

The Wrong Man.

THE district school of Long Bridge was over for the day, and only one or two stragglers yet lingered, while the teacher, a pale, weary-looking girl, stood putting her desk to rights.

The children had been unusually troublesome that day, and the discouragements at home seemed to culminate; a shiftless father, a sickly mother, and "Marm," as she was called—short for Marmora—the eldest of five. That horrible mortgage on the farm was always swallowing up money, like an insatiable tiger, to be constantly prohibited for fear of its tearing them to pieces, and one hundred and twenty-five dollars was wanted now. How in the world was she to get it? One or two tears fell into the open desk, for there was no one there to be troubled by them, and it had been such a pressing day.

September airs came in softly through the open doors; and there was beauty in the distant hills, with their soft purple haze; beauty in the clustering maples, hanging out here and there a banner of flame; beauty in sky, and earth, and air; but the poor little teacher saw it not, far more lovely, to her tearful vision, would have been a roll of crisp greenbacks.

A boy came in and handed her a letter. He had met Sam Wild in the road, and Sam had been to the post-office.

Marmora didn't often get letters; and like most persons to whom letters are rarities, she studied this for a minute or so before opening it. That well-defined, gentlemanly hand-writing was quite unfamiliar; but the address—"Miss Marmora Brade, Long Bridge, County, New York," was quite correct. Who could be writing to her?

Presently, as though she had not thought of it before, Marmora read her letter. When she had done this, she grew white, and almost gasped for breath. That document of two close pages was her first offer; and it came from a man whom she had only seen once, and whom she had never expected to see again.

The circumstances were peculiar, and happened thus:

About two weeks before, she had returned from a visit, made during her vacation, to an aunt, who lived fifty miles away; and although she could ill be spared from the home routine, she had been running down so during the summer, that the change was absolutely needed. The poor, overworked mother saw this only too plainly; and cheerfully took the additional burden, while she helped her daughter to get ready for a month's sojourn at aunt Talbot's.

That month did wonders for Marmora. She had nothing to do but eat, sleep, and grow fat; and the plump, rosy girl who got into the stage on her homeward journey, was quite a contrast to the white, shadowy damsel, who might have been living on a diet of slate pencils, dropped at her aunt's door by the same vehicle a few short weeks ago.

There were only two other passengers, and both of them were gentlemen. One, a fresh-looking, middle-aged man, with a slightly bald head; the other, young, tall, and interesting. But the elder man was much the more cheerful of the two, for he kept up a lively fire of remarks, while the younger one scarcely spoke at all. He looked as though he could talk, if he chose, but he seemed sad and indifferent; and when Marmora occasionally encountered a glance of his dark eyes, she turned her own away in blushing confusion, as if she had been guilty of an impertinence.

She was somewhat given to dreaming, this little, country school-teacher; and several times since, she had thought of these sad, half-questioning eyes, and sighed a little, perhaps, with a sort of Maud Muller feeling.

There was several miles of staging before the cars could be reached; and the ride proved quite an eventful one.

A sudden shower came up, a pitiless, drenching rain, with thunder and lightning; and after struggling on for a little while, the stage came to a stand-still, and the driver, battered and drenched, appeared at the door.

"Well, folks," he said, "I guess you may as well get out here, and toddle into the house, the off-horse is scared to death at the lightning, and I ain't over fond of it myself. It'll come handy to take your dinner, I expect, though Mrs. Jacobs'll never be hung for her cookin'."

That "Mrs. Jacobs" ought to be "hung for her cookin'" had been the conclusion of other travelers besides themselves; but they did not expect much, at the outset, from a tall, worried-looking woman, with her face tied up for toothache, overrun by a swarm of dirty children, who whooped in and out of the hall and sitting-room like a horde of young savages.

The gentlemen looked meek and resigned, when Mrs. Jacobs, after surveying them hopelessly, said that "she reely didn't feel equal to fixin' up anythin'"—she'd told Jacobs, over and over again, that she didn't set out to keep a hotel, but folks would keep droppin' in, etc.

They begged her not to put herself out in the least; they only wanted a shelter until the storm was over; but Marmora knew better. The poor, half-drowned creatures, she decided, ought to have some-

thing hot; and she felt the keen demands very sensibly herself. So, following Mrs. Jacobs out to the kitchen, she soon explored the capabilities of her larder; while the washed-out-looking hostess watched her movements with unresisting surprise, she got up a tasty, but attractive repast, of which the foundation was eggs, coffee, and biscuits.

