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ALICE LAYTON, OR, LOVE AND REVENGE.

BY P. A. CULVER.

It is twilight, a calm soft twilight in early autumn. A few pale little stars, are just peeping forth from under the white fringed cloudlets, that gem the azure sky. The verdant landscapes, stretching far away in the distance, are beginning to disappear. The tired laborer is wending his homeward way; the noise and bustle of day has subsided, and a stilly calmness has taken its place.

It is indeed, a quiet holy hour, and as I sit alone in the shadow of the great elm, memories of the past are crowding around me. A shining train of early memories come up distinctly before my vision, and wind themselves caressingly about my heart. Sweet Alice L., me thinks, I see thee even now, as I first knew thee, beautiful and pure as a dream of heaven. Methinks I see thee as I saw thee then, ere the dark cold waves of sorrow had passed o'er thy young heart, withering thy joyous spirit in its first sweet freshness.

Alice Layton was an orphan, and had never known a doting Mother's fond caress, or a Father's loving counsel. She had been left an orphan at an age when too young to know the great and bitter loss to which the unrelenting hand of destiny had subjected her. An only child of poor, but respectable parents, she had been left to the care of a maiden aunt, with barely the sum necessary to give her a thorough and independent education. Being naturally of a studious and retiring temperament, at the early age of sixteen she had finished her studies, and left school with the highest honors, as well as the love and respect of all with whom she had been associated.

Alice Layton was very beautiful, and as pure and high souled, as she was beautiful. She was tall, and slightly formed; her eyes were of the darkest blue, and her pensive forehead was half shaded by glossy mid-night ringlets, and over all, there was a pensive mournfulness of expression, and a subdued, and dreamy softness in her large misty eyes.

Yes! she was gloriously beautiful; but in her mind, the lofty aspirations of a more than ordinary high mind, made her life a thing so much above the common order. Poetry was her passion, and she would sit for hours lost to all surrounding objects, buried in the masterpieces of some of the great Poets. A dreamy child of nature, she had ever lived within a world of her own creating; a world of thought, far removed from the busy bustling crowd around her. She had hitherto lived within herself, and—

"Had given to some warm, The love to the living dead."

Notwithstanding her sensitive and retiring nature, she possessed a firmness of character seldom equalled. I never knew her to shrink from any thing she thought it duty to perform.

"Will you give me no hope? Must all my future years be steeped in the blackness of darkness. Must I, can I, relinquish this one dear hope and dream of my life?"

And then came up the answer, low and sadly, "It must be even so, I cannot, dare not bid you hope."

"Oh! Alice Layton," and Gordon Leslie's voice sounded strangely wavering, and hollow, "Oh! Alice I have loved you so entirely, I cannot give you up. To have this one dream of my life so coolly, so suddenly blighted, is more than I can bear. I ask you once again, and for all, will you not relent?"

"Gordon Leslie," and Alice's eye grew misty, "I am sorry, oh how sorry, for this; but I am very firm. I can never return your love—I never relent; it is not in my nature. May you find one more worthy, than plain unpretending Alice Layton; one who can love you in return as your noble nature deserves."

Alice Layton's form passed away, in the dim distance; and Gordon Leslie rose from the low grass plot, where they had been seated, murmuring "Ha! she thinks to escape me thus; but so sure as there is a God, I'll be revenged for this! To be thus coolly slighted, and give up in despair, is not my forte; so lady bird look to your interests, and beware how you venture near the net of this Fowler."

With a dark scowl on his countenance, and a muttered curse on his lips, he rapidly strode away and disappeared in the surrounding darkness.

Gordon Leslie, was a young man of fine talents, and great personal attractions; but possessed of indomitable will and a coolness of purpose seldom equalled. He had loved Alice Layton, with an intensity of feeling, bordering on madness; and her cool but kind refusal had roused up every latent spark of hatred and revenge within his bosom.

There are some spirits who never forgive an injury, but, form some plan of revenge, and never give over their object 'till they go on to its fulfillment. Such an one was Gordon Leslie. Stung to madness by this rejection, he

made a solemn vow to avenge his, as he thought bitter wrong.

Leslie had not always been so wholly vile. His boyhood had been pure and innocent; but the first years of his manhood had been spent in the company of the wild and vicious; and dissipation had done its work. Still he could mask his feeling, and to gaze on his open manly face, one would not have guessed the villainous of his heart. But we will leave him to his base machinations, and return to our heroine.

Months had passed away. Alice Layton was again seated on the same grassy mound, where we saw her a few months ago. Seated near her was a very different person from the suitor of that evening.

