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pent up irritability which that episode had generated she could not have con-tained herself and slept. But here Miss Travers came to her re-

lief. Her beauty, her winsome ways, her unqualified delight in everything that was soldierly, speedily rendered her vastly attractive to all the young officers in garrison. Graham and Foster, of the

infantry, Merton, Webster and Royce, of

the cavalry, haunted the house at all manner of hours, and the captain bade

them welcome and urged them to come oftener and stay later, and told Mrs. Rayner he wanted some kind of a sup-

per or collation every night. He set be-fore his guests a good deal of wine, and

drank a good deal more himself than he had ever been known to do before, and

they were keeping very late hours at Rayner's, for, said the captain, "I don't

care if Nellie is engaged; she shall have a good time while she's here; and if the

boys know all about it—goodness knows

you've told them often enough, Kate— and they don't mind it, why, it's nobody's

er care was another matter. Rayner pever saw him, and did not know him.

He rather resented it that Van Antwerp

had never written to him and asked his

and he was not even consulted. If any-

thing, he rather enjoyed the contempla

tion of Van Antwerp's fidgety frame of mind as described to him by Mrs. Ray-

ner about the time it became apparent to her that Nellie was enjoying the atten-

tions of which she was so general an ob-

ject, and that the captain was sitting up later and drinking more wine than was good for him. She was aware that the

very number of Nell's admirers would

probably prevent her becoming entangled with any one of them, but she needed something to scold about, and eagerly pitched upon this.

She knew well that she could not com-

fort her husband in the anxiety that was

gnawing at his heartstrings, but she was

jealous of comfort that might come to him from any other source, and the

Lethe of wine and jolly companionship she dreaded most of all. Long, long be-

fore, she had induced him to promise

that he would never offer the young offi-

cers spirits in his house. She would not

prohibit wine at table, she said; but she

never thought of there coming a time when he himself would seek consolation

in the glass and make up in quantity

was impatient of all reproof now, and would listen to no talk; but Nellie was

years her junior-more years than she would admit except at such times as

these, when she meant to admonish; and Nellie had to take it.

Two weeks after their arrival at War-

rener the burden of Mrs. Rayner's song

-morn, noon and night-was: "What

would Mr. Van Antwerp say if he could

Can any reader recall an instance

where the cause of an absent lover was

benefited by the ceaseless warning in a

woman's ear, "Remember, you're en-

gaged?" The hero of antiquity who

caused himself to be attended by a shad-

owing slave whispering ever and only,

"Remember, thou are mortal," is a fine

figure to contemplate—at this remote

date. He, we are told, admitted the

need, submitted to the infliction. But

lives there a woman who will admit that

she needs any instruction as to what her

conduct should be when the lord of her

heart is away? Lives there a woman

who, submitting, because she cannot es-

cape, to the constant reminder, "Thou

art engaged," will not resent it in her

heart of hearts and possibly revenge her-

self on the one alone whom she holds at

her mercy? Left to herself-to her gen-

erosity, her conscience, her innate ten-derness—the cause of the absent one will

plead for itself, and, if it have even faint

foundation, hold its own. "With the

excellent cause has been ruined by the

injudicious urgings of a mother; but to

talk an engaged girl into mutiny, rely

on the infallibility of two women-a

Just what Mr. Van Antwerp would

have said could he have seen the situa

tion at Warrener is perhaps impossible

to predict. Just what he did say with-

out seeing was, perhaps, the most un-

wise thing he could have thought of: he

urged Mrs. Rayner to keep reminding Kellie of her promise. His had not been

a life of unmixed joy. He was now

nearly 85, and desperately in love with a

pretty girl who had simply bewitched

him during the previous summer. It

was not easy to approach her, then, he

found, for her sister kept vigilant guard;

but, once satisfied of his high connec-

tions, his wealth and his social standing,

the door was opened, and he was some-

thing more than welcomed, said the gos-

sins at the Surf house. What his past

history had been, where and how his

life had been spent, were matters of less

consequence, apparently, than what he was now. He had been wild at college,

as other boys had been, she learned; he

had tried the cattle business in the west,

she was told; but there had been a quar-

rel with his father, a reconciliation, a

devoted mother, a long sojourn abroad-

Heidelberg-a sudden summons to re-

turn, the death of the father, and then

the management of a valuable estate fell

There were other children, brother

and sisters, three in all, but Steven was

the first born and the mother's glory.

She was with him at the seaside, and the

first thing that moved Nellie Travers to

like him was his devotion to that white

haired woman who seemed so happy in

his care. Between that mother and Mrs.

