

THREE LITTLE PIRATES.

There are three little pirates, over the way,
Active, relentless and bold;
Jackie, the leader, sweet little Meg,
And Dickie boy, three years old.
I watch them each day as they work at their
play,
And I wonder at all their misdeeds;
See them worry each victim, enforce each
deed,
As pirate necessity leads.
But the crowning event in a record of crime,
These pirates so happy and gay,
Is a charge and a shout and a man put to rout
With "What have you brought us to-day?"
These three little pirates, over the way,
So active, relentless and bold,
Never lose any chance, never waste any time,
As they gather piratical gold.
Their gold is their pleasure and frolic and fun,
Happiness claimed as their right;
The tribute they take, 'tis the booty they
love.
And they levy all in their might;
But the greatest event, which they never fore-
go.
These three little pirates so gay,
Is the desperate run as ev'ning comes on,
And "What have you brought us to-day?"
As in days long by, that we read of in
books,
When pirates infested the seas—
The weak, peaceful merchantman, seeking a
port.
Paid tribute to just such as these;
So now the fond father, weary of work,
At he comes to his haven of rest.
Payless private demands in all that he has,
And losses that the trouble is least.
The happy reward that kills my care,
And makes hardest labor but play.
When they meet him with glee, this piratical
three,
With "What have you brought us to-day?"
And often I wonder, over the way,
If these pirates, so active and bold,
Will keep an account of the tribute they take
And repay it when he has grown old.
The tribute of labor and watching and love,
Of struggle and sorrow and pain,
That he pays without murmur, perhaps does
not know.
And offers again and again.
Yes, know that they will they are sturdy and
true.
And when he is aged and gray,
Be he ever so sad they will make his heart
glad.
With the love they will bring him each day.
—James Paddock, in Detroit Free Press.



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CHAPTER XVII.—CONTINUED.

"IMMEDIATELY after our engagement we were separated. Business called him home to New York, and mamma and I returned to Boston. Then fell upon me the first bitter sorrow of my life. I cannot tell you the story that was brought to me—the cruel, cruel story that forbade me ever to think of him again! I tried to believe it was false, but so far an aspect of truth did it wear that I was forced to give it credence. Overwhelmed with grief, anger and humiliation on discovering that I had been deceived, I acted foolishly and hastily, my one thought being to sever the bond that had so suddenly grown hateful to me. I sent the engagement ring back to him with the simple request to be released from a promise which I was no longer able to fulfill. Mamma was ill at the time—too ill for me to tell her then of this trouble; and that very day her physician had ordered a sea voyage for her, as the only means of prolonging her life. Our arrangements were hurriedly made, and in two days more we were on the ocean, bound for the south of France. This may have been the reason that no word from Mr. North ever reached me; at all events, I received no answer to my message, and could only infer from his silence that my release was granted unconditionally.

"We remained in France until poor mamma's death last summer; then I returned to Boston, at the request of the administrators, to remain there until the estate could be settled. In the meantime I had learned the truth in regard to the rumor that had caused me to break the engagement, the fatality that had linked his name falsely and unjustly to the story of another man's wrong-doing. I was shocked for his vindication, even though I might never look upon his face again; and this I scarcely expected to do. I saw nothing of him, heard nothing of him, until, on



"A CRIMINAL."

the very first day of my visit here, we met as strangers."

The resolute voice died away here in something very like a sob. There was silence for a few moments; then Mrs. Maynard said, quietly, though with evident emotion:

"It is natural, perhaps, that after the manner of your dismissal—sudden, peremptory and without any explanation whatever—Mr. North should now give you nothing but a stranger's greeting. Remember, he had sufficient occasion for resentment, being innocent of that of which you believed him to be guilty, and perhaps wholly unconscious of the supposed fault for which you condemned him unheard."

"Oh, I know!" interrupted Miss Hilary, with a sharp accent of pain, that sounded like impatience, in her voice. "There is no defense for my course; I was hasty, irrational, unjust, and I deserve to suffer all the consequences. It isn't that—it is the evidence of his recklessness; his treachery, his deliberate double-dealing—oh, don't you understand me, Mrs. Maynard? Believe me,

it was no jealous curiosity on my part, but I could not help seeing—"

"I understand you, my dear Myra," said Mrs. Maynard, calmly, as the distressed girl paused here, at a loss for words to continue. "You rightly divined that Mr. North was my avowed suitor; but, happily for me, not yet accepted!"