Mrs. Jacobs became so interested, that she produced some wretched pie, some hard preserves, and soft pickles, to help out the feast; and Marmora, with rolled-up sleeves, bright eyes, and flushed cheeks, laid the cloth herself, in the sitting-room—presenting such a pretty picture, as she did it, that her traveling companions gazed upon her with very evident admiration. The elder gentleman advised her to hurry her preparations, or they should certainly begin upon her, just to find out whether cheeks that looked like peaches tasted like them.

Marmora blushed vividly and disappeared; and the speaker remarked to his companion, that she was a very nice little girl, and would make a jewel of a wife for any man who had common sense—and the young man as usual said nothing.

The impromptu cook and serving-maid entered into the fun of the thing in the most spirited manner; and they all looked upon it as a regular frolic—an impromptu picnic of the first water. Marmora was accustomed to bring order out of chaos at home; and, somehow, she managed to make the dreary sitting-room look cozy and attractive. The children were banished to the kitchen, where the good-natured stage-driver took them in hand, and told them stories that made their unkempt hair stand more on end than ever.

It was really a cheery, refreshing meal, after all; and the gentlemen gratefully acknowledged that they would have been poor, forlorn creatures indeed without the bright, presiding spirit, that had cast such sunshine over their path.

The storm cleared almost as suddenly as it had lowered; and the stout gentleman, declaring that he must have his share of the pleasure paid Mrs. Jacobs liberally for the viands consumed by himself and Miss Brade. He would also have paid for the other traveler, but that haughty young gentleman would not permit it.

Marmora blushed again, and allowed the gentleman, who seemed to have taken her under his supervision, to help her into the vehicle. He paid her a great many compliments during the remainder of the ride, and, at parting, laughingly asked for her address. He did not wish, he said, to lose sight of such a girl as she was.

Marmora thought it rather funny, but as she was much younger than himself, she didn't mind it. She gave him the address, and then, with a low bow, and some half-murmured thanks from the owner of the dark eyes, she took her train, and went homeward, while her companions were borne off in a different direction.

And now this letter had come from her elderly admirer, saying that he had not been able to get her out of his mind ever since she had made such sunshine for two forlorn men, in that very shady place, Mrs. Jacobs' sitting-room; and if she could be persuaded to make his sunshine for the remainder of his life, he would feel illuminated at once. He was older than she, he added; and he thought quite lately, that he had buried his hopes for this world, ("a widower, of course," commented Marmora,) but he now felt that the earth had much brightness for him yet, if the only woman who could make him forget the past would listen to his suit. He could offer her an independent fortune, and the devotion of a lifetime; would she give him permission to visit her, and hear from her own lips what he had to expect?

This document was signed "Your stage-coach companion, Edward Forbes," and then followed his address in New York.

Marmora could scarcely think connectively. Surprise seemed to have paralyzed all her faculties. But hurriedly finishing her work in the school-room, she thrust the letter into the satchel, and hastened home.

Mrs. Brade looked up in astonishment at the strange conduct of her daughter, who burst into tears, and handed her the letter.

"Oh, Marmora!" said the sick woman, when she had fairly taken it all in. "If he was a nice kind man, and you thought you could like him, I should be so glad!"

"But, wouldn't you miss me, mother?" asked the girl, with a quivering lip. It hurt her that they were so willing to let her go.

"I should like to have you settled," was the reply; "and, perhaps, Marm, we should get the mortgage paid off—that would give me a new lease of life, I think."

"Bought and sold," thought Marmora, bitterly. That was just what it seemed to be; and she sank involuntarily, as she recalled Mr. Forbes' prominent light orbs, full, rosy face, and decidedly stout figure. But then, as her parents urged, she did not love any one else, (good reason why, thought poor Marm,) and Mr. Forbes might, at least, come on a visit, and be taken into consideration. Perhaps, she would get to like him very much indeed.

And so, Marmora, urged on all sides, and vainly wishing that the dark eyes, with only a clerk's small salary, perhaps, had laid themselves at her feet instead, indited that fateful letter. She only wrote one word, "Come;" but that cost her more

than the longest epistle she had ever attempted.

