

I MUST GET HOME.

I must get home. I have wandered long in this wilderness so drear. And many times have I lost my way in the dreary night and the sunless day. And my heart has quaked with fear. Fierce storms have driven me farther back. Where mountains were bleak and bare, and oft when my foothold I would miss, have I fallen into some deep abyss, and I almost perished there.

I must get home. Too long have I lived on food that has caused distress; bitter the fruits that unripe would fall. And the murky water would turn to gall, causing untold wretchedness. And when a famine was in the land and the hot winds scorched the ground, I ate the shucks that were brown and dry, and often from thirst I would almost die ere a cooling draught I found.

I must get home. In a vision fair I behold it far away. The sky above it for aye is bright, and there comes no cloud or shadow of night.

For there 'tis a bright, glad day. A fruit tree grows by the portals wide, I have longed for it oft and sore, and when I eat from that goodly tree and drink from the fountain that flows so free, I'll hunger and thirst no more.

I must get home. At the gate I see my father and mother dear. They have waited long for their truant boy, and I know their faces will beam with joy when they see me drawing near. Two sisters, two brothers now are there, and weary and sick I roam, but O how glad will our meeting be when safe from my journey they welcome me.

I must, O I must get home. —George Clay Lloyd, in Banner of Gold.



By Will N. Harber.

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CHAPTER XII.—CONTINUED.

When she had left the room, a strange, glorious light in her young face, he began again to walk the floor. He was tingling in every vein. His heart had begun to beat excitedly. He tried to think of Jeanne, the awful disease which was eating Blanche's life away, but he could only feel the pressure of his ward's hands, the warmth of her breath on his face, the depth of her great, trustful eyes.

"Great God! what can this mean?" he exclaimed.

He continued to walk back and forth across the room for half an hour, then he stopped suddenly and rang.

James obeyed the summons.

"Where is Mr. Talley?" he asked.

"In the study, at work, sir." James saluted in military fashion.

"That is all." The major went to the study, where he found his private secretary at work at a typewriter.

"Talley," he began, "you wanted to see me yesterday, I believe?"

"I did, major. I believe the amount you were keeping for me is exactly \$5,000?"

"You are right, Talley; that is the amount, and, as I told you, you can get it at any time you wish. All you have to do is to draw the check. I will sign it."

"I have it ready now," said the young man, handing Goddard a slip of paper.

"I hope you are not thinking of leaving me?" said the major, as he signed the check.

"Not that, but I am flatly disobeying your injunctions, major. You have tried to keep me out of speculation, but the temptation is too strong to resist. This check covers all my savings, and yet I am going to put every cent of it into G. N. & W. railway stock."

"Oh, you can't be so foolhardy, Talley!"

"I am fortunately on the inside as to the future outcome of the stock," declared the young man. "I have a young friend, Hubert Johnson, the son of the Wall street Johnson. You know him by reputation. Well, this friend of mine happened to overhear a conversation in his father's office which let him on to an important secret. His father and other big speculators have formed a syndicate to depress this stock. It has been going down like lightning for the last two months. It has reached its lowest notch. They are certainly buying all they can lay their hands on. I know I cannot be running any risk. I am in a sure deal. I tell you this because I hope that you will take a hand. I had rather see you make money than anyone, major, for you have been the best friend I have ever had."

"I shall not invest," answered Goddard; "but I wish you luck, Talley. I hope it will make you rich."

"Thank you, major." The secretary put the check into his pocket.

"I have an important commission for you, Talley." The major cleared his throat, sat down at his desk, turned in his revolving chair and crossed his legs. A slight color had risen in his face. Talley had never seen him look so handsome.

"I am at your service, major."

"What if I were to tell you I am going to get married, Talley?"

The secretary stared. The carriage of his typewriting machine, with which he was toying, fell with a sharp click.

"Are you in earnest, Maj. Goddard?"

"Quite in earnest, Talley. I have decided to marry my ward."

