

mady a wily customer learned that it was an easy thing to extort a bargain while she forgot herself in dilating upon her darling theme, "my Pretty Jane."

Years passed, and the early object of the pedlar woman was accomplished.—The fruits of her tireless industry had gradually made her the mistress, not only of the cottage, to the possession of which she had so long aspired, but of several fields that lay around it, and the cheerful prospect of an old age smothered by ease seemed before her.

Her foster-child had entered upon her womanhood, and with the extreme beauty that marked her infancy, she still retained the title by which it had been acknowledged. Throughout the whole country she was distinguished as "Pretty Jane." She had learned, with her first power of reflection, to appreciate the unselfish goodness that had cherished her, and the only feeling which appeared to stir her tranquil nature with the strength of a passion, was that of gratitude.

"God bless her was often the tearful ejaculation of Widow Slade; "if there is one being on earth that would lay down her life for another, that would any Jane for me!"

Timid, silent and home-staying, notwithstanding that her personal charms and the presumption of her being the future heiress of the snug property of Widow Slade might have constituted her a belle among our primitive society, it was predicted that her affections would not readily divided into another channel, yet, before she had completed her eighteenth year, she had been wooed successfully, and with quiet hopefulness was waiting to take upon herself the duties of a wife.

Her lover was somewhat a man of mark among us—the handsome and educated young pastor of the settlement, for among the most important improvements in the aspect of the country was that of a fine new church, rearing its spire full in sight of the door of the cottage. Many an alliance far more ambitious might have been at the command of Lewis Walton, but in the gentleness, the modesty, the intelligence, the housewifely accomplishments of Jane, and above all, in her earnest piety, he saw, more than in any others, the elements of a useful and lovable minister's wife, and he felt that his hand might safely be proffered where there was so much not only to win upon the fancy, but to secure the heart.

As to Jane, she proved that beneath her outward placidity there ran a current of tenderness not less strong than deep.—To be Continued.

Jones' Narrow Escape.

IT WAS a Saturday night and Mr. and Mrs. Jones were shutting up the house preparatory to retiring when there came a loud ring at the front door bell that startled them both, as it was too late for either business or callers. Who could it be? Mrs. Jones declared she would not open the door for the world and begged Mr. J. to arm himself with the umbrella stand or the hat rack, for it might be masked robbers or something of that sort. At which Mr. Jones pooh-poohed rather faintly and nervously, and marching valiantly to the door threw it wide open and next fell back over Mrs. Jones, who had kept cautiously behind. Then the two reconnoitred the situation. There was no human being in sight, but on the doorstep there was some kind of a mysterious-looking object. Mrs. Jones looked at it a moment, then she burst into tears.

"It's a-a covered basket. Oh! J-Jones' you wretch, how could you? and I-I-I trusted you so!"

"Mercy on me, Maria, what are you crying about? I don't know what it is! Maybe it's an infernal machine, to blow us up," gasped Jones.

"Oh, you know what it is well enough, Mr. Jones! Don't add falsehood to your other baseness. Oh, Jones, Jones! how could you deceive me so?" and she wiped away another flood of tears.

"I'll throw the thing into the middle of next week," shouted Jones in a fury. "I'll—"

"Stop, stop, wretched man!" cried his wife, grasping his coat tails. "Don't add murder to your other accomplishments; and to think I have tr-trusted!"

"Maria," said Mr. Jones with the calmness of desperation, "unhand me! I will find out what this means. That's our old market basket," he exclaimed suddenly, and the next moment he had dragged it into the hall. "Why, it's our dinner for to-morrow. I forgot all about it and left it at the butcher's and he has sent it home! I hope you're satisfied."

"I never saw such a careless man in my life," said his wife, in a relieved voice. "We might have had to go without our dinner, for all of you."

Jones says it was the narrowest escape ever he had.—Detroit Post.

A Great Enterprise.

The Hop Bitters Manufacturing Company is one of Rochester's greatest business enterprises. Their Hop Bitters have reached a sale beyond all precedent, having from their intrinsic value found their way into almost every household in the land.—Graphic.

VIOLET'S CHOICE.

"WHICH shall it be?"

Violet Vane stood at her window as she asked herself this question, while her dark eyes roamed over the scene which lay before her.

A dreary scene, surely. Broad fields, from which the harvest had long since been gathered, even the aftermath; nothing now remained save the bristling stubble, upon which the autumn rain was falling—drip, drip, drip. Overhead, a dull, gray, sky, with the sun slowly dying in the west; under foot, sodden gray earth. The whole world seemed robed in that one sombre color.

And so that young girl who stood there, her eyes sweeping impatiently over it all, it seemed the dreariest picture in the world.

She was young and had beauty; the heart within her breast throbbled with ambitious desires and longings; she wanted to rise up above all these sordid, common surroundings, and get within her proper sphere. She longed for wealth and luxury; her beauty craved a costly setting; yet she was but a poor farmer's daughter, and lived in an ancient red farm-house, in the midst of gray, old cornfields, from whence the green had fled.

It seemed to her, standing there wearily, as though the green would never come back again to the fields, the azure to the skies, or the song to the bird.