Two or three times she was on the point of tearing it up. Once, after she had deposited it in the post-office, she started to get it back again; and when the letter was fairly off, beyond all recovery, she devoutly hoped that Mr. Forbes might change his mind before he got it.

But not he. The letter seemed to have reached him with the speed of a telegram, and, in the same lightning-like way, came back the announcement that he would be at Long Bridge the following day.

There was hurrying to and fro in the Brade domicile, and general putting of things to rights. The unlucky farmer was usually smiling and contented-looking; but now he fairly beamed with complacency; and the pink ribbons in Mrs. Brade's new cap seemed to, cast a faint glow of health on her cheek. Marmora had a delicate, lady-like prettiness about her, that emotion always heightened; she could not look upon this matter-of-fact Mr. Forbes quiet as a lover; and yet, feeling that he had a right to her at her best, she dutifully put on a white dress, and her mother insisted on pinning a bunch of pink chrysanthemums in her bosom.

The flowers were a lovely color, and so were the cheeks above them. Marmora, slipped off very quietly, threw a shawl over her arm, and walked out into the lane at the side of the garden. Somehow, she could not meet the man in the house; and felt as if she should choke within four walls; and if he cared to find her, he might search for her outside.

It was all very queer, she wondered, if she were not dreaming it? She believed she would just walk on, away from the fate, not caring what she came to. Why should she?

Presently, she heard footsteps behind. People seldom passed through that lane. Who could be coming now? She felt a cold chill creeping over her at the thought of Mr. Forbes. He had managed to discover her already? It seemed like witchcraft.

Marmora turned suddenly, and saw the last person in the world whom she wanted to see, except Mr. Forbes—the man who had been so persistently in her thoughts for the last few days.

"Oh, why did you come!" she said in distress, putting out her hands as though to push him from her.

"I have come in answer to the word you wrote me," was the smiling reply. "Surely, you do not regret it already?"

"You!" she exclaimed, growing white and faint.

"Yes, I, Edward Forbes; did you not expect me?"

He hastened up to the tottering figure. For the first time in her life, Marmora had fainted.

Mrs. Brade wondered what had become of her daughter, and also of the expected lover, who should have been there by the train that came an hour ago; but when, just as the last rays of sunset glinted over the hills the two walked in, radiant, the astonishment of the parents was supreme.

Could this very prepossessing young man really be the Mr. Forbes whom Marmora had represented as middle-aged and unattractive? What did it all mean?

But Edward Forbes' bewilderment was quite over, for Marmora had told him the whole story; and if, at first it was not altogether pleasant to think that the lady had been ready to marry some one else, he remembered the peculiar circumstance of the case, and forgave her.

He had told his story too. When they met in the stage-coach he had just been made miserable by a fashionable coquette, and the world, of course, all seemed stuffed with sawdust. He had felt Marmora's sweet brightness, through all his misanthropy, and basked in it like the sunshine. He had found himself watching her movements, and speculating upon her home surroundings, as he sat there buried, apparently, in his own thoughts. He had experienced flashes of indignation at the forwardness of his companion; but the man so evidently meant no harm by it, and the girl took it in such good part, that there was nothing to be said.

He listened eagerly when Marmora gave the elderly party her address, though no one would have supposed him to be thinking of anything but the straps of his valise, which he was carefully securing; and when, after his return, he found himself constantly dwelling on the girl's sweet, deft, housewifely ways, and her smiling, changeable face, he resolved to venture on the bold step of writing to her, and asking her to be his wife. What did he care what her father, mother, sisters, or brothers might be like, when the girl herself was neither ungrammatical, nor un lady-like? With a little training, she would grace the first society in the land; and, fortunately, he had no one to consult but himself.

She looked very young, this Marmora. What a quaint, Eastern sort of name! She looked seventeen, but was twenty; and as Edward Forbes had reached the venerable age of thirty, he wrote the words which helped to carry on her mistake. He did not know how she would receive his letter. Perhaps she would feel indignant that the acquaintance of a stage-coach ride should presume to address her in this way; and

until her charming little answer of one word reached him, he was almost miserable; for he had quite set his heart on this little wild-flower of a girl, who was in such sweet, fresh contrast to that somewhat worn camelia, Florence Hastings.

The mortgage on the farm was paid off, and the Brades were prosperous, and happy ever after.