"Miss Briscoe?" exclaimed Talley, his face suddenly falling.

"Yes, Miss Briscoe. And we have decided, under existing circumstances, that we will have the affair take place in as quiet a manner as possible. I want you to drive over to Rev. Mr. Strothers at once and see if we may come to his house to-morrow morning. If he consents, then I want you to attend to any other arrangements without delay."

The private secretary had turned quite pale. His eyes were expanded and fixed in a helpless stare on the face of his employer.

"Have you thought over this well, major?" he blurted out, suddenly.

"Why do you ask that?" asked Goddard, suspiciously.

"Pardon me," stammered Talley, "I only thought—but it was not clear to Talley what he thought."

"I do not understand your question, Talley," insisted the major.

"You know Miss Briscoe is young," answered the secretary, "and—and she has been so upset over your recent bereavement that I was afraid that, through sympathy and vast interest in you as her father's friend and her benefactor, she might—"

"I see," broke in the major; "you think she may hastily take a step that might be regretted later, but you need not be afraid, Talley. The truth is, Blanche and I once thought of marrying before I met Mrs. Goddard. I think you need have no fears on that score."

"I did not know of that," said the private secretary, his face still set and white. "I beg your pardon. I shall carry out your instructions. I hope you can overlook my remark just now."

"Easily," said the major, "for it shows your interest in me and Blanche is more than skin deep."

When the major had left the room the young man lowered his head to his desk. He heard the major ring and order the horse and cart.

"God have mercy on me! What have I been allowing myself to think about?" he muttered. "I might have known there was something—behind that awful suffering of hers. I ought to have seen that she loved him!"

CHAPTER XIII.

During that night a light snow began to fall, and as the bridal party left the next morning to be driven to the house of Rev. Mr. Strothers a thin white carpet lay on the earth and fine feathery flakes continued to fall.

The servants had been apprised of the astonishing event and they gathered at the windows which look out upon the drive.

"A very sensible thing for 'em to do," said James. "She is the sort of mistress I want to work for. I should have left the other if she hadn't gone to the bottom of the Atlantic. I haven't lived with the aristocracy for ten years without knowing a sample when I see it. The good Lord has been kind to the major."

"I wish she had waited awhile, just for the looks o' the thing," said Katie, Blanche's favorite maid. "Then she could have had a swell wedding, plenty of presents, and—"

"And give you all her old clothes," sneered James, who was too fat to make use of the major's discarded apparel.

"I get everything I want anyway," was Katie's defense. "It is only because I think she deserves all that any rich young lady has that I object to this kind of a marriage; but if she is only happy, I won't complain."

These gossiping hirelings were at the windows when the returning carriage appeared in sight an hour later. The bride's beautiful face was flushed by the contact with the wind, and she had never looked so happy or moved with so much grace. Talley and Miss Dean had very serious faces as they came up the veranda side by side.

"Well, it is all over," said the major to his bride when they were alone in the luxurious company chamber, where a red fire glowed. He had never been such a mystery to himself as now. He felt as if he were drunken with delicious memories of their old courtship.

"Yes, I am your wife at last," she said, with a smile. "I am your wife, and I am going to make you happy. I feel it away down in my heart."

"You feel it," he repeated, as if in a dream, and he helped her to take off her cloak. He felt her warm breath on his face. He laid the cloak aside, then drew her into his arms and kissed her. "And so do I, dear girl. And so do I."

At that strange moment Jeanne Goddard and all her evil plans seemed as much removed from his life as if she had never entered it. It was as if the old life had come back to him—the life in which his love had for its object a creature so pure and undefiled that it lifted him up and opened his eyes to spiritual possibilities.

"I was at first afraid you would not

consent so soon after—after her death," he said.

"I felt that it was my right to have you now," said Blanche, frankly. "She told me how she had deliberately beguiled you from me when she discovered that you loved me. The night before she sailed she confessed she had resorted to every trick and artifice within her power to make you cast me aside."

