowa	17.61	Rhode Island	10.98
Kansas	28.13	Tennessee	12.13
Maine	1.25	Vermont	8.97
Massachusetts	19.42	Vermont	19.21

In Pennsylvania the average rate of interest on the existing mortgage debt is 5.50 per cent, and from 1880 to 1889 the rate on the incurred debt declined from 5.87 to 5.65 per cent.

RENT IN TWIN.

A Silver Wedge Will Split Into Two Fragments the Democratic Party.

Says Thomas E. Watson in the People's Party paper: "Fine editorial work is a rarity on the partisan press. Most of the dribblings from the average editor's pen are too infirm to obey the law of gravitation. They need help even to go down hill. The financial articles in the Atlanta Constitution are exceptions, notable exceptions. Bimetallism has been advocated and the single-gold standard has been denounced with a clearness, a power and a conclusiveness which cannot be excelled. We are willing to give ungrudging praise to any one who fights for the welfare of the people. On the free silver question, the Constitution has done so."

It may be that Mr. Watson does not read the St. Louis Republic, which is continuously dealing the goldolators telling blows. The Clay Center (Kan.) Dispatch says:

"When the Dispatch makes a mistake or does anybody an injustice it is always ready to correct the same as soon as it becomes known. Two weeks ago it was stated in these columns that Col. Jones had been removed from the editorial management of the St. Louis Republic. The conclusion was drawn that his removal would result in a change of policy on the part of the paper; that, while it had been a bold defender of the people it would now become a powerful advocate of Wall street and gold-bugism. We are glad to be able to say that there has been no change in the paper so far. It continues to deal out heavy blows against the enemies of the people and we trust it will keep up the good fight for honest government until the end of time. The Dispatch is only too glad to acknowledge its error."

GOLD-BUGS ARE A BAD LOT.

Men Who Vote with Them Are Fools for Their Folly.

The daily press of the country is owned by the gold-bugs.

Nearly all the big papers are owned by the gold-bugs.

The leaders of the republican party are owned by the gold-bugs.

The leaders of the democratic party are owned by the gold-bugs.

Populists are foolish if owned by the gold-bugs.

Can any one tell what benefit has been derived from the gold-bugs?

Who is responsible for the ruined and wrecked business and stagnation of every industry? The men who have voted with and for the gold-bugs.

Well, now, say what interest have you in the gold-bugs any way?

Is this a free country? If it is, why not let the people who want gold money have it, and let those who want silver and greenbacks have them?

The populists want plenty of money to make times good, the gold-bugs have better times when money is scarce. Why? Because the dollar will buy much more, you know. In other words, it takes more bushels of wheat or pounds of cotton or any other products of labor to buy a dollar.—Oberlin (Kan.) Herald.

Parity. When a hundred-dollar coin note is presented for