Alice Layton, and Ernest Durand had been playmates in childhood. They had long years before played on the same grass plot, where they are now seated, and roamed through the same old forests, that now surround them.—They had parted when mere children. Ernest for a Seminary, in one of the Southern States; and Alice for a boarding school in Eastern New York. Time passed on, Ernest had finished his studies, at one of the Eastern Colleges; spent two years in Italy, and returned to America a few weeks before, and commenced the duties of his profession as an Artist.

He had met Alice Layton, at an evening party, and immediately recognized in her the playmate of his childhood. The recognition was a mutual one; and soon Ernest Durand and Alice Layton became almost inseparable.

When she walked, it was Durand's hand that folded the shawl so carefully about her form; and it was Durand's voice that read to her from the master minds of her favorite authors; 'till she drank in the inspiration and was buried in the depth of the mighty irresistible tide of genius.

But there was another who had loved Ernest Durand; who had loved wildly, passionately through many long long years.

Claire Willis had known Durand in childhood; she had played with him, and passed many a joyous hour in his society, and when he called her his little wife, and told how he would come for her when he grew to be a man, she had believed it all; and when she grew to be a woman who anxiously had she looked for his return. 'Till had been happiness to her through the long and weary years, to idly dream and think of him, and when at last he came, to be received only with a cold bow after a formal introduction. Oh! it was too much. Would not reason reel under the pressure of its awful burden? Could the human heart endure to see its idols torn so rudely from its embrace. To have this one dream of a life-time forced back so suddenly upon her heart, what wonder if it crushed out all its innocence, and left only the semblance of its form!

It was Durand's voice that was speaking in such soft low tones, that sounded like the very depths of melody.

"The skies of Italy are very blue, the flowers are very sweet, but I would give them all for this one spot. My parent's feeble footsteps press this soil, and I would watch over and guard their last declining steps 'till they enter on their blissful abode with the best beyond. America too, is the home of one dearer than all besides; of one without whose smile my life would be a blank, a dreary trackless waste."

And then he whispered something so low, it was heard only by her to whom it was addressed.

There was no answer, but the drooping eyelids and the silent pressure of the hand told that his appeal had not been in vain.

They arose to go, their hearts were too full for utterance, and they silently pressed on in the dusky twilight. When they had fairly disappeared in the distance, a slight female figure arose from the low crouching position where she had been concealed.

The words uttered by Durand's soft musical voice, words that had brought unutterable joy to Alice Layton, had also been heard by Claire Willis, and had brought misery. Oh! what a flood of misery to her heart. But little had Alice or Durand dreamed of the aching heart throbbing its weary pulsation so near their own.

Time passed on. It was again twilight, Claire Willis was bending over her guitar, and a soft wild strain of music was floating over the mournful breeze.

"'Tis broken all shattered, and low in the dust, Lies the last faded atom of youth's sunny trust. Its fragments are shattered, and low 'neath my feet, The lute-strings are lying that once gushed so sweet. Ah! where is the idol I worshipped as mine, E'er life's sky was clouded or dimmed 'til his sunshine? That idol is shattered, and never again Will this heart thro' so lightly; its worship was vain."

"Ah! never again, life's sunshine is o'er And hope has departed to waken no more, False! False! Ah! how bitter, how empty, how drear, Life's lone march is westward, the sunset is here, I have loved, Ah! too wildly, too deeply and true, To blot from my heart, and its dreams bid adieu, Forget them! no never; tho' its worship was vain, Still my spirit will live o'er its heart dream again."

The wild numbers died away, and a low tap

at the door started Claire Willis from her deep reverie. She opened it when her brother entered accompanied by a stranger whom he introduced as Mr. Leslie. Yes the intruder was none other than our old acquaintance Gordon Leslie.

The dark scowl that rested on his countenance when last we saw him had faded away, and in its place was a placid calmness and frankness of expression.

Gordon Leslie had through some means become acquainted with the circumstance of Claire Willis' hopeless love for Durand, and for this reason he had sought her acquaintance, hoping to gain some assistance, thro' her to further his vile scheme of revenge.

After exhausting every common place subject, and towards the close of the evening, Leslie observed, "There have been a great many changes, since last I visited, this place. It scarcely seems like the same lovely spot where I once spent so many happy hours."

"Yes," answered Claire, "It is strange what almost incredible changes a few years will create."

"My old friends," continued Leslie, "are mostly married and gone from the place, and I heard this evening that my old friend Alice Layton was about wedding the artist Durand. How is it Miss Willis?"