Yet she was deciding a momentous question that day, and one which was destined to affect all her future life. It was this:

Arnold Lee, a millionaire, had asked her to become his wife. But he was old, and gray, and wrinkled, and her heart belonged to another—Richard Lyle. But Richard was poor as she was, and—and—the glittering bait which the old man held out was very tempting.

Violet was tired of poverty and the constant battle against the ills of this life. She wanted to get away from it all; she longed to live in a palace, and wear silks and jewels, and have all the money she desired. And all this could be gained merely by saying yes to Arnold Lee!

But how could she? How could she wrench from her heart the love which occupied it, and glorified her life with all the glories of a pure and innocent affection, and bind herself to this grim old man for the sake of his gold? Yet Richard was so dreadfully poor! Violet's heart sank as she remembered it all. And she must decide quickly, for in two hours' time Arnold Lee would come for an answer.

"Violet!" The girl turned to see her mother standing beside her—a fretful, complaining woman, who spent her daily life in bewailing their poverty.

"Well, Violet," she went on, "have you made up your mind? To think that you should ask for time to decide such a matter! Why, girl, I should think you would be so gratified at Mr. Lee's proposal that you would tell him yes without a moment's delay."

"Mother, do you really advise me to marry that old man just for his money, when you know that Richard and I are—"

"You are not really engaged," interrupted her mother, hastily. "No, thank heaven! and the understanding between you, such as it is, can be easily settled. Violet, I want you to marry Mr. Lee; you can't afford to refuse him! Why, it will save you and us all from the depths of misery. Tell him yes, Violet."

She left the room and Violet to her own meditations. A defiant look flashed into the girl's clear eyes.

"I will not!" she cried, setting her white teeth hard together, and clenching her little hand fiercely. "I will not marry that old man! I have decided at last! Poverty with Richard Lyle is preferable to a life of gilded misery!"

A tall figure coming across the sodden fields met her gaze—the color flamed up into her cheeks, her eyes shown with a dewy light.

"Dear Richard!" she whispered to herself, "he is coming; I will meet him and tell him all!"

As she spoke the slow rain ceased falling and a single blue streak appeared in the sky. Throwing a water-proof cloak about her, she opened the low window and stepped over the sill. Gathering her skirts about her, she darted forward, across the wet door-yard, and met her lover at the gate. "Oh, Richard," she cried, stopping short, "I want to tell you!"

She paused in shy confusion. "You have decided, my darling?" he whispered; "well, Violet, which shall it be—love or gold?"

She slipped her little hand in his, and the shifting color came and went in her fair cheek.

"Love, Richard!" she murmured, softly. "I shall not marry that old man—they cannot force me to do it!"

For a long time the two conversed together in low tones, and at last they went away together through the gather-

ing twilight down to the village lying prim and silent in the evening shadows.

And when they had returned to the old farm-house Violet was Richard Lyle's wife.

Quietly she slipped into the house, and up stairs to her room.

She had hardly lain aside her cloak and changed her dress when her mother appeared.

"Violet!" she began querulously, "make haste, can't you? Mr. Lee has been waiting for you down stairs for the last half hour. Have you made up your mind?"

Violet's face crimsoned. "Yes," she answered, softly, her eyes shining with the light of love, "I have made up my mind!"

Mrs. Vane caught her in her arms. "God bless you, my child!" she cried; for to her heart there was but one decision possible; "now we shall know no more poverty—no more pinching and turning to get along in the world! You have saved us, Violet!"

But Violet had no words to utter. What would her parents say when they knew what she had done? She went down stairs and entered the shabby little parlor, with its dingy carpet and old fashioned furniture.

Mrs. Vane, sitting there, was already turning over in her mind a hundred plans for the future. They should have a new house, new, soft carpets and fine furniture and live and become people of wealth and position.

She glanced up as Violet entered, and her heart misgave her as she observed the girl's pale cheeks and frightened air. She arose as though to leave the room.

Old Farmer Vane, who had come in to entertain their distinguished visitor until Violet should appear, arose also. But Violet motioned to her parents to remain.

"Do not go," she cried, her sweet voice trembling a little; "I have nothing to say which I cannot say in the presence of my father and mother. Mr. Lee," she added, abruptly, turning to the old millionaire, who had arisen and stood before her deferentially, "you have done me the honor to ask my hand in marriage. Of course, with the disparity between us, there could be no question of love; it would, therefore, be but a mere sordid transaction, in which I became your wife for the sake of the wealth and position which I would enjoy."

"Violet!" cried Mrs. Vane, in unfeigned consternation. "Listen, mother, Mr. Lee, I have weighed this matter well in my mind. I assure you, sir, I have given it long and anxious deliberation; and I have decided."

Mrs. Vane caught her breath with a quick gasp of surprise as Violet paused.

"I cannot be your wife, Mr. Lee," the young, sweet voice went on. "I do not love you and I cannot barter my liberty for wealth. Besides, I love another; it was 'love against gold,' you see, and I have chosen—love! This evening I became the wife of Richard Lyle. Father—mother—forgive me for the step I have taken; indeed I meant not to cause you pain; but I love him and I am his wife!"

