

ANSWERED.

Long days of sun, and rain, and bloom have sped,
And on the fair, pure, golden head
Of youth, the silver hand of time
Has laid his touch, and the dark eyes
Look wistfully down the coming years,
And while the smile of trust around the mouth
Shines bravely, yet the tremulous tears
Will, spite of faith and prayer, at times arise.
Yet, father, keep him brave and true, I pray,
And since we may not meet, still let me say,
And know my words are true:
He is untouched, unsoiled by sin or crime,
True to his God, this faithful love of mine."

Amid the scenes of war, and shame, and wrong,
With brave uplifted eye, he wends along
The cruel pathway of his life's sad doom;
Enduring, struggling, conquering thro' the gloom
And blackness of that prison life's dark way.
Sometimes he almost falters—and to pray
Seems useless fable, and he cries aloud:
"I cannot longer fight—I cannot hold
My own against the bitter fates that crowd
So strongly round me, to press out
The highest aspirations of my soul.
Let me but sink unto the level of these brutes,
And take my paltry pleasure at their hand,
With conscience stifled, hushed and mute.
Yet how so, could I look into her eyes
If, in the years' slow onward roll,
Again we meet!" And then with sighs
Of anguished dread, he pleading cries:
"I pray Thee, Father, let me see
Her face once more and keep her true to me!
And thus in strength and truth he bravely
stands,
And so she faithful waits with outstretched hands."

—John Sydney, in N. Y. Observer.



CHAPTER II.—CONTINUED.

He brought her a thick gray shawl, which he draped over her shoulders. It quite covered her, and she looked very small and odd.

"You look like a child in its big sister's clothes," Oliver said, abruptly leaving her. He was not made of iron, and she kept looking at him with happy, affectionate eyes. "Haven't you a shawl-pin?"

"How could I, when I had no shawl?" she laughed. "Do you think women are pin cushions?"

He departed and rummaged around in his room; then he returned in triumph with a diamond scarf-pin.

"Some woman gave me that atrocious thing to do well for the shawl."

"I am glad to take it away because a woman gave it to you. I hate to think of anybody else liking you. Is Dr. John a young man?"

Oliver thought she was either an experienced flirt or the most innocent of young persons, but her liking was so honest and apparent he felt the better for it.

"No, Mrs. Minny; he is an old chap, like me."

"I do not think you old," with a tender glance. "Besides, I'm twenty myself."

He put on his overcoat in silence and turned out the lamp. "Must the dog go?" he asked, resignedly.

"Of course. I would die without him."

Mike was waiting with the horses. "Where will I be after telling the doctor you've gone, sor?" he asked, calmly, as if a midnight elopement was not unusual.

"Tell him," said Oliver, thoughtfully, "that Mrs. de Restaud came to me for assistance to get to the railroad, and I took her there; there was nothing else to do. He must say nothing if Dr. Restaud comes, and keep him from finding out, if possible, that I helped his wife. I trust to your Irish wit, Mike, to send him away from the cabin."

They were going up hill—the horses panting heavily.

In the dark. If I can make it I will be back here by noon to-morrow."

"The greaser livin' foreinst the wather tank have a good horse, sor," said Mike, as he cautiously released the horses' heads and they started down the road at a gallop.

The night was warm and pleasant; the chinook blew from far-sun-warmed plains, and myriads of stars pierced the darkness. The road was fairly good, though seldom traveled, and lay mostly on an incline towards the plains. It took all Oliver's strength to hold the horses, shut in for a day or two and headed for Denver, where they keenly remembered the comforts of oats and a city stable. Mrs. de Restaud, as the buckboard swung around often touched him; she caught his arm once with a little cry as they plunged into a hollow; but he talked distantly of her journey, restraining any affectionate confidences on her part with reference to the absent Aunt Hannah.

She would go to Colorado Springs; the train passed through there; she had a friend—a poor woman—well, their washerwoman when she and mamma lived there that winter; and this washerwoman was really a nice lady, who could buy her some proper clothes.

"Put the money!" she cried, in dismay. "Have you got any with you?"

They were going up a hill, the horses panting heavily. Oliver took a roll of bills and put them in her hand. As his fingers met hers, every nerve in his frame thrilled.

"This seems a great deal," she said,



THEY WERE GOING UP HILL—THE HORSES PANTING HEAVILY.

timidly. "Perhaps Aunt Hannah would not like to pay so much."

"You need not spend it all, Mrs. Minny, then; and, besides, the bills are small; that's what makes them seem so many. Now please put them carefully in your pocket, and don't let the dog chew them."

She laughed merrily. "Of course not, you goose! Oh, this ride is lovely! I never saw horses go so fast. Even if he should follow you you would not let him take me." She clung to his arm but he freed himself, gently.