Rayner there had speedily sprung up an acquaintance. She had vastly admired Nellie, and during the first fortnight of

their visit to the Surf house had shown

her many attentions. The illness of a

daughter called her away, and Mrs. Ray-

ner announced that she, too, was going elsewhere, when Mr. Van Antwerp

that they had better remain until it was

time to go to town. In October they

spent a fortnight in the city, staying at

the Westminster, and he was assiduous

in his attentions, taking them every-where and lavishing flowers and bon-

bons upon Nell. Then Mrs. Van Ant-

werp invited them to visit her at her own

comfortable, old fashioned house down

own, and Mrs. Rayner was eager to ac-

cept, but Nellie said no, she would not do it; she could not accept Mr. Van Ant-werp; she liked, admired and was at-tracted by him, but she felt that love him she did not. He was devoted, but had tact and patience, and Mrs. Rayner at

returned, and Mrs. Rayner

it was so late in the season

to the son

married sister or a maiden aunt.

but see this or hear that?"

it. As Mrs. Rayner's husband and consent. As Mrs. Rayner's husband and Nellie's brother-in-law, it seemed to him he stood in loco parentis; but Mrs. Ray-ner managed the whole thing herself,

-here, at least." What Mr. Van Antwerp might think

CHAPTER VIII. March had come—the month of gale ad bluster, sleet and storm, in almost yeary section of our broad domain—and farch at Warrener was to the full as fustering and conscienceless as in New legiand. There were a few days of sunine during the first week; then came a realight of raging snow storms. The walry troops, officers and men, went out their stable duties as usual, but, recept for roll call on the porch of the barracks and for guard mounting over the guard house, all military exercise semed suspended. This meant livelies times for the ladies, however, as the officers were enabled to devote just so many pore hours a day to their entertainment.

There were two of three loops a week yeer in the big assembly room, and there was some talk of getting up a german in elations existing between Mrs. Rayner and the ladies of other families at the cost made the matter difficult of accom-There were bright little luncheon, diner and tea parties, where the young ers and the younger ladies met every and, besides all this, despite the

t that Mrs. Rayner had at first shown ad wrongs of "the Hayne affair," as it was now beginning to be termed, with all comers who belonged to the Riflers, a had grown to be a very general thing or the youngsters to drop in at her case at all hours of the day; but that has because there were attractions there which outweighed her combativeness. Then Rayner himself overheard some e, and forbade her discussing the subwith the officers even of her own nt. She was indignant, and dended a reason. He would name no



but told her that he had heard to cenvince him she was doing ore harta than good, and, if any ntributing to the turn of the in Hayne's favor. Then she felt outand utterly misjudged. It was a e for her, and if deprived of se of her main weapon of offense d defense the battle was sure to go s. Sorely against her inclination, obeyed her lord, for, as has been d, she was a loyal wife, and for the me being the baby became the recip-nt of her undivided attention. True to her declaration, she behaved

soldly and with such marked distance nanner to the colonel and his wife a they met in society immediately the dinner that the colonel quietly d his wife she need not give either r's return. He would like to have her something, to welcome Miss Travers, be thought the girl had much of her in her. He knew him well in the days before and during the war, and hed him. He liked her looks and her unaffected, cheery manner. He ed the contrast between her and her ster; for Miss Travers had listened in ce to her sister's exposition of what manner should be to the colonel and is wife, and when they met she was right and winsome. The colonel stood at talked with her about her father, m she could remember only vaguely, of whom she never tired of hearing d that night Mrs. Rayner rebuked her verely for her disloyalty to the cap-in, who had given her a home.

ut when Mrs. Rayner heard that al and Mrs. Waldron had invited Mr. ayne to dine with them, and had in-ited to meet him two of the cavalry Acers and their wives, she was incensed yond measure. She and Mrs. Waldron da brief talk, as a result of which Rayner refused to speak to Mrs. aldron at the evening party given by rs. Stannard in honor of her and her er. It was this that brought on the orisis. Whatever was said between the was not told. Maj. Waldron and Capt. Rayner had a long consultation, nd they took no one into their confie; but Mrs. Rayner obeyed her hus , went to Mrs. Waldron and apolofor her rudeness, and then went ith her sister and returned the call of colonel's wife; but she chose a bright ernoon, when she knew well the lady

