

# THE MAIL

A PAPER FOR THE PEOPLE.

(From the Indianapolis Herald.)  
A CYNIC.

Rhythmical stenographic report of his remarks at a camp fire in the mountains.  
(Colorado, 1875.)  
BY J. C. R.

I hate the world—you think that's strong.  
Stranger, it is, to you.  
But hate's the word, and right or wrong,  
I'm going to pack it through.

It hasn't been very long ago,  
Since I could draw a check,  
And have it paid, for a thousand or so,  
But now, I'm through the deck.

I've got my hands, and that's 'bout all;  
The rest, my money and wife,  
Left behind in a general brawl—  
Fright glad I kept my life.

You might not think a rough like me  
Had ever loved and lost.  
But there you're off a point, you see—  
And here is what it cost!

I was fixed up once, I was, you bet;  
A right good home was mine,  
A carriage, and horses black as jet—  
Everything nice and fine.

And lots of friends we had, you know,  
All smiling, and sweet-lipped.  
As long as I had the clink to show—  
But when I broke, they skipped.

That's just the truth of it, you hear me;  
As long as you're rich as Krout,  
You're friends'll freeze in, good and free,  
And then they'll just kick 'em out!

Oh I've been there, I know 'em pat—  
Just how they come and go,  
When Honorable this, and Colonel that,  
And are on your list, for show.

As I was sayin' a home I had,  
A wife, and baby too,  
A little scrub, she called me dad,  
With eyes of the bluest blue.

Well, in my biz I wanted mon,—  
I had to make a raise;  
I gave a mortgage; when that was done,  
It ended my best days.

Oh, suppose those money-grabs would wait  
A month, all on the square?  
No, sir; they just pranced it at date,  
And cleaned me out right there.

And then that child began to cough,  
And died, and what was worse,  
My wife, in pride and shame, went off—  
Leavin' me to swear and curse.

Tain't just the cheese to sound your notes,  
And tell you how you was whirled;  
But there I am with the d-d coyotes—  
That's why I hate the world.

For men and women are on the make,  
No matter how it's done—  
They'll sell their souls to pull the stake,  
And chip in number one.

## Wynfield Hall.

BY FLORENCE PERCY ALLEN.

"So this is James' daughter," said a kind voice, "look up at me, my dear—I am not going to hurt you, and I have raised my eyes, and for the first time, saw my Uncle Robert."

A tall, straight man was he with keen blue eyes, and a resolute mouth—a proud man and a stern man evidently, but his smile was pleasant, and he spoke to me as gently as though I were a little child.

"I am glad to see you," he said, after a moment's steady scrutiny of my upturned face—"you look like your father," and then, after a little pause, "James and I never got along very well together—we were not of the same brood, you know, but I always thought more of him than he knew, and his sending you to me shows that he did not cherish any hard thoughts toward me at the last; so, my dear, you are doubly welcome here, and that was all."

He did not kiss me, nor even touch my hand, but I felt that his words were sincere, and that there was a quiet, understanding established between us from that moment.

"Your aunt will be down soon," he said, as I turned away, and then the door opened, and a dark-eyed, tired-looking young lady entered, accompanied by two children.

"Good-morning, Miss Silvertown," said my uncle, courteously, and then, turning to me: "A member of our family at present, Leonora; Miss Silvertown, my niece, Miss Wynfield, and these are your two cousins."

I noticed even at the first how extremely pretty she was, in spite of the tired look, and how ladylike she was with her plain dress and smooth hair, and then I devoted myself to making the acquaintance of my small cousins, until my aunt joined us.

A tall, thin lady was my Aunt Barbara—with a frosty smile and a predisposition to chilliness. She wore an elegant, particular morning gown of deep red, consisting of a small white head-ornament, pink gauze, folded corner wise, and pinned together under her chin, and the little dry kiss she gave me actually made me shiver.

"I was sorry not to have welcomed you here last night," she said, "but you came so very late—I hope you are contented here, but now—and she shuddered in a stately, expressive manner. "I trust you are not addicted to carache," she continued, "I am, and have to be very careful, as you see"—and then my uncle gave her his arm and led the way to the breakfast room.