"I have to drive, you know," he said, coldly. He meant to do or say nothing that the whole world should not know, but it was very hard to be distant, and seemed such a child. He felt she covered away from him at his words, hurt and frightened, but he forced himself to be silent. At last she said, timidly: "I know you hate me, and I seem to realize all at once you are almost a stranger; and I have asked of you more than one should even require of an old, old friend."

"Please, Mrs. Minny, don't. I am silent because I'm thinking of your journey, if we should miss the train, if the washerwoman should be dead or moved—for washerwomen are migratory—if even Aunt Hannah should fail you."

"But the town will be there, and Mr. Perkins, the depotmaster, is a neighbor—his wife takes care of Aunt Hannah's cat and parrot when she goes visiting."

"That, of course, alters things."

"The only thing I fear from Aunt Hannah," she said, dubiously, "is a long moral lecture about the duties of married women and their having chosen a path—she says parth; they do down there—and ought to walk in it. She wouldn't let me run away with her."

"Show her your bruises," Oliver said, hoarsely.

"I will; for she told me if he struck me I could come to her; and sometimes, honestly, Mr. Oliver, I used to tease him so he would and I might have my chance."

Oliver whistled softly under his breath; he would not have liked Dr. John to hear that last speech. "You must not tell her," he said, quickly, "about this ride and coming to my house."

"Why not? I would like her to know how good you were."

"There was no need, but he slashed his horses angrily; then he said, curtly: "I am sorry you cannot understand. Could you explain it satisfactorily to Mr. de Restaud?"

"How cross you are! and I know you look just as you did when I talked mean about him—a sort of disgruntled impatience. But he is not a reasonable being. Other people may be."

"Would you have gone to those amiable friends of his for assistance to get to the railroad?"

"Of course not. You know that."

"Well, how is the world to know I am any better?"

"I suppose being a lawyer makes you so smart," she said, in a melancholy tone; she assured her dog in a whisper he was the only being who loved her, her only friend; that she was silly and frivolous, Aunt Hannah said, and seemed to be a great trouble to mere strangers of good dispositions. Oliver said never a word; a little smile curved his lips, but he did not turn his head. Soon she grew quiet, and her head dropped against his shoulder, the soft wind lifting her curls to blow across his cheek. The dog, ornamented with the doctor's cap, slept in her lap.

Across the level land before them crept the gray glimmer of the dawn. Rose-colored light flamed in the far east, reflecting on the new snow on distant mountain-peaks. Prairie dogs hopped out of their holes and sat on their hind legs discussing local politics and happenings, the bill to abolish free rents for rattlesnakes, and the extortions of horned owls. The sky terrier disgustedly flung off the doctor's cap and barked angrily at the small dogs. Mrs. de Restaud lifted her head with a little start, blushed and slapped the sky terrier.

"Do be quiet, sky. I am afraid I tired you, Mr. Oliver."

He would have liked to say a sweet thing to her—to most women he would—but his role now was that of benevolent friend; so he only answered vaguely: "Not at all," as if he did not know to what she referred. The horses dragged themselves wearily forward; it was six o'clock, and they had come fifty miles over a difficult road in less than seven hours. Two parallel lines of iron stretched far in the distance; the clumsy outline of a water-tank loomed up just ahead. The goal was reached, and away in the north a ribbon of smoke outlined on the sky proclaimed the coming train. Oliver lifted Mrs. de Restaud down. Sky rushed madly to the hole of a venturesome prairie dog who had taken up a residence near the tank and was out enjoying the morning air. The terrier found only a vanishing, and vented his annoyance at this and all the other vagrant dogs in shrill barks. His mistress was vastly amused; the strangeness of her undertaking had quite gone out of her head.

Oliver, in some concern, gave her advice regarding her journey; he was uncertain of his horses about the train and had to stand by their heads; so Mrs. Minny frisked about with her dog, entirely confident her difficulties were over.

"You must send me word to Denver when you get to Maine," he said, "and be sure and make no acquaintances on the cars."

"One would think I was just out of boarding-school."

"The primary department," he said, crossly. "I wish you would be reasonable and listen a moment. I shall tell the conductor you are one of a camping-party and your mother is ill at Colorado Springs—that you had to leave in such a hurry to catch the train, you had no time to get ready. If I must tell wrong stories for you, Mrs. Minny, please don't make me out in a lie the first thing."

"How good you are!" she said, softly. "I shall never never forget what you

have done for me. I shall say to myself: 'Minny, you may be frivolous—Aunt Hannah says she is unstable as water—but one big, handsome man is your friend and always will be.'"