e retired from the contest, appartly, as has been said, and took much an consolation to herself from the et that at so great a sacrifice she was eying her husband and doing the duty owed to him. In very truth, howthe contest was withdrawn from by the fact that for a week or more ir his evening at the Waldrons' Mr. yne did not reappear in garrison, and had no cause to talk about him. of his name. Ladies of the cavalry iment calling upon Mrs. Rayner and Travers occasionally spoke of him his devotion to the men and his ery at the fire, but rather as though ant in a general way to compli the Riflers, not Mr. Hayne; and so heard little of the man whose existwas so sore a trial to her. What would have said, what she would thought, had she known of the ting between him and her guarded the, is beyond us to describe; but she dreamed of such a thing, and Travers never dreamed of telling for the present, at least. Fortu-ly, or unfortunately, for the latter, has not so much of her relations with Hayue as of her relations with half s. Hayne as of her relations with half these young bachelors that Mrs. Rayproperty specific property felt herself compelled to the self-the selfoff in October to spend some time in the interior of the state with relations of their mother, and there frequently came Mr. Van Antwerp to see her and to urge

his suit.

They were to have gone to Warrener immediately after the holidays, but January came and Nellie had not surrendered. Another week in the city, a long talk with the devoted old mother whose heart was so wrapped up in her son's happiness, and whose arms seemed yearning to enfold the lovely girl, and Nellie was conquered. If not fully convinced of her love for Mr. Van Antwerp, she was more than half in love with his mother. Her promise was given, and then she seemed eager to get back to the frontier which she had known and loved as a child. "I want to see the mountains, the snow peaks, the great rolling as a child. "I want to see the mountains, the snow peaks, the great rolling prairies, once more," she said, and he had to consent. Man never urged more importunately than he that the wedding should come off that very winter; but Nellie once more said no. She could not and would not listen to an earlier date than the summer to come.

No one on earth knew with what sore

foreboding and misery he let her go. It was something that Mrs. Rayner could not help remarking—his unconquerable aversion to every mention of the army and of his own slight experience on the frontier. He would not talk of it even with Nellie, who was an enthusiast and had spent two years of her girlhood aland loved the mere mention of the Wyo-ming streams and valleys. In her husband's name Mrs. Rayner had urged him to drop his business early in the spring and come to them for a visit. He declared it was utterly impossible. Every moment of his time must be given to the settling of estate affairs, so that he could be a free man in the summer. He meant to take his bride abroad immediately and spend a year or more in Europe. These were details which were industriously circudetails which were industriously circu-lated by Mrs. Rayner and speedily be-came garrison property. It seemed to the men that in bringing her sister there engaged she had violated all precedent to begin with, and in this instance, at least,

there was general complaint.

Mr. Blake said it reminded him of his early boyhood, when they used to take him to the great toy stores at Christmas: "Look all you like, long for it as much as you please, but don't touch." Merton and Royce, of the cavalry, said it was simply a challenge to any better fellow to cut in and cut out the Knickerbocker; and, to do them justice, they did their best to carry out their theory. Both they and their comrades of the Riflers were assiduous in their attentions to Miss Travers, and other ladies, less favored made acrimonious comment in cons quence. A maiden sister of one of the veteran captains in the -th, a damsel whose stern asceticism of character was reflected in her features and grimly illustrated in her dress, was moved to censure of her more attractive peighbor. "If I had given my heart to a gentle-man," said she, and her manner was indicative of the long struggle which such a bestownl would cost both him and her, "nothing on earth would induce me to accept attentions from any one else, not

even if he were millions of miles away. But Nellie Travers was "accepting attentions" with laughing grace and er-joying the society of these young fellows immensely. The house would have been gloomy without her and "the boys," Rayner was prompt to admit, for he was ill at ease and sorely worried, while his inflammable Kate was fuming over the situation of her husband's affairs. Under ordinary circumstances she would have seen very little to object to so long as Nellio showed no preference for any one of her admirers at Warrener, and peevish or porturbed in si would have made little allusion to it. As matters stood, however, she was in a most querulous and excitable mood; she could not rail at the real cause of her misery, and so, womanlike, she was thankful for a pretext for uncorking the vials of her wrath on somebody or some-

If the young matrons in garrison who. with the two or three visiting maidens, were disposed to rebel at Miss Nell's apparent absorption of all the available cavaliers at the post, and call her a too lucky girl, could but have heard Mrs. Rayner's nightly tirades and hourly rebukes, they might have realized that here, as elsewhere, the rose had its stinging thorns. As for Miss Travers, she confounded her sister by taking it all very submissively and attempting no defense. Possibly conscience was telling her that she deserved more than she was getting, or than she would be likely to get until her sister heard of the adven ture with Mr. Hayne.

"By the way," said Mr. Royce one evening as they were stamping off the now and removing their heavy wraps in Rayner's hallway after a series of garrison calls, "Mrs. Waldron says she expeets you to play for her to-morrow afternoon, Miss Travers. Of course it will be my luck to be at stables."