"I have no right to complain of that," interposed Miss Hilary, her pretty head lifted, her eyes bright with girlish pride. "It is not strange that he should admire you, love you, as his every glance and tone and action revealed that he did; why, he seemed scarcely conscious of my existence, so wholly absorbed was he in you! And to me the strangest part of it all was that he betrayed no recollection of the past, no resentment toward me, no consciousness that we had ever met before. This pained me, but I accepted it as only what I ought to expect, and I resolved to go away as soon as I could find any reasonable pretext for cutting short my visit here, and henceforth bury out of sight that dead past in which he bore a part. It was only when he looked at me as he did to-day, as a lover might, you know, that I saw the depth of his duplicity; and I think now that I hate him for being so false to us both!"

Again there was a little silence, so controlled that no hint would have been given a casual observer of the tragical emotions that were contending in the hearts of these two women. It was Mrs. Maynard that spoke next, in a cold, hard, relentless tone:

"We both have great cause to congratulate ourselves, my dear Myra, on having discovered Mr. North's true character before it was within his power to wreck the life-long happiness of either. I hesitate to tell you the truth that has recently forced itself upon my belief."

The color died quickly from Miss Hilary's face again; there was a vague alarm expressed in her trembling tones as she responded hurriedly:

"Oh, let me know the worst, Mrs. Maynard! What is he? What has he done?"

"It would be nothing," continued Mrs. Maynard, bitterly, "for him to vacillate between two fancies—to alternate and hesitate in his choice between yourself and me—"

"Oh, dear Mrs. Maynard!" came in tones of whispered protest from the white-faced listener.

"It would be nothing," repeated Mrs. Maynard in the same hard, bitter tone, "that his conscience would reproach him for, or that society would seriously condemn; therefore, this phase of his conduct does not materially surprise me. But I am surprised to find that this man, who is habitually so watchful of his own interests, so careful of his own safety, so jealous of his own comfort and happiness, should allow his interest in any matter to carry him to the length of becoming a criminal in the eyes of the law."

"A criminal?"

Miss Hilary's white lips repeated the words breathlessly; then for a brief space refused to speak again. At last she asked tremulously:

"What crime has he committed?"

"Oh, a very gentlemanly one, indeed," returned Mrs. Maynard with quiet sarcasm. "It is nothing worse, my dear Myra, than forgery. I have already told you briefly of the recent will contest in which I had so great an interest at stake; I did not tell you, as I feel in duty bound to do now, that I suspected who it was that forged that will. By his own tacit admission I know that it was Mr. North!"

The calmness was all gone from voice and manner before these last words were fairly uttered. A woman with less pride would have broken down completely; Mrs. Maynard sat with compressed lips and tightly interlaced fingers, holding herself under a rigid control. She did not look at the girl who was sitting so silently on the hassock at her side; but she was vitally conscious of all the grief and amazement that Myra Hilary's face so plainly revealed.

The fairy castle in the grate suddenly fell into sparkling ruins, sending out a flash of brilliant flame that illuminated the twilight drawing-room for a moment with the glow of a strong, red light. Then by degrees the illumination subsided into fitful gleams, playing with weird effect of light and shadow over the dim room, and giving a transient glow of color to the two white faces that were turned silently toward the fire. It seemed hours to Myra Hilary, in the blank wretchedness that kept her own lips dumb, before Mrs. Maynard spoke again; but it was in reality only moments, a space easily filled by the slow striking of the great clock in the hall and the tardy response of the drawing-room clock, whose silvery chime fell tinkling upon the silence. As if waiting only for this interruption to cease, Mrs. Maynard resumed as soon as the last stroke died away:

"You can imagine with what a shock this revelation fell upon me—this dreadful suspicion which his own words and manner first suggested to my mind, and then tacitly, but unmistakably, confirmed. It was difficult for me to realize what I was nevertheless forced to believe. And then I blamed myself far more than him, for I feared that it was my eagerness to secure that fortune that had led him on to take this fatal and desperate step. You know what reason I have to wish for an independent fortune; you have seen with your own eyes the unhappiness of my life here, under the same roof with the man who has hated me with a causeless, insatiate hatred from the day of my marriage to his brother, and who, during the four years of my widowhood, when the conditions of my husband's will made my inheritance of the pittance that he allowed me dependent upon my continued residence here, has abused to the utmost his invalid's privilege to make existence a burden to me. Can you wonder that I saw a welcome release in the chance of possessing that childless old woman's wealth, which she had conditionally promised me over and over again should be mine? And it was for this, I thought, to secure to me the prize that I coveted so eagerly, that

he had committed this deed! You can perhaps imagine the agony of self-reproach that this thought brought to me. Then by degrees the scope and possibilities of his motives were revealed to me; my perception of his character and his capabilities widened. By a wonderful and unexpected turn of the wheel of fortune, the missing niece and heir-at-law was discovered; the proofs of her identity and whereabouts fell into his hands. Instantly his active sympathies were all transferred from my interests to Annie Dupont's. The desire to ingratiate himself with the successful heiress would be perhaps a natural and sufficient motive for this change, in him; but that another and still stronger motive exists, I have become reasonably convinced. And this, my dear Myra, is the keynote of my warning to you."

"To me?" Miss Hilary repeated the words incredulously with a little start of amazement. "To me? Why, Mrs. Maynard, what have I to do with this matter?"

"Perhaps I can satisfy you that you have a very important part to play in this interesting little drama," returned Mrs. Maynard, with a rather forced smile. "I date Mr. North's sudden interest in you, which you yourself noticed for the first time, to a certain day this week when we drove by the Clement house and saw him about to step into a carriage that was waiting there. With him was a man who had called here an hour before, and left the house in company with Mr. North; the mysterious man through whom all the recent discoveries about Annie Dupont were made. Mr. North had just had a private interview with this man, and doubtless had heard his story. And, as we drove slowly past, it was you that absorbed his whole attention; you at whom he gazed with such rapt interest that he did not see me at all. I bowed to him as usual; he paid no heed; his eyes were fixed upon your face, while a strange excitement and agitation were apparent in his whole

rifed to his mercenary selfishness that forced me to speak these words of warning and enlightenment. My responsibility ends here. You are free to deal with him as you think best, knowing all that he has done and is capable of yet doing if his selfish ends require it."

Miss Hilary rose quickly from the low hassock and stood facing Mrs. Maynard, her hands clasped, her head thrown back, her eyes glowing like stars. She was very pale but perfectly composed, and when she spoke her voice was firm and free from the slightest trace of excitement.

"I am grateful to you, Mrs. Maynard," she said, "deeply grateful for the kindness that prompted you to speak as you have done. I am scarcely able yet to realize all that you have told me; I only know that it is very, very dreadful! But I can never think of Mr. North again except with feelings of utter abhorrence. Even gratitude would be impossible, if what you have suggested should prove to be true. I would forego any good fortune, rather than receive it at his hands! Can we not let him know, Mrs. Maynard, how plainly we see all his wickedness? How utterly we condemn him? Need we go on in this preposterous way, affecting to countenance him when we know him to be so unworthy?"

"No!" exclaimed Mrs. Maynard, with sudden resolution. "We will act this farce no longer. The very next time he comes here we will denounce him as he deserves."

Early the following morning, however, instead of a call from the perfidious North, Mrs. Maynard received this hurried note:

"MY DEAR MRS. MAYNARD:
Before this reaches you I shall be en route to Charleston, on business intimately concerning my son. When I return I will report to you in person. Faithfully yours,
A. NORTH."

TO BE CONTINUED.

PLANTING NEW FORESTS.

Pennsylvania Woods Cut Away to Form Coal-Mine Ponds.



manner. I did not see him again until he called this morning. During the few moments that we were alone in the conservatory he told me that Annie Dupont had been discovered, and that he should soon be in possession of all the evidence necessary to establish her legal position and rights; told me exultingly, as if he took a cruel pleasure in taunting me with my defeat. He little knew that I had divined the truth, the secret that he was jealously guarding, that he had discovered Annie Dupont under my own roof!"