After we were all seated, I noticed, with a little wonder, as to who the absent one might be, that there was a vacant place just opposite my seat; but as this question rose in my mind, Uncle Robert looked across at his wife.

"Is Marchmont at home?" he inquired, a little frown contracting his fair forehead; and then, as she looked up to reply, a tall young gentleman made his appearance, and with a careless word of excuse for his lateness, sauntered to the vacant chair.

"Leonora, this is Marchmont Severn," said my uncle, and then the new-comer, with a little complimentary speech concerning the pleasure he felt in making my acquaintance, took his seat, and proceeded to the business of breakfast.

After a little I found an opportunity to look at him, unobserved, and I did so. Such a handsome young fellow as he was—so tall, and straight, and graceful, with his wide blue eyes, his fair, English face with its long silken moustache, and close-cut curling hair. Marchmont Severn—I wondered a little as to his place in the family; and then, finding this course decidedly unsatisfactory, I gave it up and turned my attention to my coffee and toast.

It was a silent and uncomfortable meal—my first breakfast at Wynfield Hall. My aunt was evidently "under the weather," as the country folks express it—and shivered and trifled with her coffee in silence. Miss Silvertown was busy with the children, and paid no attention to anyone else, save once, when looking up suddenly, I detected her glancing swiftly from young Mr. Severn to myself—and then her long lashes drooped, and a little flush came into her face; but she went on instructing eight-year-old Bessie in the proper manner of managing her fork, and did not raise her eyes again. Uncle Robert was grave and taciturn—in fact the last comer was the only one of the circle, save six-

years-old Alice, who seemed either cheerful or amiable; and he was importunately good natured, addressing his remarks now to my uncle, then to my aunt, and then to me, in no wise discouraged by their unflattering reception.

"I, for one, was heartily glad when we at last rose from the table and returned to the pleasant library," Mr. Severn gallantly escorted me, and Miss Silvertown marshalling in the children.

"It is too raw for Bertie and Alice to walk this morning," said my aunt, seating herself in a large lounge chair before the fire, "supposing you have a game of battledore before the school hours?" and Miss Silvertown acquiescing, departed with her charges. Then Uncle Robert left us on plea of letter writing; and finally Mr. Severn sauntered away with no excuse in particular, and I was left alone with my aunt.

How tediously the minutes dragged as she sat there with her head lying back on the cushion cover of her chair, and her eyes closed. I began to feel nervous and wretched, and devoutly wished that I knew the whereabouts of Miss Silvertown and the children, that I might join them in their game, when suddenly my aunt opened her eyes and sat upright.

"You must really excuse me, my dear," she said, pinning her shawl closer around her head, "but my head health makes me miserable company. You'll find it fearfully dull here, I'm afraid. By the way—where is March?"

"I have not the slightest idea," I answered, and my aunt smiled indulgently.

"I hope that you two will be good friends," she said, and then, with more real interest in her face than I had seen before, "Isn't he a fine handsome boy? I am very fond of him, you know—foolishly so perhaps." And then, seeing the look on my face, she laughed softly.

"I forgot that you don't know anything about us," she went on, "except that my husband was your father's half-brother. I was a widow when your uncle married me. My first husband was Colonel Marmaduke Severn, and he died in India when Marchmont was nine years old. He was a very fine man—Marchmont's father—one of the handsomest men I ever met. March is his father over again—so you can judge."

And here my aunt looked at me very keenly.

"He is indeed very handsome," I answered, feeling that she expected me to speak, and then the door opened and Marchmont came in—so suddenly that I was sure he heard my last words, although he looked so entirely unconscious.

"I am glad you have come," said Aunt Rebecca. "Leonora here, is growing so handsome and wretched. I want you to rescue her."

"I shall be most happy," he looked at me laughingly, "anything in the world to make myself useful," and then, going to the window he looked out. "It has turned pleasant after all," he said, "supposing we ride to Four Corners—don't you ride, Marchmont?"