"You hear better music every after noon than I can give you, Mr. Royce."
"Where, pray?" asked Mrs. Rayner, turning quickly upon them. Mr. Royce hesitated, and-with shame

be it said-allowed Miss Travers to meet "At Mr. Hayne's, Kate."

There was the same awkward silence that always followed the mention of Hayne's name. Mrs. Rayner looked annoved. It was evident that she wanted more information-wanted to ask, but was restrained. Royce determined to be

"Several of us have got quite in the way of stopping there on our way from afternoon stables," he said, very quietly. 'Mr. Hayne has his piano now, and has nearly recovered the full use of his eyes. He plays well."

Mrs. Rayner turned about once more and without saying so much as good night, went heavily upstairs, leaving her escort to share with Mr. Royce such welcome as the captain was ready to secord them. If forbidden to talk on the subject nearest her heart, she would not speak at all. She would have banged her door, but that would have waked baby, It stung her to the quick to know that the cavalry officers were daily visitors at Mr. Hayne's quarters. It was little comfort to know that the infantry officers did not go, for she and they both knew that, except Maj. Waldron, no one of their number was welcome under that roof, unless he would voluntarily come forward and say, "I believe you innocent." She felt that but for the stand made by Hayne himself most of their number would have received him into comradeship again by this time, and she could bardly sleep that night

from thinking over what she had heard. But could she have seen the figure that was slinking in the snow at the rear door of Hayne's quarters that very evening, peering into the lighted rooms, and at last, after many an irresolute turn, knocking timidly for admission and then hiding behind the corner of the shed until Sam came and poked his pig tailed head out into the wintry darkness in wondering effort to find the vis-

itor, she would not have slept at all. It was poor Clancy, once more moon ing about the garrison and up to his old tricks. Clancy had been drinking; but he wanted to know, "could he spake with the lieutenant?" CHAPTER IX.

"Mrs. Clancy, you must watch hi "I have been reading over your letter of Thursday last, dear Steven," wrote Miss Travers, "and there is much that I feel I ought to answer. You and Kate are very much of a mind about the 'temptations' with which I am surrounded; but you are far more imaginative than she is, and far more courteous. There is so much about your letter that touches me deeply that I want to be frank and fair in my reply. I have been dancing all this evening, was out at dinner before that, and have made many calls this afternoon; but, tired as I am, my letter must be written, for to-morrow will be but the repetition of today. Is it that I am cold and utterly heartless that I can sit and write so calmly in reply to your fervent and appealing letter?

"Ah, Steven, it is what may be said of me; but, if cold and heartless to you, I have certainly given no man at this gar-rison the faintest reason to think that he has inspired any greater interest in him. They are all kind, all very attentive. I have told you how well Mr. Royce dances and Mr. Merton rides and Mr. Foster reads and talks. They entertain me vastly, and I do like it. More than this, Steven, I am pleased with their evident admiration—not alone pleased and proud that they should admire me who am pledged to you—not that alone, I frankly confess, but because it in itself is pleasant. It pleases me. Very possibly it is because I am with

"And yet, though my hours are con-stantly occupied, though they are here from morning till night, no one of them is more attentive than another. There are five or six who come daily. There are some who do not come at all. Am I a wretch, Steven? There are two or three that do not call who I wish would

call. I would like to know them.
"Yet they know—they could not help
it, with Kate here, and I never forget that I am your promised wife. Steven, do you not sometimes forget the condi-tions of that promise? Even now, again and again, do I not repeat to you that you ought to release me and free yourself? Of course your impulse will be to say my heart is changing—that I have seen others whom I like better. No; I have seen no one I like as well. But is 'like' what you deserve, what you ask? And is it not all I have ever been able to promise you? Steven, bear me witness, for Kate is bitterly unjust to me at times, I told you again and again last summer and fall that I did not love you and ought not to think of being your wife. Yet, poor, homeless, dependent as I am, how strong was the temptation

to say yes to your plea!
"You know that I did not and would not until time and again your sweet mo ther, whom I do love, and Kate, who had been a mother to me, both declared that that should make no difference; the love would come; the happiest marriages the world over were those in which the girl respected the man of her choice: love would come, and come speedily, when once she was his wife. You yourself declared you could wait in patience -you would woo and win by and by. Only promise to be your wife before returning to the frontier and you would be content. Steven, are you content? You know you are not; you know you are unhappy; and it is all, not because I am growing to love some one else, but because I am not growing to love you. Heaven knows I want to love you; for so long as you hold me to it my promise is sacred and shall be kept.