"She told you that?" the major exclaimed.

"Yes, and not only that, but she said she had some sort of presentiment that she was going to die abroad, and said if anything did happen to her she hoped I would marry you. Oh, I've tried to regret her death—to feel sorry for her at being taken away in the midst of such sins, but I cannot. She even told me—oh, I can't tell you what else she said. It makes me almost hate her memory."

"Please go on," said the major.

"She confessed that she was unhappy with you—that she wanted to get away from you—that she married you simply for your money."

"I suspected that," said the major, dreamily.

It seemed so wonderful to him that he could now calmly contemplate Jeanne's shallow faithlessness without the pangs such thoughts had always caused him. Was it because he really loved his ward and that he had never loved Jeanne—that his passion for her had been only a base infatuation which had already taken wings?

He could not answer these questions; he could only wonder at the strange exultation which was swelling in his breast—the boundless enthusiasm over the thought that he was loved by the beautiful young creature before him. He lost sight of the wrong he had done her. She had only a short while to live—that time, he told himself, should constitute his life and hers; beyond that brief period he could not reckon.

"You have suffered?" he heard himself murmuring.

"Ever since that awful day when you introduced me to her in the drawing-room. I had never dreamed that God intended you for anyone but me. You had been my whole life, and even afterwards, when I saw the hold she had on you, I could not keep from suffering. The pain, the loss was with me night and day. I hated her; I despised myself. I planned a thousand times to leave, but I could not tear myself away, because I saw your soul in danger. I saw her day by day leading you downward instead of upward, as I had dreamt of doing. I knew how charitable you had been before your marriage—how many poor people you had helped, and I saw her drawing you away from such impulses by her sharp, heartless ridicule."

"And now that she is no longer—no longer—here?" Goddard could not pronounce the word which lay on his tongue like a weight.

"Now that she is out of our way I shall pray God to help me exercise a better influence over you."

"You have always done that," he said. "Do with me as you will. I am

pretending to pout. "I am getting along beautifully."

"But I—I want—you must see a doctor," he stammered. "I shall feel better now to know that everything is being done as that should be done for you."

"You talk as if I were going to die," said the girl. "Why, I've just begun to live."

For a moment he looked confused. He could not reveal his real fears, and yet he was now deeply troubled about her condition.

"Of course, it isn't anything serious," he said; "but still to please me you will let me send for Dr. Fralich."

"No, I don't know him, and I don't like to make new acquaintances. Besides, Dr. Fleming is coming to New York in about ten days. I promised faithfully to see him when he returned."

"How do you know he is coming?" asked the major, in surprise.

"I had a note from him yesterday. He explained that he was coming to New York earlier than he expected, owing to a sudden change in his plans. I will go to see him, if you insist on it, but I know he will tell me I have taken enough of his tonics."

"Well, that will do," said Goddard, reluctantly. He thought of the crimson pictures in the medical book he had consulted, and his heart sank. After all, his new-found happiness was only to end in her death, and then—Goddard's meditations about Blanche always stopped there. He had shut his real wife out of his thoughts as men who are striving for better things shut out the memory of past evil deeds and associations.

That night when the house was still and he found himself alone in his study he forced himself to the task of communicating with Jeanne. And as I can in no better way reveal the workings of his heart, I shall reproduce the letter word for word.

In beginning it he wrote "Dear Jeanne," but there he stopped abruptly, and sat staring at the words for several minutes, then he tore the sheet into small bits and let them filter through his fingers. His letter began simply as follows:

"Well, I have at last done your bidding. I was a madman. I confess that—the very flames of hell had scorched my brain. I have committed an unspeakable crime against the purest, loveliest creature that God ever gave life to. You will be surprised perhaps to find that I have changed so quickly, and really I have changed completely. The scales have fallen from my sight. I feel like a man who has been hypnotized and wakes to find he has murdered his best friend. I despise myself as no mortal ever despised himself before. I now know that my passion for you was the blindest, most insane infatuation that ever dragged the soul of a man from an atmosphere of hope down into the mire of hellish despondency. I now know that my love for my ward was the only pure love I have ever experienced. Yes, I loved her when I met you, and I love her now with all the tortured soul within me. I have wronged her as no man ever wronged a pure, unsuspecting woman, but as her life will be of such short duration, if I can prevent it she shall never know of the stain I have put upon her fair name. While she lives I shall lavish all the tenderness of my soul on her, praying to God that I may in that way atone a little—a very little—for my crime against her. She married me to comfort me in my loneliness; I married her at the bidding of an intriguer of the most unpardonable type. I would confess all at this moment but for the fear that the shock would kill her. How could I tell her that you are alive, and that I am not her legal husband?"

"I would not write to you now, but for the fact that it is due to you to know the stand I have taken, and that we must now thoroughly understand each other in regard to Blanche's fortune. As God is my judge I do not want her money, and as God is my judge you shall never lay your covetous hands upon it. I shall at once take precautions to see that, at her death, the money shall go to her blood relatives. As to you, I shall never willingly see you again, nor write you another line from this day forth. I see my duty and I shall do it. Any letter you write me will be returned to you unopened. Do your worst. If you wish to publish to the world that you and I have played on its credulity, do so, I shall then confess to the part I took in your scheme. As much as I now hate you, I would not let you bear all the blame. I am as guilty as you because I am a man. I herewith enclose a draft payable to Mrs. Nolan; it is all the money I can send you now. I am about to enter into a speculation in railway stock and if it turns out well I shall send you more money. You are my wife, and I shall provide for you as well as my own means will allow, but of Blanche's money you nor I shall ever have one penny. I shall try to get means out of my own resources to keep you quiet at least as long as Blanche lives, but you need not look to me for large remittances. I am not exactly under your thumb; your threats of exposure will not frighten me. I am desperate. I want Blanche to know what I am. I cannot face her pure eyes and know that I am as vile as the deepest dyed convict. The sooner you make the whole thing known the better I shall be pleased."

"ROWLAND GODDARD."

Mrs. Nolan was standing in the doorway of the little gray brick cottage when the postman handed this communication to her. Recognizing the handwriting she took it unopened to Mrs. Goddard, who was restlessly walking in the little, high-walled garden in the rear of the house.

"Ah," she exclaimed, "he has written!"

"Yes, it is from him," said the angular woman, approaching slowly.

Mrs. Goddard tore open the envelope. She had hardly read a dozen lines before she uttered a little scream, and then, with quivering hands and expanding eyes, she continued to read.

[To Be Continued.]

His Own Fault.

Hodd—Hang it all! Do you suppose I'll ever make a good golf player?

Todd (pityingly)—Never, old man. You think too much of your family and your business.—Harper's Bazar

HE SAT STARING AT THE WORDS FOR SEVERAL MINUTES.

a very bad man, Blanche; a very wicked man. If you knew me as I am you would despise me for my wickedness, as you despised her for hers."

"You never had a fault till she crossed your path, dear guardian, and nothing you have done since is going to count." She spoke lightly, and smiled as she laid her head on his shoulder.

The next day was Sunday, and as Miss Dean had gone home, they drove alone to the village, about two miles distant, to attend church. Blanche had never looked so well. The crisp air brought the blood into her cheeks and blew her hair into a froth of gold about her eyes and brow.

"Perhaps we ought not to drive so far," he said, solicitously, as they were entering the carriage. "Do you think Dr. Fleming would approve of it?"

"He said outdoor exercise was what I needed most," answered Blanche. "Don't worry about me; the medicine he prescribed is making me strong again. Did you notice the breakfast I ate? I was ashamed of my appetite."

He was silent a moment as they drove along, then he gravely said:

"I want you to go to a good physician to-morrow and ask his advice. It has been some time since you saw Dr. Fleming."