"I never mounted a horse more than twice in my life, but a tinge of sarcasm in his voice made me suddenly brave.

"I should be pleased to go," I answered, "only—and here a thought suddenly arrested me—I have no riding habit with me."

"You can take mine," said Aunt Barbara, but her son indulged in a low whistle of dissent—very impolitely.

"Really, now, mother," he said, "do you want to make a guy of her? It would take three of her to fill your habit."

"Miss Silvertown will lend you hers," she said, "just for this time—you must have one at once, for riding is the chief amusement here—I will send for it."

"I would rather ask for it myself," I said hastily. "Please let me." And so, escorted by my self-appointed cavalier, I made my way to the school-rooms.

The game of battledore was over, and Miss Silvertown was just about to commence the lesson when my errand, a five minutes' respite was allowed to the children, and the pretty governess hurried away to bring me the garment which I wished, and I went with her as far as my room, while Marchmont departed to order the horses.

"I think it will fit you nicely," she said, returning with her wrappings, "we are about the same size. I am sure it is worth mentioning," as I thanked her—and then she went back to the school room, and I proceeded to array myself for my ride.

Ten minutes later I came down the great stairway, and as I paused a moment before the mirror, in the hall, I glanced, not unpleased with the reflection therein.

I was never a pretty girl, but I was stately looking, with my black hair, clear, dark complexion, heavy brows, and great black eyes; and to-day, with my jaunty hat and trailing feather crowning my heavy braids, and the little flush of excitement in my cheeks, I knew that I was looking my very best.

Marchmont was waiting for me by the fire with his mother, and with a word of commendation for my speedy appearance, we went out together.

The horses had been brought around—fine, spirited animals, with a look in their eyes that made me actually nervous.

"Are you afraid?" said Marchmont, looking down at me sharply. "Jesse seems to be pretty lively—shall I send her back and order a quieter horse?"

The look in his eyes piqued me. "I am not a baby," I said. "You can do as you choose."

"Steady, then," and then I was in the saddle, and with Marchmont beside me, went slowly down the drive.

"Do you like to race?" we had ridden along in comparative silence, I with my heart in my month at every sudden movement of my horse—conscious that my cheeks were flaming and my hands trembling in spite of myself; "but perhaps you are a timid horsewoman."

"Perhaps so!"

A spirit of mischief suddenly possessed me; I, who had never ridden faster than a jog trot in my life, gave my fiery horse a sharp blow with my riding-whip, and then we were off like the wind.

After the first moment, I fairly enjoyed the novelty—my fear left me entirely, and holding my reins firmly, I looked back over my shoulder. There was a sudden awful slipping sensation, a swift rush of air, and then a great shock, and after a long, long time, as it seemed, I opened my eyes to find myself lying in a muddy heap in the middle of the road, with Marchmont bending over me with a look of genuine interest and fight on his handsome face.

"Drink this," he said, "are you much hurt?"

possible, it was simply an aching helpless weight. "I don't know," I answered, "but I think—I am quite sure—it is broken."

"The devil it is!" I could excuse the profanity, seeing him go down on his knees beside me, in the muddy road, to examine it, and then he made a sling of my veil and tied it up.

"The quicker we get home the better," he said, and then mounting me on his horse, he walked beside me, leading him with one hand and holding me in my seat with the other arm until we were again at Wynfield Hall.

Such a fuss as they made over me, Aunt Barbara forgot her carache and hovered around like an arctic angel. Uncle Robert looked into the room a dozen times a day, to inquire as to my welfare, and Marchmont was represented by his mother as wandering around the house all day in a grimly disconsolate state of mind, imperiously anxious to know when I intended to make my appearance.

My arm did remarkably well however, and very soon I was able to spend my days on the wide sofa in the library, and from that time Marchmont devoted himself to my amusement. He read to me, talked to me, he sat in the music room with me, and played to me by the hour—and his fingers had the very magic of melody—and I saw by his mother's satisfied face that she approved of the friendship which seemed to exist between us.