"More than that, if you say that it is your will that I seelude myself from these attentions, give up dancing, give up rides, drives, walks, and even receiving visits, here, so be it. I will obey; write this to me, Steven-not to Kate. I am too proud to ask her to show me the letters I know she has received from you-and there are some she has not shown me-but I cannot understand man's complaining to other persons of the conduct of the woman who is, or is to be, his wife. Forgive me if I pain you; sometimes even to myself I seem old and strange. I have lived so much alone, have had to think and do for myself so many years while Kate has been away, that perhaps I'm not 'like other girls; but the respect I feel for you would be injured if I thought you strove to guide or govern me through others; and of one thing be sure, Steven, I must honor and respect and look up to the man

I marry, love or no love. "Once you said it would kill you if rou believed I could be false to you. If by that you meant that, having given my promise to you to be your wife at some future time, I must school myself to love you, and will be considered false if love do not come at my bidding or yours, I say to you solemnly, release me low. I may not love, but I cannot and will not deceive you, even by simulating love that does not exist. Suppose that love were to be kindled in my heart. Suppose I were to learn to care for some one here. You would be the first one to know it; for I would tell you as soon as knew it myself. Then what could l hope for-or you? Surely you would not want to marry a girl who loved another man. But is it much better to marry one who feels that she does not love you

"Think of it, Steven; I am very lonely, very far from happy, very wretched over Kate's evident trouble, and all the sorrow I am bringing you and yours; but have I misled or deceived you in any one thing? Once only has : word been spoken or a scene occurred that you could perhaps have objected to. I told you the whole thing in my letter of Sunday last, and why I had not told Kate. We have not met since that night, Mr. Hayne and I, and may not; but he is a man whose story excites my profound pity and sorrow, and he is one of the two or three I feel that I would like to see more of. Is this being false to you or to my promise? If so, Steven, you cannot say that I have not given you the whole truth.

"It is very late at night-1 o'clockand Kate is not yet asleep, and the captain is still down stairs, reading. He is not looking well at all, and Kate is sorey anxious about him. It was his evidence that brought years of ostracism and misery upon Lieut. Hayne, and there are vague indications that in his own regiment the officers are beginning to believe that possibly he was not the guilty man. The cavalry officers, of

course, my seeming we us on use surgers, and I have never heard the full story. If he has been, as is suggested, the victim of a scoundirel, and Capt. Rayner was at fault in his evidence, no punishment on earth could be too great for the villain who planned his ruin, and no remorse could atone for Capt. Rayner's share. I never saw so sad a face on mortal man as Mr. Hayne's. Bieven Van Antwerp, I wish I were a man! I would trace that mystery to the hitter end.

would trace that any end.

"This is a strange letter to send to—to you; but I am a strange girl. Already I am more than expecting you to write and release me unconditionally; and you ought to do it. I do not say I want it.

"Faithfully, at least, yours,
"NELLER.

"P. S.—Should you write to Kate, you are not to tell her, remember, of my meeting with Mr. Hayne. Of course I am anxious to have your reply to that letter; but it will be five days yet."

An odd letter, indeed, for a girl not yet twenty, and not of a hope inspiring character; but when it reached Mr. Van Antwerp he did not pale in reading it; his face was ghastly before he began. If anything, he seemed relieved by some passages, though rejoiced by none. Then he took from an inner pocket the letter that had reached him a few days previous, and all alone in his room, late at ous, and all alone in his room, late at night, he read it over again, threw it upon the table at which he was sitting, then, with passionate abandonment, buried his face in his arms and groaned aloud in anguish.

Two days after writing this letter Miss

Travers was so unfortunate as to hear a conversation in the dining room which was not intended for her ears. She had gone to her room immediately after breakfast, and glancing from her win-dow saw that the officers were just go-ing to headquarters for the daily mati-nee. For half or three-quarters of an hour, therefore, there could be no proba-ble interruption; and she decided to write an answer to the letter which came from an answer to the letter which came from Mr. Van Antwerp the previous after-noon. A bright fire was burning in the old fashioned stove with which frontier quarters are warmed if not ornamented, and she perched her little, slippered feet upon the hearth, took her portfolio in ner lap and began. Mrs. Rayner was in the nursery, absorbed with the baby and the nurse, when a servant came and an-nounced that "a lady was in the kitchen" and wanted to speak with the lady of the house. Mrs. Rayner promptly re-sponded that she was busy and couldn't be disturbed, and wondered who it could be that came to her kitchen to see her. "Can I be of service, Kate?" called Miss Travers. "I will run down, if you

'I wish you would," was the reply, and Miss Travers put aside her writi "Didn't she give any name?" asked Mrs. Rayner of the Abigail, who was standing with her head just visible at the stair way, it being one of the unconquerable tenets of frontier domestics to go no farther than is absolutely necessary in con-veying messages of any kind, and this damsel, though new to the neighborhood, was native and to the manner born in all the tricks of the trade.