Leslie saw with an inward feeling of satisfaction the quick flush, and the deadly palor succeeding it as she replied, that such was the report, but for the truth of which she could not vouch.

"Well," said Leslie, "he is a noble fellow and well deserving of such a prize as I doubt not she will prove to be."

Gordon Leslie felt little of what he said, but he took a secret pleasure—thus goading his listener, whom he knew was already writhing under the force of his cruel remarks.

Paul Willis noticing his sister's painful situation, and fearful of a scene, changed the conversation to a more congenial topic.

Leslie soon left, he had witnessed enough to convince him of Claire's love for Durand, and he resolved to profit thereby.

This was not the last time Gordon Leslie was found at the farm house of Mr. Willis, from that evening there had sprang up an intimacy between himself and Claire, that was likely to terminate in an intimacy for life.

And why? asks the reader. Has she soon forgotten Ernest Durand? Forgotten him? Ah! no, Claire Willis could not forget him. But she knew the entire hopelessness of her position; she knew that she had lavished her heart's best affection at an unholow shrine. The shadow that had fallen across her pathway instead of purifying the heart as is its wont had only rendered it the unholow semblance of its once spotless purity. The heart's innocence was gone, and in its place dwelt wild and unconquerable hatred and sin.

She did not love Gordon Leslie. No! that was impossible. A heart lacerated and bleeding as hers, might never love again. But Claire Willis had pledged her troth to Leslie from other motives than love. She knew that Gordon Leslie's soul was still writhing under the weight of its rejection, and she resolved to convert him into an instrument to execute some terrible vengeance on the hated objects of her malice. And thus they were both seeking through such other to gain some furtherance to their plan of revenge.

Is it possible the once gentle Claire could be so vile, such a fiend at heart? Ah! we know not the long and terrible hours of agony that have hardened her better nature, and nearly scathed her brain to madness. Let us not condemn her unjustly and without charity. Mistaken Claire! she thinks revenge will soothe her troubled heart and calm her aching brow. Little does she dream of the long weary days of remorse to come.

A few months have passed by since the occurrence of the events recorded above. It was Claire Willis' bridal eve. Brilliantly flashed the light from splendid chandeliers. Softly fell the strains of melody on the ear. Gay words escaped the lips of giddy lighthearted belles, and fashionable fops breathed soft nonsense into their willing ears.

Beauty and elegance were combined, and there were many lovely and graceful beings in that crowded assembly.

But far lovelier, and more graceful than them all looked Claire Willis in the snowy satin contrasting so strangely with the raven tresses that floated like a veil around her queenlike head. There was a strange unnatural light in her large jetty eyes, and a bright burning spot on either cheek. She wore no ornament save a tiny locket set with pearls.

Gordon Leslie was looking his best, but there was no gleam of happiness athwart his high pale brow, as he led his queenly bride to the altar. The flush faded away from Claire's cheek as her hand touched Leslie's, and a livid palor took its place. It was too plain to go unnoticed, but it was attributed to that thoughtless crowd to timidity.

Claire Willis felt that she was perjuring herself before her God. Swearing to love and cherish one whom she despised in her soul for his baseness, and Leslie felt himself perjured, but there came no feeling of remorse, he was too far lost in wickedness to hesitate now.

The ceremony was ended, and many were the congratulations showered upon them. But think you those light words caused one chord to vibrate joyfully within the heart of Claire Leslie? Ah! no. There was something dreadfully miserable in the proud despair of her heart, and she would gladly have enveloped the whole world in the folds of the leaden shroud-plaits, that swathed her soul.

[CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.]

Washington Crossing the Delaware.

Dark and gloomy was the hour,
And Freedom's fire burnt low;
For twenty days had Washington
Retreated from the foe;
And his weary soldiers' feet were bare,
As he fled across the Delaware.

Hearts were fainting through the laud,
And patriot blood ran cold;
The stricken army scarce retained
Two thousand men all told;
While the British arms gleamed everywhere,
From the Hudson to the Delaware.

Cold and stormy came the night,
The great Chief roused his men;
"Now up, brave comrades, up and strike—
For Freedom once again;
For the Lion sleepeth in his lair,
On the left bank of the Delaware."

By the darkling river's side,
Beneath a wintry sky,
From that wet bank, forlorn and low,
Went up the patriot cry,
"O, land of Freedom, never despair!
We'll die, or cross the Delaware!"

How the strong ones dashed the ice,
Amid the tempest's roar!
And how the trumpet voice of Knox,
Still cheers them to the shore,
Thus in the freezing midnight air,
These brave hearts crossed the Delaware.