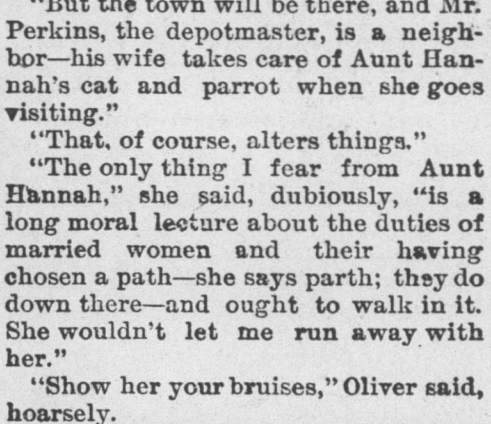
"Always, Mrs. Minny, to the end of my life."

The rush of the near train terrified his horses' almost beyond control, and he was obliged to send her for the conductor when the train stopped for water. The obliging official showed no surprise at Oliver's ingenious story; he was used to camping parties. He imparted the welcome news that the stateroom was vacant—she could have that—and accepted two fine cigars.

"My daughter is unused to traveling alone," Oliver said, gravely; "so will you telegraph for a carriage to meet her at the Springs, and see that she gets out at the right place?"

The conductor would be very happy to oblige. Then the young lady asked meekly if a dog, a very little one, might also ride in the stateroom.

"He might," said the official, "if hidden under a shawl; for, if this pre-



"GOOD-BY," SAID OLIVER, HOLDING OUT HIS HAND.

caution is not taken, on the next trip all the women in the train will be bringing along their dogs. And I guess it's time to get aboard."

"Good-by," said Oliver, holding out his hand.

Mrs. Minny picked up her dog; with it under one arm, she took Oliver's hand, reached up, and shamelessly kissed him, a ghost of a kiss touching his cheek.

"Good-by, papa," she called, running to the car, and from the step waved farewell until the train vanished in the distance.

Oliver, as he drove along the road by the track in search of the Mexican who had the good horse, was almost dazed. He could not forget that farewell. He was haunted by the presence of the little lady of the Troublesome. He had not returned the kiss—well, there was no time—but how thoughtless, in front of the train! and there ever another woman like her? He had never seen one. Trying as she was all that long way, could any man have played the role of honest friend better? "Not even Dr. John," said Oliver.

CHAPTER III.

M. de Restaud looked up from his cards as the chill gray of dawn stole in the window.

"Heavens!" he muttered, "what a night I've had!"

He pushed the chips away, for he had been a heavy loser, and staggered to his feet. He flung the banker at the game a roll of bank notes and fumbled in his pockets for gold. The villainous faces of his four companions looked sallow and hideous after the long hours. His own head was aching, his mouth dry and parched. He leaned out the window, drinking in the fresh chill air as icy water. The room behind him was foul with cigar-smoke and the smell of dregs of liquor in many glasses.

"Go to bed," he said, wearily; "you know your rooms. I've played enough, and you're all winners; you ought to be content."

One man muttered about giving him a chance, but Dr. Restaud shook his head impatiently, and they all went away.

"I was ugly to the little girl last night," Dr. Restaud said, half aloud. "What did I do? Odd I can't remember. I wish she would keep away from me when I'm not myself. She has no more sense about some things than a child. I'll go see her."

He tried her door; no sound, not even the angry bark of his inseparable companion.

"I wonder if I killed the dog when I kicked it. Wish I had; but she'd never forgive me. She riding down the road to see that fellow—thinks of him all the time. I know in my heart she's as innocent as a child about it, just out of school when I married her, but he will think she's like other women and take her nonsense in earnest. A man of the world, evidently. He had better keep out of my way. Those boorish Americans—he has a fist like a blacksmith."

He went muttering down the corridor to his own room, and flung himself, still dressed, on his bed. The house was silent for hours. Annette in the lower softly about her work, monsieur was so dreadful if awakened. Louis currying the horses in the corral scarce spoke above a whisper, but taciturnity had become a habit with him. The poultry, however, clucked merrily in the back yard; the gobbler gave his views, and the hens, women-like, cackled about it, while the ducks enjoyed the bonanza of deep mud and pools after the rain. The cows, loath to go upon the hills, huddled near the barns. Annette, round-faced, beady-eyed, neat as a pin, stood in the door, her hands on her hips. She looked with pride on her fowls—how well the plump darlings repaid her care—then she glanced across at her husband, ten years her junior—the beautiful man who had spent her dowry and told her so charmingly he married her for that money, and who had brought her to this wild country. She smiled to herself in satisfaction; in this wilderness no girl could take him away. Those Paris girls were such wretches, brassy things. The ranchers' daughters here, however, were well behaved; no matter

what eyes Louis made, they would have none of him. The young girls of the mountains were brave and good. How they must suffer, though! for Louis was so fascinating.

