

That Lass o' Lowrie's,

A STORY OF THE LANCASHIRE COAL MINES.
By FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT.

"It ud be aw I'd ax," said Sammy. "I'd be main well satisfied, yo' mebbe sure; but yo' know there's so many lookin' out for a job o' that kind, an' I ha' na many friends among th' quality. I niver wur smooth-tongued enow."
True enough that. Among the country gentry, Sammy Craddock was regarded as a disrespectful, if not a dangerous, old fellow. A man who made satirical observations upon the ways and manners of his social superiors, could not be much better than a heretic. And since his associates made an oracle of him, he was all the more dangerous. He revered neither Lords nor Commons, and was not to be awed by the most imposing institutions. He did not take his hat off when the gentry rode by, and it was well known that he had jeered at several of the most important individuals in county office. Consequently, discreet persons who did not believe in the morals of "the masses" shook their heads at him, figuratively speaking, and predicted that the end of his career would be unfortunate. So it was not very likely that he would receive much patronage in the hour of his downfall.

Sammy Craddock was in an uncomfortable frame of mind when he left his companions and turned homeward. It was a bad look-out for himself, and a bad one for "th' owd lass." His sympathy for the good woman was not of a sentimental order, but it was sympathy nevertheless. He had been a good husband, if not an effusive one. "Th' owd lass" had known her only rival in the Crown and his boon companions; and upon the whole, neither had interfered with her comfort, though it was her habit and her pleasure to be loud in her condemnation and disparagement of both. She would not have felt her connubial life complete without a grievance, and Sammy's tendency to talk politics over his pipe and beer was her standard resource.

When he went out, he had left her lying down in the depths of despair, but when he entered the house, he found her up and dressed, seated by the window in the sun, a bunch of bright flowers before her.

"Well, now?" he exclaimed. "Tha niver says! What's taken thee? I thowt tha wur bedrid for the rest o' thy days."

"Howd thy tongue," she answered with a proper touch of wifely irritation at his levity. "I've had a bid o' company an' it's chirked me up summat. That little lass o' th' owd pason has been settin' w' me."

"That's it, is it?"
"Aye, an' I tell yo' Sammy, she's a nice little wench. Why, she's gotten th' ways o' a woman, stead o' a lass, she's gotten a face as pretty as her ways, too."

Sammy scratched his head and reflected.
"I mak' no doubt on it," he answered. "I mak' no doubt on it. It wur her, tha knows, as settled th' fight betwix th' lads an' th' dog. I'm wonderin' why she has na been here afore."

"Well now?" taking up a stitch in her knitting, "that's th' queer part o' it. Whatten yo' think th' little thing said, when I axt her why? She says, 'I did na seem loike I was needed exactly, an' I did na know as yo'd care to ha' a stranger coom w'out being axt.' Just as if she had been moort but a neighbor's lass, and would na tak' th' liberty."

"That's moort th' owd pason's way," said Sammy.
"Th' owd pason?" testily, "I ha' no patience w' him. Th' little lass is as different fro' him as chalk is fro' cheese."

CHAPTER XVII. THE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

The morning following, Anice's father being called away by business, left Riggan for a few days' absence, and it was not until after he had gone, that the story of Mr. Haviland's lodge-keeper came to her ears. Mr. Haviland was a Member of Parliament, a rich man with a large estate, and his lodge-keeper had just left him to join a fortunate son in America. Miss Barholm heard this from one of her village friends when she was out with the phaeton and the grey pony, and she at once thought of Sammy Craddock. The place was the very thing for him. The duties were light, the lodge was a pretty and comfortable cottage, and Mr. Haviland was known to be a generous master. If Sammy could get the situation, he was provided for. But of course there were other applicants, and who was to speak for him? She touched up the grey pony with her whip, and drove away from the woman had told her the news in a perplexed frame of mind. She herself knew Mr. Haviland only by sight; his ostle was three miles from the village, her father was away, and there was really no time to be lost. She drove to

the corner of the road, and paused there a moment.

"Oh, indeed, I must go myself," she said at last. "It is unconventional, but there is no other way." And she bent over and touched the pony again and turned the corner without any further delay.

She drove her three miles at a pretty steady trot, and at the end of the third, at the very gates of the Haviland Park, in fact,—fortune came to her rescue. A good-humored; middle-aged gentleman on a brown horse came cantering down the avenue and, passing through the gates, approached her. Seeing her, he raised his hat courteously; seeing him, she stopped her pony, for she recognized Mr. Haviland.

She bent forward a little eagerly, feeling the colour rise to her face.
It was somewhat trying to find herself obliged by conscience to stop a gentleman on the highway, and ask a favour of him.

"Mr. Haviland," she said, "if you have a moment to spare—"

He drew rein by her phaeton, removing his hat again. He had heard a great deal of Miss Barholm, from his acquaintance among the county families. He had heard her spoken of as a rather singular young lady who had the appearance of a child, and the views of feminine reconstruction of society. He had heard of her little phaeton, too, and her grey pony, and so, though he had never seen her before, he recognized her at once.

"Miss Barholm?" he said, with deference.

"Yes," answered Anice. "And indeed I am glad to have been fortunate enough to meet you here. Papa is away from home, and I could not wait for his return because I was afraid I should be too late. I wanted to speak to you about the lodge-keeper's place, Mr. Haviland."

He had been rather of the opinion that Miss Barholm must be a terrible young woman, with a tendency to model cottages and night schools.

