

STEADFASTNESS.

Waste not the present hour in vain regret For prizes forfeited in days gone by; Or mourn the glow of suns forever set; Entomb thy past, bid memory forget The fixed and changing years that rear- ward lie; Charge but thy constant soul with pur- pose high, And life shall eke thee of its treasures yet. The Now is thine, a goodly battlefield Whereon all past defeats redeemed may be; Fight bravely on and vanquished foes will yield Thy valiant sword a path to victory, Thy onward drop and moan, 'It might have been'— 'It yet shall be,' the steadfast cry, and win.

—Donahoe's Magazine.

A GENUINE SURPRISE.

BY HARRY GANUNG.

HE station at Swampy Corners was never a picturesque spot, even in the blue glow of the sunniest June day; but on this chill October night, with the first snowflakes of the season eddying in the slow, undecided way that first snowflakes have, through the gray air, and the tall hemlocks swaying this way and that in the raw wind, it looked especially dreary.

Emily Elkton shuddered as she stood looking out of one of the panes of glass clumsily inserted in the long frame-work by way of window. "No, Miriam," she said, "you can't go." "But I've got to go!" said Miriam Mudge, sympathetically compressing her lips as she tightened the straps of the parcel she was fastening one notch at a time. "And leave me here alone!" "Nobody won't hurt you, I reckon," said Miriam, a strong-featured woman of forty, with a bristling upper lip like a man's.

"If you go," said Emily, "I'll go too." "Not much," composedly spoke Miriam, "that ain't room in Pete Muller's backboard for so much as a sheet of paper arter me and him in. Besides, what'll your Uncle Absalom say when he comes back and finds nobody here. If the fire goes out, everything'll freeze stiff, and— Yes, Pete, I'm a-comin'; that ain't no need to stand there a-bol-lerin' like a Texas steer! Good-bye, Emily! Oh, I forgot!"—coming back, and mechanically lowering her voice, although there was no one but the gray cat by the stove to overhear the words. "The ticket money and two rolls of gold eagles as the paymaster's call for to-morrow in the noon train is in the red chest under your uncle's bed. I reckoned it 'ud be safer than in the money-drawer. Don't forget to give it to him just thing he gets back."

"Forget!" echoed Emily, wringing her hands in frantic desperation. "But I won't be left in charge of it! I'll assume no such responsibility. I insist upon your taking it with you!" The remonstrance, however, came too late. Miriam hawled out some indistinct reply and the next sound Miss Elkton heard was the creaking of the backboard wagon as it turned the sharp curve below the gleaming line of the railway switches.

"She's gone," cried Emily, clasping her hands like the tragic mummy, and left me alone with all that money! And the navy camp only three miles up the mountains, full of Italians and Chinese and the miners at Lake Lodi and the whole neighborhood infested with desperadoes! And Uncle Absalom not expected home until two o'clock in the morning, and the bolt broken off the door, and the key's a misfit, and nothing but a hook and staple between me and destruction! Oh, why didn't I stay in Rhode Island? What evil spirit possessed me to come out here to Dakota, where one might as well be buried alive and done with it!"

Emily Elkton sat down and cried heartily, rocking herself forward and back and sobbing out loud, like a child whose slice of bread and treacle had been taken away from it. And not until the candle flared up, with an extra sized "winding sheet" wrapped around its wick and the cat rubbed itself persistently against her knee, did she arouse to the quadruple fact that puss wanted her supper, the fire was low, the candle needed snuffing and there was no sort of use in tears.

Emily had come out West, partly because there seemed nothing to do at home and partly because Uncle Absalom had written that one of his nine nieces would come very handy for a house-keeper at Swampy Corners, in the State of Dakota, if she could be spared. The latter sentence was intended on his part for a sarcasm, but the Elkton family had received it all in good faith and held many a deliberation before they consented to let one of the nine young birds flutter out of the home nest.

And more especially she had come because she had incidentally learned that Andrew Markham was one of the engineers in charge of the new line of railway on the other slope of the mountain, which undertaking involved the navy camp and the great derricks and steam drills and the gangs of silt-eyed Chinese and dark-browed Italians.