"Louis," she called, softly, stepping out on the plank walk, "madame is not yet awake, nor the little dog. It is a strange silence for them who are usually out so early. You climb up on the roof of the corral and look in her window. She never would open her door to us."

The man hurriedly obeyed. He had been thinking all the morning something was wrong. If she were dead—monsieur was wilder than common last night, and so hasty; he had been gambling and losing all day. The dog must be dead; he hated Louis, and generally made his appearance at the window early to bark at him. Louis climbed up one of the posts of the roof, crossed and looked in the open window. Annette watched him, shading her eyes with her hand.

"She is there, Louis?"

He shook his head and dropped to the ground at her feet. "No; she is gone. The bed hasn't been slept in."

"Heavens!" cried Annette, wringing her hands. "Monsieur will be terrible."

"He ought to kill her, the little cat. You need not pity her; she makes game of you always because you cannot comprehend her English tongue. I must wake monsieur."

Followed by Annette, who prayed in a whisper, he knocked at monsieur's door. No answer. Then he went in and shook the sleeper gently.

"Monsieur," he said, tremulously, as Dr. Restaud sat up dazed and haggard-eyed, "I hate to tell you, but I must; madame is gone."

"Liar!" cried the other, leaping to his feet. "She would not dare. Get my coat. Gone! Where? Who would take her in? Ah, I know. I was not far wrong all the time. It is maddening. Break in her door, Louis; I have no strength."



"GOOD-BY," SAID OLIVER, HOLDING OUT HIS HAND.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

GENEROSITY EXEMPLIFIED.

The Prodigal Liberality of the American Duchess of Marlborough.

It is said that the most prodigal giver in England at Christmas-time to rich and poor hospitals and almshouses, as well as to relatives and friends, is the American Duchess of Marlborough, formerly Mrs. Louis Hamersley, of New York city, who is spending her first husband's millions very liberally in the country of her second spouse. It is not the custom in England to sacrifice so lavishly on the altar of Santa Claus and the Christ-Kind as it is here and in Germany, and the duchess's generous gifts called forth much surprise and observation. At Hamland, where she was living at that time, she was known as the fairy godmother, as she had a gigantic Christmas tree for the children of the parish, laden with toys, pictures and sugar plums, as well as more substantial gifts of food and clothing. She had also Christmas tea parties for old men and women, at which, after a substantial feast, tea and tobacco were presented in large packages to each of the beneficiaries. The duchess has recently taken Deepdene, one of the most beautiful estates in England, on a lease of twenty-one years, thus indicating that she will never return as a permanent resident to her native land. That the poor of the neighborhood will have reason to hail her coming with delight, the generous spirit that she has shown during her residence in England puts beyond a doubt.—Harper's Bazar.

A SCENIC ROUTE.

"What are the objects of special interest around here?" asked a party of tourists going through Arkansas on horseback.

"Wal, thar's var'ous things wuth lookin' at. Thar's Bud Jackson's bull pen, only six months an' kin lick any year-old dang in these parts. An' then thar's Si Dobson's twins, both on 'em got twelve toes an' twelve fingers. An' if ye want see a reel curiosity ye order ride over to old Ben Hobbes an' see a calf o' his'n with four horns an' no tail, yes sires! An' I kin pilot ye to the identical spot whar Bob Higgins an' Bill Jeffries fit a duel with corn cutters, an'—"

But the tourists had piloted themselves on their way, and the native said in a tone of disgust:

"Reckon they're lookin' fer water-falls an' natchrel bridges an' mounting lakes an' trash o' that sort. Some folks is queer."—Detroit Free Press.

AT THE BARRACKS.

The colonel, on his tour of inspection, unexpectedly entered the drill-room, where he came upon a couple of soldiers, one of whom was reading a letter aloud while the other was listening, and, at the same time, stopping up the ears of the reader.

"What are you doing there?" the puzzled officer inquired of the latter.

"You see, colonel, I am reading to Piton, who can't read himself, a letter from his sweetheart."

"And you, Piton?"

"Please, colonel, I am stopping up Boquillon's ears with both hands, because I don't mind his reading my sweetheart's letter, but I don't want him to know what she writes."—La Famille.

A CHINESE DESCRIPTION OF THE PIANO.

A Chinaman, lately returned from a trip to Europe, treated his countrymen to the following description of the piano: "The Europeans keep a large four-legged beast, which they can make to sing at will. A man, or more frequently a woman, or even a feeble girl, sits down in front of the animal and steps on its tail, while, at the same time, striking its white teeth with his or her fingers, when the creature begins to sing. The singing, though much louder than a bird's, is pleasant to listen to. The beast does not bite, nor does it move, though it is not tied up."—Das Neue Blatt.

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