Again Myra started with visible amazement. There was no clearly defined perception of Mrs. Maynard's meaning in her mind, yet the words had been spoken with too much significance to fail utterly in impressing her with their suggestive trend. She repeated them mechanically, with vague speculation in her tones:

"Under your own roof?"

"In you, my dear Myra," continued Mrs. Maynard, her white lips smiling faintly as she returned the girl's inquiring gaze. "Don't ask me for proof. I know it; partly by intuition and partly by an endless chain of trifles that would vanish into thin air if I were to attempt to put them into words, but which are nevertheless as convincing to my mind as the most palpable evidence could be. I cannot be mistaken; I feel, I know, that it is so!"

"I will not ask for proofs, Mrs. Maynard," said Miss Hilary, still bewildered and incredulous. "I will simply ask you how this can be true. Oh, it seems utterly impossible! I cannot believe it!" she added quickly, waving her hands toward the fire with a resolute gesture of rejection.

"My dear Myra, it shows a very limited knowledge of life to say that anything is impossible," returned Mrs. Maynard, with a slow shake of her head. "But for my familiarity with your early history, I might have considered my present theory improbable, to say the least; as it is, I see no reason to doubt it. You were very young when Mrs. Hilary adopted you, were you not?"

"So young," answered Myra, with a little break in her voice, "that I never realized that she was not my own mother."

"Did she ever tell you?"—Mrs. Maynard's voice was slightly unsteady as she asked this question, while all her nerves were tense with anxiety—"anything about your parents?"

"Nothing, except that they were dear friends of hers, and were both dead. But, my dear Mrs. Maynard"—Myra clasped her hands and laid them on the arm of Mrs. Maynard's chair while she looked earnestly into that lady's face—"if there were such a history as this connected with me, I should have learned something of it long ago. I cannot believe anything so wildly improbable."

"But, if it be true, what then, Myra?" questioned Mrs. Maynard quietly, a singular little smile on her face as she looked directly into the girl's eyes.

"You will be a rich woman; rich enough, perhaps, to hold the allegiance of this self-lover, who has at last chosen between us. Oh, how bitter that sounds! But it was the dread of seeing you sac-

rificed to his mercenary selfishness that forced me to speak these words of warning and enlightenment. My responsibility ends here. You are free to deal with him as you think best, knowing all that he has done and is capable of yet doing if his selfish ends require it."

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DAD AND THE DOLLAR.

Results of Bad Financial Teachings—Only Sixty-four Cents, Eh?—Lesson on Silver Enforced With Fists.

[Enter boy with badly bruised face and eye swelled shut.]

"My son, what on earth does this mean?"

"It means that Tom Jones lied to me."

"But you should never fight. I must punish you severely."

"He hit me first and called you an old turncoat, and—"

"Called me an old turncoat?"

"Yes. It was this way, pa. He told me he would give me a dollar to saw a cord of wood, then when I got it done he would only pay me 64 cents."

"Only 64 cents!"

"That is all he would pay me."

"Perhaps you misunderstood him, my son."

"No I didn't. I guess I know 64 cents when I see it."

"I mean about the price."

"No, sir, he said he would give me a dollar."

"Well, put your hat on, my son. I'll go over and see that he pays you a dollar, according to contract."

Going they meet boy (badly battered) accompanied by his father.

"There's Tom, pa."

Jones—How's this? Your son as-
saulted mine, and I've come to demand
satisfaction.

Smith—Yes, and so have I. Your
lazy runt of a boy can't hire my boy
and agree to pay him a dollar a day
and then only pay him 64 cents. Be-
sides, he assaulted my boy first.

Jones—You're a liar, you son of a

[They both clinch and so do the boys.] For a few minutes the air is blue with profanity and hair. Then the crowd, which had assembled, separates them. [Bystander picks up silver dollar and hands it to Smith's son.] "Here's a dollar dropped out of your pocket during the scuffle."

[Boy takes it.] "That is the same dollar I paid him for sawing wood—boohoo!"