"She said you knew her name, ma'am,

She's the lady from the hospital."
"Here, Jane, take the baby! Never mind, Nellie; I must go!" And Mrs. Rayner started with surprising alacrity: but as she passed her door Miss Travers saw the look of deep anxiety on her face.

A moment later she heard voices at the front door—a party of ladles who were going to spend the morning with the colonel's wife at some "Dorcas society" work which manner the same of the work which many of them had embraced with enthusiasm. "I want to see Miss Travers, just a minute," she heard a voice say, and recognized the pleasant tones of Mrs. Curtis, the young wife of one of the infantry officers; so a second time she put aside her writing, and then ran down to the front door. Mrs. Curtis merely wanted to remind her that she must be sure to come and spend the after noon with her and bring her music, and was dismayed to find that Miss Travers could not come before stable call; she had an engagement.

"Of course; I might have known it: you are besieged every hour. Well, can you come to-morrow? Do." And, tomorrow-being settled upon, and despite the fact that several of the party waiting on the sidewalk looked cold and impatient, Mrs. Curtis found it impossible to tear herself away until certain utterly irrelevant matters had been lightly touched upon and lingeringly abandoned The officers were just beginning to pour forth from headquarters when the group of ladies finally got under way again and Miss Travers closed the door. It was now useless to return to her letter; so she strolled into the parlor just as she heard her sister's voice at the kitchen

"Come right in here, Mrs. Clancy. Now, quick, what is it?"

And from the dining room came the answer, hurried, half whispered and

"He's been drinkin' ever since he got out of hospital, ma'am, an' he's worse than ever about Loot'nant Hayne. It's mischief he'll be doin', ma'am; he's crazy

"Mrs. Clancy, you must watch him. You— Hush!"

And here she stopped short, for, in astonishment at what she had already heard, and in her instant effort to hear no more of what was so evidently not intended for her, Miss Travers hurried from the parlor, the swish of her skirts telling loudly of her presence there. She went again to her room. What could it Why was her proud, imperious Kate holding secret interviews with this coarse and vulgar woman? What concern was it of hers that Clancy should be "worse" about Mr. Hayne? It could not mean that the mischief he would do was mischief to the man who had saved his life and his property. That was out of the question. It could not mean that the poor, broken down, drunken fellow had the means in his power of further harming a man who had already been made to suffer so much. Indeed, Kate's very exclamation, the very tone in which she spoke, showed a distress of mind that arose from no fear for one whom she hated as she hated Hayne. Her anxiety was personal. It was for her husband and for herself she feared, or woman's tone and tongue never yet

revealed a secret. Nellie Travers stood in her room stunned and bewildered, yet trying hard to recall and put together all the scattered stories and rumors that had reached her about the strange conduct of Clancy after he was taken to the hos pital-especially about his heart broken wail when told that it was Lieut. Hayne who had rescued him and little Kate from hideous death. Somewhere, some-how, this man was connected with the mystery which encircled the long hidden truth in Hayne's trouble. Could it be possible that he did not realize it, and that her sister had discovered it? Could it be-oh, heaven! no!-could it be that Kate was standing between that lonely and friendless man and the revelation that would set him right? She could not believe it of her! She would not believe it of her sister! And yet what did Kate mean by charging Mrs. Clancy to watch him-that drunken hu What could it mean but that she was striving to prevent Mr. Hayne's ever bearing the truth? She located to bear

re and soive the riddle once and for

when the sisters found themselves alone again, it was late in the evening.

Mrs. Rayner came to Nellie's room and talked on various topics for some little time, watching narrowly her sister's face. The young girl hardly spoke at all. It was evident to the elder what her thoughts must be.

"I suppose you think I should explain Mrs. Clancy's agitation and mysterious conduct, Nellie," she finally and suddenly said.

"I do not want you to tell me anything.

"I do not want you to tell me anything, Kate, that you yourself do not wish to tell me. You understand, of course, how I happened to be there?"

I happened to be there?"
"Oh, certainly. I was thinking of that. You couldn't help hearing; but you must have thought it queer—her being so agitated, I mean." No answer.