Of Miss Silvertown I saw very little during these days, but one evening when my arm was nearly well, I was coming by the school room door, and hearing a stifled sob, I pushed the door open and looked in.

There sat the pretty governess, her arms thrown despairingly out on the table in front of her and her head bowed down upon them in a very agony of weeping. One moment I hesitated, and then, moved by a sudden impulse, I went to her, and closing the door securely, and went to her.

"What is it?" I said, touching her head lightly. "Can I help you?"

She started up, and pushing her hair back with both hands, looked at me almost fiercely. "Let me alone," she said. "Don't touch me, don't come near me, and then, seeming to collect her self, she spoke suddenly. "I get home-sick, sometimes," she said, "silly, isn't it?—and I am best alone at such times."

"Home-sick?" I really pitied the poor girl, she looked so wretched and forlorn. "Haven't you any friends near here?"

"I haven't a friend in the wide world," she answered, "not one—except—no—not one."

"Can I not help you then?" I said, nothing with a little wonder, how thin and pale she had grown of late. "I am home-sick too, sometimes," but she stood silent, trifling with the cover on her chair, and looking at me over her shoulder.

"What is anything I can do for you," I said, at last, as I turned to go, "please let me know. I do not like to think that you are unhappy," and as I passed her, something in the pretty face arrested my steps—a yearning frightened look in the dark eyes that puzzled me.

"I do not like to leave you so," I said, and then she broke out almost fiercely.

"It is only a love affair—that is all. I had a lover, and now he doesn't care for me as he did, and I am wretched. Please leave me now."

"Poor little girl!" moved by a sudden impulse, I kissed the trembling lips. "I see I cannot help you, but I am honestly sorry for you. I hope it will all pass off happily after all." And so I left her.

Marchmont was waiting for me in the library, his handsome face bright with smiles. "Just the day for a drive," he said, "will you go?" and I, assenting, we were soon rolling along the quiet road, in the pale fall sunshine, talking and laughing like two happy children.

But I had not felt so much at ease with March; perhaps it was because I had noticed, once or twice a coldly displeased look in Uncle Robert's eyes when March and I were together, and several times he had refused, almost sharply, to let me go with March driving or walking—making the weather or my aches an excuse; but I did not think of this, and, enjoying every moment of the long, delightful drive.

It was dusk when the horses' heads were turned homeward, almost night, and as we whirled along, the chill wind blew my wrappings back. March, driving with one hand, drew them together with the other, and then, as if by accident, his arm fell carelessly on the back of the seat, then, after a moment it came closely around me.

After all it was only March—and although I felt my cheeks flame in the darkness, I said nothing, only when he drew me closer, so that my head rested on his shoulder, I tried to draw myself away, but he held me firmly, but gently.

"Come, Nora," he said, "you are surely not afraid of me?"

"Afraid of you?—why Marchmont!—why should I be?" and yet I felt my heart throb—why, I scarcely knew.

We were home, now, and as he reined the horses up sharply, he bent and kissed me once, twice, then, as if by accident, his arm fell carelessly on the back of the seat, then, after a moment it came closely around me.

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day not far distant, I saw his face bright and glow tender and loving as my father's had been in the old happy days, and when at last I stopped, he bent and kissed me for the first time.

"I am glad you have found it in your heart to tell me," he said; "James wrote me something of this, but I wanted to know it from yourself. Thank you, my dear girl," and so I left him, feeling happier than I had during all my stay at Wynfield Hall, although the story of March's wrong doings troubled me not a little.

That evening as I sat before the fire in my dressing-sack, there came a timid knock at the door, and, turning round, I saw Miss Silvertown's face looking at me. "May I come in?" she queried, and then coming swiftly across the room she stood before the fire, with her hands clasped before her, and her dark eyes looking into the blaze.

"What is it?" I asked, and then she spoke in a hard, unnatural manner that startled me.

"You said once that you wanted to help me—are you of the same mind now?"