As to the worthy individual who appeared to Marmora in the undesirable light of a probable husband, for a few wretched days, it is only just to say that nothing was farther from his thoughts; for as he was the lawful property of a severe lady, who ruled him with a rod of iron, and his eldest daughter was just about Marmora's age, he scarcely bestowed an after-thought on his stage-coach companion; and when he met her, as Mrs. Edward Forbes, he did not recognize her.—*Peterson's Magazine.*

A Foreign Railroad Story.

A young lady belonging to the highest circles of society in Holland met recently with a mysterious adventure which has excited a good deal of speculation. Having occasion to go from Rotterdam to Utrecht, and being alone, she took a coupe for herself. The instant the train started a well-dressed gentleman of *distingue* appearance jumped into the coupe and seated himself opposite the young lady. After the expiration of a few minutes, the intruder suddenly addressed his *ex-a-vi* with the words: "Mademoiselle, I must ask you a favor." "Me, sir?" "Yes; and a very great favor at that." "But I do not know you." "Oh, never mind; it will not inconvenience you much, unless you should refuse, and then"—here he drew a pistol, carefully examined it, and put it away again. "I am waiting for an answer." "What could the young lady do?"

Pale with terror, she promised anything he might ask. "Well," replied the intruder, pulling out a pocket handkerchief, "I shall tie this over your eyes. You must neither move nor cry out until I remove the handkerchief. That is all I desire of you." The young lady suffered herself to be blinded. After half an hour's painful silence, which seemed to her a century, the frightened girl was permitted to remove the handkerchief. But who can describe her amazement? Instead of a gentleman, an elegantly dressed lady sat before her.

"Mademoiselle," she said, in the most polite manner, "you have rendered me an invaluable service. I hope some day to be able to prove my gratitude. Will you promise not to mention this little incident before the expiration of six weeks?" "I promise, madame." "Thanks, a thousand thanks; you will not find me insensible of this kindness." Arriving at the next station, the guard opened the coupe, the stranger bowed and disappeared. In consequence of the excitement the young lady suffered for many weeks from a nervous affection, and was more than once despaired of by her physicians. Not until after the stipulated period did she relate the adventure of the coupe.

Remarkable Verdict.

The most remarkable verdict, ever rendered by a Coroner's jury in Lancaster Co., is that which was rendered in the case of Henry Walters, whose suicide was recorded the other day. The verdict, as returned to the county Commissioners, was as follows: "That the deceased, Henry Walters, by not having God before his eyes, but being seduced and moved by the instigation of the Devil, and in a certain woods in Mount Joy township, being then and there alone with a certain hempen cord which he there had and held in his hands, and one end thereof put about his neck and the other end thereof tied about a bough of a certain oak tree, himself then did there, with the cord aforesaid voluntarily and feloniously and of malice aforethought, hang and suffocate himself; and the jurors aforesaid declared that the said Henry Walters then and there in manner and form aforesaid (as a felon himself) killed, strangled and murdered himself, against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth."

A Cheerful Conductor.

A Nashville man had occasion to go to Memphis over the Northwestern road recently. There were but few passengers on board, and during the night the conductor came and sat down by him. "Goin' to Memphis, are you, stranger?" he asked. "Yes, sir," said the Nashville man. "Mighty rough road, ain't it?" queried the conductor, with a yawn. "Very" was the reply. "Last time I went over the road this car we're in now was upset, and a man was killed all to smash," said the communicative ticket-puncher, with another yawn. Then he added: "I've got the most reckless engineer on the road with me to-night, too, but I hope we won't have any accidents." "I certainly hope we will not," responded the passenger with a feeling of uneasiness. "Well, I don't know as it would make much difference to you," said the conductor cheerfully; "you'll die any way if you're goin' to Memphis."

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New Pension Law.

UNDER an act of Congress approved March 3, 1873, widows of officers who were killed, or died of disease contracted in the service, are now entitled to \$2.00 per month for each of their children.

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April 3, 1874.

Disolution of Co-Partnership.

NOTICE is hereby given that the co-partnership heretofore existing between the undersigned, under the name of Kough, Snyder & Co., is dissolved by mutual consent. The books of the firm will be found with J. W. S. KOUGH, and notice is given that accounts must be settled within thirty days from this date.

J. W. S. KOUGH,

W. H. KOUGH,

Newport, Aug. 20, 1874.

The business heretofore conducted by Kough, Snyder & Co., will be continued by the undersigned.

J. W. S. KOUGH,

W. H. KOUGH.