"Didn't you?" "I wasn't thinking of her at all."
"What did you think then?" half defiantly, yet trembling and growing white.
"I thought it strange that you should
be talking with her in such a way."

"She was worried about her husband his drinking so much—and came to consult me."

"Why should she—and you—show such consternation at his connection with the name of Mr. Hayne?"

"Nellie, that matter is one you know I cannot bear to talk of." ("Very recent-ly only." thought the younger.) "You ly only," thought the younger.) "You once asked me to tell you what Mr. Hayne's crime had been, and I answered that until you could hear the whole story you could not understand the matter at all. We are both worried about Clancy. He is not himself; he is wild and imaginative when he's drinking. He has some strange fancies since the fire, and he thinks he ought to do something to help the officer because he helped him, and his head is full of Police Gazette stories, utterly without foundation, and he thinks he can tell who the real culprits were, or something of that kind. It is utter nonsense. I have investigated the whole thing-heard the whole story. It is the trashiest, most impossible thing you ever dreamed of, and would only make fearful trouble if Mr. Hayne got hold of it."

"Why?" "Why? Because he is naturally vengeful and embittered, and he would seize on any pretext to make it unpleasant for the officers who brought about his trial."

"Do you mean that what Clancy says

in any way affects them?" asked Nell, with quickening pulse and color. "It might, if there were a word of truth in it; but it is the maudlin dream of a liquor maddened brain. Mrs. Clancy and I both know that what he says is utterly impossible. Indeed, he tells no two stories alike."

"Has he told you anything?" "No; but she tells me everything." "How do you know she tells the truth?"

"Nellie! Why should she deceive me? I have done everything for them." "I distrust her all the same; and you had better be warned in time. If he has any theory, no matter how crack brained, or if he knows anything about the case and wants to tell it to Mr. Hayne, you are the last woman on earth who should

stand in the way."

"Upon my word, Nellie Travers, this is going too far! One would think you believed I wish to stand in the way of

that young man's restoration." "Kate, if you lift a hand or speak on word to prevent Clancy's seeing Mr. Hayne and telling him everything he knows, you will make me believe—pre-

Capt. Rayner heard sobbing and lamentation on the bedroom floor when he came in a few moments after. Going aloft he found Miss Travers' door closed as usual, and his wife in voluble distress of mind. He could only learn that she and Nellie had had a falling out, and that Nell had behaved in a most unjust, disrespectful and outrageous way. She declined to give further particulars.



"I wish you would play, Mr. Hayne," Miss Travers had other reasons for wanting to be alone. That very afternoon, just after stable call, she found herself unoccupied for the time being, and decided to go over and see Mrs. Waldron a few moments. The servant admitted her to the little army parlor, and informed her that Mrs. Waldron had stepped out, but would be home directly. A bright wood fire was blazing on the hearth and throwing flickering lights and shadows about the cozy room. The piano stood invitingly open, and on the rack were some waltzes of Strauss she remembered having heard the cavalry band play a night or two previous. Seat-ing herself, she began to try them, and speedily became interested. Her back being to the door, she did not notice that another visitor was soon ushered in-a man. She continued slowly "picking out" the melody, for the light was grow ing dim and it was with difficulty that she could distinguish the notes. Twice she essayed a somewhat complicated passage, became entangled, bent down and closely scanned the music, began again, once more became involved, exclaimed impatiently, "How absurd!" and whirled about on the piano stool, to find

herself facing Mr. Hayne. Now that the bandage was removed from his eyes it was no such easy matter to meet him. Her sweet face flushed instantly as he bent low and spoke her

hanically or "It was my

stand.

"Are your eyes well enough to real music especially in such a dim light the mixed, with evident sympathy.

"My eyes are doing very well better than my flagers, in fact, and, as I ment play by note after I cace learn a piece the eyes make no difference. Whe music do you like? I merely looked at this collection thinking you might as comething that pleased you."

"Mrs. Ray told me you played Rubin stein so well—that melody in F, for one."

"Did Mrs. Ray speak of that?"—his face begintening. "Tm glad they form anything to enjoy in my music."