"Certainly," I said, wondering at her manner as still looking at me, but straining into the fire, she said, "Lend me ten pounds then; you needn't give it to me, your uncle owes me that much, but I'm not paid until the quarter, and I want the money now."

"Is that all?" I put two crisp five pound notes into her hand; "that is of no consequence. Is there not something else?"

"No," she said, "nothing; I am much obliged to you," and then suddenly she was down on her knees beside me, sobbing, trembling and crying in a way that fairly frightened me. "You are so kind to me, Miss Wynfield," she cried, "when I haven't a friend in the world. Oh, if you only knew!"

"I know what," I bent over and tried to raise the bowed head; but suddenly the sob ceased, the clenched hands fell nervelessly at her side, and the poor girl lay white and still at my feet. My first impulse was to ring for help, but a moment's thought showed me that such a course would cause a great deal of comment and questioning as to her presence in my room, and so I clasped her hands, bathed her temples with cologne; and, after a weary while, the white eyelids unclosed, and, with a long, deep breath, she came back to life again. For one moment she looked at me steadily, as if trying to collect her scattered thoughts, and then, with a sudden effort she rose to her feet.

"You are very kind," she said, constrainedly, "and I beg your pardon for disturbing you. Good-night," and so she left me, her long, dark hair veiling her shoulders, and her face white as death.

The next morning, to my great surprise, Miss Silvertown and the children did not appear at the breakfast table.

"The children here made me quite nervous with their shocking manners," said my aunt, "so I have decided that they shall have their meals in the nursery for a while."

I fancied that her grey eyes glanced across at Marchmont as she spoke, but he met them with a careless smile, and she said no more.

All that long rainy day Miss Silvertown was invisible. March lounged around the house, growling at the weather and everything in general. Uncle Robert wrote letters in his "hermitage" and read the Times, and I constituted myself Aunt Barbara's companion, and with my embroidery and a novel managed to feel utterly amused.

"Don't trouble yourself to stay with me," said Aunt Barbara. "March is always more in need of sympathy during these wretched days than I am. Go and play billiards with him for a while."

March's eyes seconded this proposition, although March himself, lazily indifferent in appearance, was stretched out in a great lounging chair by the fire, but I expressed myself perfectly contented where I was, and Aunt Barbara dozed off again.

So the long day passed off. March read to me, played and sang to me; but even Heine's tenderest songs could not lure me from Aunt Barbara's side, and at last Marchmont grew weary, dozing off his overcoat, went out into the storm.

"Anything is better than this confounded dull hole!" he said savagely, in response to his mother's protest, and she looked reproachfully at me; but I was apparently unconscious that my failure to be entertaining was the cause of his departure, and wished him a "pleasant journey" with the most calmly indifferent manner possible.

March having departed, I incontinently deserted Aunt Barbara, and wandered around the house like an unquiet spirit—playing a little, singing a little, writing a little, and reading a little—until at last it was time to dress for dinner.

My toilet was speedily accomplished, for my deep mourning admitted of but little change, and then remembering that a precious letter was lying between the leaves of a book which I had been reading, I ran down to recover it.

Aunt Barbara's chair was vacant, but leaning against the mantel before the fire, stood March—his bright hair wet with the storm, and curling in close little curls around his fair forehead.

I did not see him until I was too far in the room to retreat, therefore I nodded to him with a laughing inquiry as to the weather, and securing my book, turned to depart.

"Nora," he said, suddenly, "wait a minute—I want to ask you a question."

"What is it?" I said, feeling my cheeks growing crimson; "do not detain me, please."

"Sit down," he said; "where have you been to-day?"

"Driving," I answered; and then, after a little walk up and down the room, he came back to me, and looking down at me grimly, said with the most discomposing abruptness: "Has that fellow been making love to you?"

"What could I say? His mother's kiss!—and, as I hesitated, Uncle Robert spoke again:

"Answer me this time, please, and truthfully. Do you love him, my dear?"

The real kindness of the tone brought the tears to my eyes, and looking in his face I was heartily thankful that I could answer honestly and earnestly. "No, I do not, Uncle Robert."