In the morning, gray and dim,
The shout of battle rose!
The Chief led back his valiant men,
With a thousand captives foes;
While Trenton shook with cannon's blaze,
That told the news o'er the Delaware.

How Mineral Coal was Made.

Geology has proved that at one period there existed an enormously abundant land vegetation, the ruins or rubbish of which, carried into seas, and there sunk to the bottom, and afterwards covered over by sand and mud-beds, became the substance which we now recognize as coal. It may naturally excite surprise that the vegetable remains, should have so completely changed their apparent character, and become black. But this can be explained by chemistry; and part of the marvel become clear to the simplest understanding, when we recall the familiar fact that damp hay, thrown closely into a heap, gives out heat, and becomes of a dark color. When a vegetable mass is excluded from the air and subjected to great pressure, a bituminous fermentation is produced, and the result is the mineral coal, which is of various characters, according as the mass has been originally intermingled with sand, clay or other earthy impurities. On account of the change affected by mineralization, it is difficult to detect in coal the traces of a vegetable structure; but these can be made clear in all except the highly bituminous caking coal, by cutting or polishing it down into thin transparent slices, when the microscope shows the fibrous cells very plainly. From distinct isolated specimens found in the sand stones amidst the coal beds, we discover the plants of this era. They are almost all of simple cellular structure, and such as exist with us in small forms, (horse tails, club masses, and ferns,) but advanced to an enormous magnitude. The species are long since extinct. The vegetation is such as grows in clusters of tropical islands; but it must have been the result of a high temperature obtained otherwise than at the tropical regions now is, for the coal strata are found in the temperate, and even the polar regions. The conclusion, therefore, to which most geologists have arrived is, that the earth originally an incandescent or highly heated mass, gradually cooled down, until in the carboniferous period it fostered a growth of terrestrial vegetation all over its surface, to which the existing jungles of the tropics are mere barrenness in comparison. The high and uniform temperature, combined with a greater proportion of carbonic acid gas in the atmosphere, could not only sustain a gigantic and prolific vegetation, but would also create dense vapors, showers and rains; and these again gigantic rivers, periodical inundations, and deltas.—Thus all the conditions for extensive deposits of wood in estuaries would arise from this high temperature; and every circumstance with the coal measures points to such conditions.

A century since, Benjamin Franklin, the Postmaster General of the colonies, set out in his old gig to make an official inspection of the different routes. It is supposed that he accomplished the object of his journey; but if he were to undertake to travel in his gig all over the routes at present existing, he would arrive at the end of his journey when he was about an hundred years old. About eighty years since, Congress appointed Dr. Franklin Post Master General to the then independent Colonies; he still went in his old gig, and a small folio, containing about three quires of paper lasted as his account book for two years. Now the railroad train goes sixty miles an hour, and the Post-Office accounts consume every two years three thousand of the largest sized ledgers, keeping no less than one hundred clerks constantly employed in recording transactions with thirty thousand contractors and other persons.—There are now paid annually, for mail locks, keys and stamps nearly thirty-two thousand dollars, a sum equal to the entire outlay in the year 1790. The stamped envelopes and postage stamps cost over fourteen thousand dollars; the mail-bags fifty thousand—the blanks, seventy one thousand—the wrapping paper, forty-one thousand. Franklin would be slightly astonished if he could rise from his grave, travel to Washington in his old gig, see the three thousand ledgers, the one hundred clerks, and hear the railroad train thundering past him at the rate of sixty miles an hour. And yet what would be his emotions when he reflected that this was but an evidence of the rapid advance of the great Republic of which he was one of the founders.

A Rough Bed-Fellow.

There is a good story going the rounds of the papers, told of a man in Kansas, who had been drinking till a late hour at night, and then started for home in a state of sweet obliviousness.

Upon reaching his own premises, he was too far gone to discover any door to the domicile he was about to inhabit, and therefore laid himself down in a shed, which was a favorite rendezvous for the hogs.

They happened to be out when the new comer arrived, but soon returned to their bed. The weather being rather cold, they in the utmost kindness, and with the truest hospitality, gave their biped companion the middle of the bed, some lying on either side of him, and others acting the part of a quilt. Their warmth prevented him from being injured by exposure.

Towards morning he awoke. Finding himself comfortable, in blissful ignorance of his whereabouts, he supposed himself enjoying the accommodation of a tavern, in company with other gentlemen.

He reached out his hand, and catching hold of the stiff bristle of a hog, exclaimed—"Halloo, my good friend, you've got a beard!" When did you shave last?"

MISCHIEF-MAKERS.