"Not that that signifies," Emily had plausibly told herself. "But, of course, it's pleasant to be somewhere within a hundred miles of an old acquaintance." Andrew Markham had been so to see her twice, and both times she had made up her mind that the far West was the only place to live in. "He expects to settle here," she thought, with a soft pink color suffusing her face. "He says he has already

bought a sunny slope of land, where he means to build a house and bring a wife when he can afford it. He thinks that life here means twice what it does in the effete civilization of the East." But to-night, with the darkness wrapping the little depot like a blanket, and the wind howling down the mountain gorge, Miss Elkton would not at all have objected to some of that same "effete civilization."

Alone in the house! During the whole of her sojourn at Swampy Corners such a thing had never happened to her before. Uncle Absalom had occasionally been absent, it was true, but Miriam Mudge was always there to bear her company until his return. Now that a sudden summons from her father, hurt in an accident in the saw mill on Ragged River, six miles below, had called Miriam away, poor Emily was all in a flutter.

True, the one train a day which stopped at the station was not due until seven in the morning. The telegram office was closed, and there was absolutely no care for her to assume except to put another log of wood on the air tight stove and go quietly to bed.

But the very sense of solitude appalled her. She shivered at the very click of the snow flakes against the window, the crack of the boards in the floor, the slow drip of the water into the kitchen sink, where Uncle Absalom had recently introduced the modern improvement of a water tap, connected by pipes with the spring in the spruce glen above.

"Why couldn't Miriam have stopped at one of the neighbors' houses and sent some one to keep me company?" she re-peated. "Andrew says there are some nice girls at Almondale, down the mountain, and he said he'd like to introduce me to Marietta Mix, who teaches Sunday-school in the South Cleating, and does type writing for the company on week days. I'm sorry, now that I tossed my head, and put on airs, and said I did not care to mingle in the society hereabouts. I must have appeared hateful enough. Gracious, what was that!"

It was the clock striking nine, and then Emily remembered that she had no supper. Nervously glancing around her, she tip-toed to the cupboard, and to a glass of milk and a little bread-and-cheese. As she replaced the tumbler on the shelf she heard footsteps on the frozen ground outside.

"It's my imagination," she said, after listening for a second. "But I won't be frightened so. I will be brave." She took a hatchet, and salting fortia, opened the cellar-door. "If anyone comes he'll sail down there before he can get to the door," she said.

And with two prodigious slashes of the hatchet she cut away the board path which led across a series of rugged boulders to the railway platform.

"There," she cried, hurrying back to the inside warmth and brightness, as if a whole brigade of pursuers were at her heels, "that's done! I feel safer now. But I must hang on to the lantern out before Uncle Absalom comes back. I don't want him to fall down and break his dear old neck!"

She had just seated herself with a sigh of relief when something like a big fire-fly blazed on her vision—for a brief second only; then it was gone.

"A dark lantern!" she said to herself. "I am sure now that I hear the sound of feet on the platform. There are two or three people there—perhaps more. They have learned that I am alone with all that money!" She clasped her hands over her eyes, and shivered as she heard a crash, a smothered exclamation, a suppressed buzz of voices, "Some one has fallen down the cellar! Oh, how fortunate it was I thought of that!"

And now a low whisper came up through the carelessly-joined boards of the floor. She could distinguish the words, "Hold on! Be careful! The iron door is fastened, or I tried it. You can all of you get down cellar, and come up that way."

smiles. "No need of bein' sorry for nothin'. You're all welcome! How on earth did ye know it was Emmy's twentieth birthday?"

"Marietta has baked a cake," said Leonidas, "and the Cliffe girls brought a jug of lemonade, and it was broken when I tumbled down cellar, and—"

"Oh, that don't matter none!" beamed Uncle Absalom. "We're awful pleased to see you—ain't we, Emily?"

In this auspicious manner began Emily Elkton's first acquaintance with the young people who were destined to be her lifelong neighbors.