"They found a great deal, Mr. Hayas and there are a number who are envise of their good fortune—I, for one." an answered, blithely. "Now play for me Mrs. Waldron will be here in a minute. And when Mrs. Waldron came in a little later Miss Travere, seated in an each chair and looking intently into the blass

the later Miss Travers, scated in an easy chair and looking intently into the blass, was listening as intently to the soft, rich melodies that Mr. Hayne was playing. The firelight was flickering on her shining hair; one slender white hand was toying with the locket that hung at her throat, the other gently tapping on the arm of the chair in unison with the music. And Mr. Hayne, scated in the shadow, bent slightly over the keyboard, absorbed in his pleasant task and playing as though all his soul were thrilling in his finger tips. Mrs. Waldron stood in silence at the doorway, watching the unconscious pair with an odd stood in silence at the doorway, watching the unconscious pair with an odd yet comforted expression in her eyes. At last, in one long, sweet, sighing chord, the melody softly died away, and Mr. Hayne slowly turned and looked upon the girl. She seemed to have wandered off into dreamland. For a moment there was no sound; then, with a little shivering sigh, she roused herself.
"It is simply exquisite," she said. "You have given me such a treat!"

"I'm glad. I owe you a great deal more pleasure, Miss Travers."

Mrs. Waldron hereat elevated her eyebrows. She would have slipped away if she could, but she was a woman of substance, and as solid in flesh as she was warm of heart. She did the only thing left to her-came cordially forward to welcome her two visitors and express her delight that Miss Travers could have an opportunity of hearing Mr. Hayne play. She soon succeeded in starting him again, and shortly thereafter man-

again, and shortly thereafter managed to slip out unnoticed. When he turned around a few minutes afterwards she had vanished.

"Why, I had no idea she was ue!" exclaimed Miss Travers; and then be color mounted to her brow. He think her extremely absorbed in his playing; and so indeed she was.

"You are very fond of music Lees" You are very fond of music, I see,

he said, at a venture.

"Yes, very; but I play very little and very badly. Pardon me, Mr. Hayne, but you have played many years, have

"Not so very many; but—there have been many in which I had little else to do but practice."

She reddened again. It was so unlike him, she thought, to refer to that matter in speaking to her. He seemed to read her:

"I speak of it only that I may say to Waldron came. You gave me nd oppor tunity to thank you the other night, and I may not have another. You do not know what an event in my life that meeting with you was; and you cannot know how I have gone over your words again and again. Forgive me the embarrassment I see I cause you, Miss Travers. We are so unlikely to meet at all that you can afford to indulge me this once." He was smiling so gravely, sadly, now, and had risen and was standing by her as she sat there in the big easy chair, still gazing into the fire, but listening for his every word. "In five long years I have heard no words from a woman's lips that gave me such joy and comfort as those you spoke so hurriedly and without premeditation. Only those who know anything of what my past has been could form any idea of the emotion with which I heard you. If I could not have seen you to say how-how I thanked you, I would have had to write. This explains what I said a while ago; I owe you more pleasure than I can ever give. But one thing was certain: I could not bear the idea that you should not be told, and by me, how grateful your words were to me—how grateful was to you. Again, may God bless you!"

And now he turned abruptly away,

awaiting no answer, reseated himself at the piano and retouched the keys. But, though she sat motionless and speechess, she knew that he had been trembling so violently and that his hands were still so tremulous he could play no more. It was some minutes that they sat thus, neither speaking; and as he regained his self control and began to at-tempt some simple little melodies, Mrs. Waldron returned:

"How very domestic you look, young people! Shall we light the lamps?"
"I've stayed too long already," said Miss Travers, springing to her feet. "Kate does not know I'm out, and will be wondering what has become of her sister." She laughed nervously. "Thank you so much for the music, Mr. Haynel Forgive my running off so suddenly, won't you, Mrs. Waldron?" she asked, pleadingly, as she put her hand in hers; and as her hostess reassured her she bent and kissed the girl's flushed cheek. Mr. Hayne was still standing patiently by the center table. Once more she turned and caught his eye, flushed, half hesi tated, then held out her hand with quick

"Good evening, Mr. Hayne, I shall hope to hear you play again." And, with pulses throbbing and cheeks that still burned, she ran quickly down the line to Capt. Rayner's quarters, and was upstairs and in her room in another

This was an interview she would find it hard to tell to Kate. But told it was, partially, and she was sitting now, late at night, hearing through her closed door her sister's unmusical lamentation -hearing still ringing in her ears the reproaches heaped upon her when that sister was quietly told that she and Mr. Hayne had met twice. And now she was sitting there, true to herself and her resolution, telling Mr. Van Antwerp all about it. Can one conjecture the sen tions with which he received and read

Mr. Hayne, too, was having a wakeful night. He had gone to Mrs. Waldron's to pay a dinner call, with the result just told. He had one or two other visits to make among the cavalry households in garrison, but, after a few moments' chat with Mrs. Waldron, he decided that he preferred going home. Sam had to call three times before Mr. Hayne obeyed the summons to dinner that evening. The sun was going down behind the great mage to the seath west, and the transmit