O! could there still in this world be found,
Some little spot of happy ground,
Where village pleasures might go round,
Without the village tattle;
How doubly blest that place would be,
Where all might dwell in liberty,
Free from the bitter misery
Of gospel's endless prattling.

If such a spot were really known,
Dane Peace might claim it as her own,
And in it she might fix her throne
Forever and forever.
There like a queen might reign and live,
While every one would soon forgive
The little slight they might receive,
And be offended never.

'Tis mischief makers that remove
Far from our hearts the warmth of love,
And leads us all to disapprove
What gives another pleasure.
They seem to take one's part—but when
They've heard our cares, unkindly then
They soon retail them all again,
Mix'd with the poisonous measure.

And then they've such a cunning way
Of telling their ill-meant tales, they say
"Dont mention what I say, I pray,
I would not tell another!"
Straight to your neighbor's house they go,
Narrating every thing they know,
And break the peace of high and low,
Wife, husband, friend and brother.

O! that the mischief-making crew
Were all reduced to one or two,
And they were painted red or blue,
That every one might know them!
Then would our villages forget
To rage and quarrel, fume and fro,
And fall into an angry pet,
With things so much beloved them.

For 'tis a sad, degraded part,
To make another bosom smart
And plant a dagger in the heart.
We ought to love and cherish;
Then let us evermore be found
In quietness with all around,
While friendship, joy and peace abound
And angry feelings perish!

This large island—the largest of the American islands—has until within a few years been regarded as of comparatively little importance. Of late, however, the proposed transatlantic telegraph, the reciprocity treaty, and other circumstances, have conspired to direct public attention towards it, and a brief account of its character and resources may not be uninteresting to our readers.

The Island was first discovered in the year 1797, by John Sebastian Cabot, and by those renowned explorers it was named *prima vista*, or First Seen Island; and from this arose its present anglicized name. It was colonized by masters of fishing vessels in 1615, and is now the oldest British colony in the world. Until the middle of the last century it was looked upon by England merely as a nursery for seamen, and its manifold natural resources wholly neglected.

The island of Newfoundland is about four hundred miles in length, by two hundred and fifty in average breadth. It abounds in lakes and rivers both of moderate size, and its surface is diversified with hills and mountains, some of which project boldly into the sea. The lowlands, when they do not consist of flat bogs, are generally covered with forests of fir or pine. These varieties of trees are very abundant; but they seldom attain a height of more than thirty feet, and in the northern portions they are so low, and their branches so matted together, that small animals can walk upon their tops. The most useful tree upon the island is the tamarac, or larch, the timber of which is used in building small vessels. The elm, the maple and the beech are rare, and the oak unknown. The variety of trailing evergreens is immense, and all the berries peculiar to the northern latitudes are so abundant as to be an article of export.

The animal kingdom of the island is more interesting than the vegetable. A Swedish naturalist, who spent several years there, reported it to contain no less than five hundred species of birds. The water birds are especially numerous. Of the larger quadrupeds, the caribou or American rein-deer is most abundant. Its paths intersect the entire country like sheep walks. The black bear is found in the wilder parts of the island, and the wolf, fox, hare, martin, weaver, otter and muskrat abound in the interior. The coasts swarm with different varieties of seal. With regard to reptiles, such as snakes, lizards, frogs, &c., it is said that St. Patrick destroyed them in Newfoundland at the same time that he banished them from Ireland. The inland lakes and streams are the homes of vast numbers of salmon and trout. The resident population of Newfoundland is about one hundred thousand, and nearly every man in the colony is connected in some way with the fishing or seal hunting business. The island is governed by a representative assembly of fifteen members, with an executive council of twelve, appointed, like the Governor, by the crown of England.

Things Two Hundred Years Hence.

Scene—Parlor in the house of an elderly gent in New York. Old gent telegraphs to the kitchen, and waiter ascends in a balloon.

Old gent—John, fly over to South America, and tell Mr. Johnson that I will be happy to have him sup with me. Never mind your coat, now go.

John leaves, at the end of five minutes returns.

John—Mr. Johnson says he will come—he has got to go to the North Pole, for a moment, and then he will be here.

Old gent—Very well John. Now start the machine for setting the table, and telegraph to my wife's room, and tell her that Mr. Johnson is coming, then brush up my balloon, for I have an engagement in London, at twelve o'clock.

John flies off to execute his orders, and the old gentleman returns.

the moment you broach the subject of a ball room, it has no more effect than a fly could exert towards stopping a locomotive.

Barnum has been "wound up" by the Jerome Clock Company.