"But really," said she, half crying, half laughing, "I thought you were all banditti!"

"It's all my fault," acknowledged honest Marietta Mix. "I was determined that you should have a surprise. Andrew wasn't half willing, but I insisted. You see, I didn't think there would ever be any other way of getting acquainted with you, Miss Elkton. And we knew that Andrew was so interested in you."

"Nonsense!" cried Emily, blushing. "Is it nonsense, though!" retorted Marietta. "Well, time will show."

And time did show. Six months afterward—but, after all, where is the use of turning over the leaves of the book of fate? Let all true lovers guess for themselves how the matter ended.

"But," Emily acknowledged in her turn, "I never was so frightened in all my life as at first and never so happy as I was at last."

And she never returned to town life.—New York Mercury.

Japanese Carpenters at the Fair.

On the wooden island in the lagoon that separates the Horticultural Building from the ugly structure that will hold the official exhibits of the United States Government there will be a cluster of Japanese houses, erected by Japanese artisans for the commissioners of the land drifts from the chrysaltheim. When these very attractive looking houses are entirely finished they will be viewed with great interest and curiosity by the visitors to the fair, for in many regards they will be very different from anything that the great majority ever saw before. But the process of building was even more interesting than the finished houses will be. When the snow was over a foot deep this winter, and visitors to the works were very scarce on account of the cold, there was still always something of a crowd about the wire rope that was put up to keep visitors away from the Japanese carpenters and joiners who were erecting the houses in the island village. The wire rope did not keep back the more adventuresome of the sight seers, nor were those who invaded the forbidden ground ordered out after they had gone where they had no business to go. Even a Japanese artisan, though clothed with authority, is too gentle and kindly and courteous in his nature to resent any friendly encroachment upon his rights. Those who went within the ropes saw nothing all that was to be seen, and every question that was asked was answered as fully as the limited English vocabulary of the workmen permitted. And what bright and nimble fellows these workmen were! It may be that they were picked men, selected for their skill and intelligence. If they represent the average of Japanese artisans, then the average must be very high indeed. It seems almost a pity that these carpenters could not be kept at work all during the fair; such an exhibit would be as popular as anything within the grounds.

MIDNIGHT IN TOWN

THE DARK SIDE OF A GREAT CITY Drawn By Talmage. Horrors of the Night and Awful Fate of the Gambler and Drunkard.

TEXT: "And the darkness He called night."—Genesis 1, 5. Two grand divisions of time. The one of sunlight, the other of shadow; the one for work, the other for rest; the one a type of everything glad and beautiful, the other used in all languages as a type of sadness and affliction and sorrow. These two divisions of time may have nomenclature of human invention, but the darkness held up its dusky brow to the Lord, and He baptized it, the dew dripping from His fingers as He gave its name. "And the darkness He called night." This is midnight in town.

There are honest men passing up and down the street. Here is a city missionary, the dew dripping from his fingers as He gave its name. "And the darkness He called night." This is midnight in town. There are honest men passing up and down the street. Here is a city missionary, the dew dripping from his fingers as He gave its name. "And the darkness He called night." This is midnight in town.

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away and though the wife be waiting in the cheerless home? Stir up the fire. Bring on your sit there now—the same cap, and apron and spectacles. It was my old mother—she sat there."

Then he turned to his wife and said: "I wish you would take these strings off the bed. Somebody is wrapping strings around me all the time. I wish you would stop that annoyance." She said: "There is nothing here." Then I saw it was delirium. He said: "Just where you sit now my mother sat, and she said, 'Roswell, I wish you would do better—I wish you would do better.' I said, 'Mother, I wish I could do better. I tried to do better, but I can't. Mother, you used to help me. Why can't you help me now?' And she said, 'I got out of bed for it was reality, and I went to her and threw my arms around her neck, and I said: 'Mother, I will do better, but you must help. I can't do better, but I wish I could do better.' I said, 'Mother, I wish I could do better. I tried to do better, but I can't. Mother, you used to help me. Why can't you help me now?' 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