"Oh, don't begin that," said Blanche,

A GOVERNMENT FIRST.

President McKinley Tells Cuban Political Questions Must Be Settled Before Trade Relations Are Considered.

Washington, April 29.—The members of the Cuban commission called upon the president Saturday to bid him farewell. Senor Capote urged that something be done toward reciprocal trade relations for the benefit of the Cubans. The president replied that nothing could be done on economic lines until the political questions were settled; that it would be necessary for the Cubans to form a government before any negotiations could be entered into. He assured the delegation that, as soon as the Cuban government was formed he would appoint a commission to consider economic relations.

GEN. MILES' ARMY SCHEME.

As Approved by Secretary Root It Provides for 76,787 Men, Apportioned Among the Three Arms of the Service.

Washington, April 29.—Gen. Miles has completed the details of the plan for the army reorganization. It was approved by Secretary Root. The three arms of the service are divided into 38,520 infantry, 15,940 cavalry, 13,734 coast artillery, and 4,800 field artillery, making a total of 76,787 men. Under this scheme the artillery strength will be 18,862 men and will be ample to care for the coast defenses, which have been neglected owing to the lack of men.

MONEY ORDER DECISION.

They Are Payable Only by Postmasters Upon Whom Drawn—Wipes Out a Custom Heretofore Pursued.

Washington, April 29.—The comptroller of the treasury has decided that postal money orders are payable only by postmasters upon whom they are drawn to whom notice of the issue thereof has been sent. It has been the practice heretofore to cash money orders at post offices other than those on which they are drawn and for the postmasters cashing such orders to turn them into the post office department as vouchers.

STUDENTS FROM PORTO RICO.

Nineteen Youths Left San Juan for New York, 11 of Whom Will Be Educated at Uncle Sam's Expense.

San Juan, P. R., April 29.—The United States transport Sedgwick sailed for New York, having on board 19 Porto Rican youths who are going to the United States to be educated. Eleven of them are bound for the United States government Indian training school at Carlisle, Pa. The government will assume the expenses of the 11 students referred to.

A New Oklahoma Railroad.

Guthrie, Ok., April 29.—A territorial charter has been issued to the Oklahoma Central & Southeastern Railway company, which proposes to build from Kiowa, Kan., to Coal Gate, I. T. The estimated length in Oklahoma is 150 miles. The line is to pass through the Oklahoma counties of Woods, Grant, Garfield, Kingfisher, Noble, Logan, Oklahoma, Pottawatomie and Lincoln.

Bryan and the Governorship.

New York, April 29.—Edward Rosewater, editor of the Omaha Bee, who is in the city, said in a published interview: "William J. Bryan, in my opinion, will be a candidate for governor of Nebraska next year. Mr. Bryan still exerts a wide influence in the state and if he receives the gubernatorial nomination he will be a very hard man to beat."

Millionaires in the United States.

New York, April 29.—The New York Herald prints a list of United States millionaires—3,828 names, arranged alphabetically and divided by states. These men and women, the Herald declares, own \$16,000,000,000 out of the nation's total wealth, \$81,750,000,000, or about one-fifth of the whole.

Cripple Creek's Gold Product.

Colorado Springs, Col., April 29.—Carefully compiled statistics by the Gazette shows that the gold production of the Cripple Creek district up to the close of the present month makes a grand total of over \$100,000,000. Gold was first discovered in this camp in 1889.

Fairbanks' Boom Launched.

Pittsburg, Pa., April 29.—United States Senator Charles W. Fairbanks, of Indiana, was boomed for president at the fifteenth annual dinner of the American Republican club, commemorating the seventy-ninth anniversary of the birth of Gen. U. S. Grant, here Saturday night.

McKinley at Convention Hall.

Kansas City, Mo., April 28.—It has been definitely decided that President McKinley will speak in Convention hall at nine o'clock on the evening of June 8. On Monday morning he will review the school children of the city on the paseo.