"Very well, then," he said, with a long breath of relief, I fancied. "I will tell you something; I would rather see you dead where you are sitting, than see you married to that man. Do you understand me, child? His mother spoiled him—grew up to be what he is—a handsome, worthless good-for-nothing, and bad at that as bad can be. I should have sent him to India long ago, had it not been for his mother; she is so fond of him, and proud of him in spite of everything. Perhaps I ought to have spoken of this before, but I put it off, until at last I felt simple justice to myself. I felt that I must do so."

Here was the opportunity which I had waited for so long, to tell Uncle Robert a little heart history which I hid so carefully from others; and as I told him about the brave young fellow across the ocean, who was coming home again some

but March was in the gayest spirits; and I, though I was inwardly determined to go to Uncle Robert with my story, was outwardly as composed and amiable as ever.

Once or twice I felt March's eyes fastened upon me, but I met his gaze indifferently, and went on with my dinner with cool unconcern. Once or twice he rallied his mother on her apparent severity, but finding her in no mood to enjoy even his pleasantry, desisted after a little, and devoted himself to the disposal of his dinner.

"I wish to see you a few moments," said Aunt Barbara to Uncle Robert as we rose from the table; and then as we entered the library she touched the bell. "Miss Silvertown," she said to the servant who answered the call, and then with awful solemnity, she seated herself in her favorite chair.

March looked askant at me, and moved toward the door, but his mother interposed. "Pray remain, my son, and you, also, Nora, my business with Miss Silvertown will take but a moment, and I prefer to have you both here."

A moment later Miss Silvertown came in, a little frightened look in her dark eyes, but looking prettier than ever with that faint color coming and going in her cheeks.

"Miss Silvertown," said my aunt impressively, "I have sent for you to contradict some reports which have come to me—I hear that you are carrying on what appears to be a very deep flirtation with some unknown man. That you meet him very late and unseasonable hours in the garden, and that, in fact, your department is not what we are entitled to expect from a person in your situation."

A wave of crimson surged over the pretty face, and then died away, leaving her deadly pale. One slender hand grasped a high chair back as though to steady herself, but her dark eyes met my aunt's bravely.

"Do you deny this?" said my aunt, "have you nothing to say?"

"No," she answered, clearly and distinctly. "I do not deny it."

"Then," said Aunt Barbara, in a cold, measured tone, "of course your connection with this fairly well known man, and you must go. I cannot countenance such proceedings, and I wonder that you are shameless enough to acknowledge having been so—worse than imprudent."

Uncle Robert had not spoken once, but his keen eyes were fastened on the girl's face; March stood by the window utterly indifferent and unconcerned, swinging the tassels of the curtain backward and forward and humming softly a snatch of one of Heine's songs.

"Of course," Aunt Barbara said again, "you must go, and at once," and then suddenly my uncle interposed.

"Let the young lady speak," he said, and then turning to Miss Silvertown, he laid his hand on her shoulder. "Do not be afraid," he said, "I think I can trust you enough to promise to be your friend. Have you nothing to say against being turned away in disgrace like this?" and then the slight form stood erect, the bowed head was thrown proudly back, and the flashing eyes met my aunt's defiantly.

"I have nothing to say," she said. "Nothing—ask him—your son—my husband—madame, whose secret I have kept so long. Ask him if it is fitting that his wife should be turned away like this," and then as March, with a black frown on his face, and a devilish smile on his lips, came sullenly forward, the poor girl turned white and faint.

"I never meant to tell," March, she said, "but she tried me so sorely, forgive me. I was going away—I never meant to betray you—I wish I had died first!"

"Hush, my child," it was my uncle's voice, and his arm supported her as she sank trembling to the floor. "Do not kneel to him—you have done no wrong."

And then my aunt rose to her feet, and with her shaking hands stretched out toward her son, and an awful gray pallor settled down on her face, cried out like one in mortal pain, "Marchmont, you dare not say that this is true—oh, my son! tell me that it is all false!" but Marchmont, looking askant at me, answered never a word.

"Marchmont," said