But Mrs. Vane refused to be comforted. All the fair visions of the happy future which gold would bring to them vanished now, and the castle of cards tumbled over.

"I will never forgive you, you wicked, deceitful girl!" she cried. "You have ruined the happiness of your father and mother."

Arnold Lee turned to the irate woman.

"Do not reproach Violet, Mrs. Vane," he said, gently, "she had a right to her own choice, untrammelled by my wishes or desires."

He opened the outer door and beckoned to some one without.

"Come in, Richard!" he said, "and let me explain all this. Listen, good friends;" and as Richard entered and stood at Violet's side, silence fell upon the little group and the old man continued: "I love Violet; indeed, who could help it? But I am very old, and I was well aware that if she chose me it could not be for love, but only for the sake of the wealth which I could bestow on her. I soon found out another thing—that she and Richard Lyle loved each other and that he is worthy of her. So I took him into my confidence. I said that he would put Violet to the test—we would give her a choice between love and gold. If she decided to be my wife I would do all in my power to render her happy. But if, on the other hand, 'love' was triumphant and she became the wife of Richard Lyle I agreed to settle upon the young man \$100,000 to be his own when Violet became his wife. This was our own secret; Violet knew nothing of it. She has preferred truth to a life which would have been but a long deception. She is Richard's wife, and I congratulate them both. And I now announce Violet and Richard Lyle as my heirs. I am very old and cannot live long; when God sees fit to take me away I shall leave all my earthly possessions to them jointly."

And the old man kept his word. While he lived he was the best and truest friend to the youthful pair whom he had so truly befriended; and when he died and was laid away to rest, his will named Violet and Richard Lyle sole heirs to his immense wealth, because they loved each other and were worthy, and her true heart had chosen love instead of gold.

And Mrs. Vane's hopes were realized after all; and the castle of which she had so fondly dreamed was built.

SUNDAY READING.

Filial Love.

There is not on earth a more lovely sight than the unwearied care and attention of children to their parents. Where filial love is found in the heart we will answer for all the other virtues. No young man or woman will turn out basely, we sincerely believe who has parents respected and beloved. A child affectionate and dutiful, will never bring the gray hairs of his parents to the grave. The wretch who breaks forth from wholesome restraint, and disregards the laws of his country, must have first disobeyed his parents, showing neither love nor respect for them. It is seldom the case that a dutiful son is found in the ranks of vice among the wretched and degraded. Filial love will keep men from sin and crime. There never will come a time while your parents live when you will not be under obligation to them. The older they grow the more need will there be for your assiduous care and attention to their wants. The venerable brow and frosty hair speaks loudly to the love and compassion of the child. If sickness and infirmity make them at times fretful, bear with them patiently, not forgetting that time ere long may bring you to need the same attention. Filial love will never go unrewarded.

The Greatest Mistake.

Everybody is making mistakes.—Everybody is finding out afterwards that he has made a mistake. But there can be no greater mistake than the stopping to worry over a mistake already made. The temptation is irresistible when one has slipped on an orange peel or banana skin, to turn and see just where and how he slipped. But if a man is in a hurry to reach the depot, along the average city sidewalk, he would do better to look out for the next slipping place, and guard against it, than to turn around and walk backwards, with his eyes on the place where he slipped last, and his mind full of worry because he did slip there. A man would stand a better chance of entering his train by letting those slipping places alone.

"Forgetting those things which are behind, including the forgetting to worry over the irredeemable past.—"Reaching forth unto those things which are before," is the "one thing" for every child of God to do in spite of the many mistakes which at the best he has certainly made.

"Live for Something."

Thousands of men breathe, move, and live; pass off the stage of life, and are heard of no more. Why? They did not a particle of good in the world, and none were blest by them; none could point to them as the instruments of their redemption; not a line they wrote, not a word they spoke, could be recalled, and so they perished—their light went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than the insects of yesterday. Will you thus live and die? Live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name by kindness, love and mercy on the hearts of the thousands you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten. No, your name, your deeds, will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind as the stars on the brow of evening. Good deeds will shine as bright on the earth as the stars of heaven.

The meanest and most contemptible person on earth, not to say the most wicked, is one that will flatter you to your face, and talk against you, and slur you behind your back. Always look out for and avoid a backbiter. He is "the snake in the grass," the adder that biteth the horse's heels, making his rider fall backward." Such an one always gives evidence of an unsanctified heart. The way to avoid this sin is not to talk about others, unless to speak well of them, to do them good, or to do somebody else good by saving them from evil association.

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It is a matter of journalistic record, that some years since, a schooner set sail from Baltimore, having on board a crew of thirteen men. By a most singular freak of nature, the entire force was attacked by a skin disease, which manifested itself in large ulcerated sores on the arms and hands, wholly incapacitating the men from duty. The result was that the vessel was towed back to the city where the men were placed in the hospital. Moral! Had Swayne's Ointment for skin diseases been used in the first place, the crew would have recovered in from 12 to 48 hours.



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