Young ladies who go out of the ordinary groove are not apt to be attractive to the average English mind. There are conventional charities in which they may indulge,—there are Sunday-schools, and rheumatic old women, and flannel night caps, and Dorcas societies, and such things to which people are used, and which are likely to alarm nobody. Among a class of discreet persons these are held to afford sufficient charitable exercise for any well-regulated young woman; any whose plans branch out in other directions are looked upon with some coldness. So the country gentry, hearing of Miss Barholm and her novel fancies, her teaching in a night-school with a young curate, her friendship for the daughter of a dissipated collier, her intimate acquaintance with ragged boys and fighting terriers, her interest in the unhappy mothers of nameless babies,—hearing of these things I say, the excellent nonconformists shook their heads as the very mildest possible expression of dissent. They suspected strong-mindedness and "reform"—perhaps even politics, and a tendency to advance irregular notions concerning the ballot. "At any rate," said they, "it does not look well, and it is very much better for young persons to leave these matters alone, and do as others do who are guided wholly by their elders."

It was an agreeable surprise to Mr. Haviland to see, sitting in her modest phaeton, a quiet girl who looked up at him with a pair of the largest and clearest eyes he had ever seen, while she told him about Sammy Craddock.

"I want the place very much for him, you see," she ended. "But of course I do not wish to be unfair to any one who may want it, and deserve it more. If there is any one who really is in greater need of it, I suppose I must give it up."
"But I am glad to tell you, there is nobody," answered Mr. Haviland quite eagerly. "I can assure you, Miss Barholm, that the half dozen men who have applied to me are, without a solitary exception, unmitigated scamps—great strong burly fellows, who would, ten to one, spend their days in the public-house, and their nights in my preserves, and leave their wives and children to attend to my gates. This Craddock is evidently the very man for me; I am not a model landowner, but I like to combine charity with subservience to my own interest occasionally. I have heard of the old fellow. Something of a demagogue, isn't he? But that will not frighten me. I will allow him to get the better of me in political discussion, if he will leave my pheasants alone."

"I will answer for the pheasants," said Anice, if you will let me send him to you."

"I will see him to-morrow morning with pleasure," said Mr. Haviland. "And if there is anything else I can do for you, let me hear of it."

"Thank you, there is nothing else at present. Indeed, you do not know how grateful I feel."

Before an hour had passed, Sammy Craddock heard the good news. Anice drove back to his house and told him, without delay.
"If you will go to-morrow morning, Mr. Haviland will see you," she ended.

"I have you to thank for this," said

"and I think you will be good friends, Mr. Craddock."

"Owd Sammy" pushed his spectacles up on his forehead, and looked at her. "An' tha went at th' business o' thy own accord an' managt it i' haaf an hour!" he said. "Well, I'm dom'd;—axin your pardin for takkin th' liberty; it's a habit I've gotten—but I be, an' no mistake."

He had not time to get over his grateful amazement and recover his natural balance before she had said all she had come to say, and was gone, leaving him with "th' owd lass" and his admiration.

"Well," said Sammy, "I mun say I niver seed nowt loike it i' my loife. To think o' th' little wench ha'in' so mich gumption, an' to think o' her takkin th' matter i' hond th' munit she struck it! Why! hoo's a rare un—I said it when I seed her amongst th' lads there, an' I say it again. An' hoo is na mich bigger nor six penn'orth o' copper neyther. An' I warrant hoo niver thowt' fillin her pocket w' tracks by way o' comfort. Well, tha'st noan ha' to dee i' th' Union after aw, owd lass, an' happen we can save a bit to gi' thee a grand funeral if tha'l mak' up thy mind to stay to th' top a bit longer."

CHAPTER XVIII. A CONFESSOR OF FAITH.

The Sunday following the curate's visit to Lowrie's cottage, just before the opening of the morning service at St. Michael's, Joan Lowrie entered, and walking up the side aisle, took her place among the free seats. The church members turned to look at her as she passed their pews. On her part, she seemed to see nobody and to hear nothing of the rustlings of the genteel garments stirred by the momentary excitement caused by her appearance.

The curate, taking his stand in the pulpit that morning, saw after the first moment only two faces among his congregation. One from among the old men and women in the free seats, looking up at him with questioning in its deep eyes, as if its owner had brought to him a solemn problem to be solved this very hour, or for ever left at rest; the other, turned toward him from the Barholm pew, alight with appeal and trust. He stood in sore need of the aid for which he asked in his silent opening prayer.

Some of his flock who were somewhat prone to undervalue the young parson's talents, were moved to a novel comprehension of them this morning. The more appreciative went home saying among themselves that the young man had power after all, and for once at least he had preached with uncommon fire and pathos. His text was a brief one— but three words—the three words Joan had read beneath the picture of the dead Christ: "It is finished."

It was a chance that led to them to-day, it was a strange and fortunate chance, and surely he had never preached as he preached then.
After the service, Anice looked for Joan in vain; she had gone before the rest of the congregation.
But in the evening, being out in the garden near the holy hedge, she heard her name spoken, and glancing over the leafy barrier, saw Joan standing on the side path just as she had seen her the first time they had spoken to each other.

"I ha' na a minnit to stay," she said without any prelude, "but I ha' summat to say to yo."

Her manner was quiet, and her face wore a softened pallor. Even her physical power for a time appeared subdued. And yet she looked steady and resolved.

"I wur at church this mornin'," she began again almost immediately.
"I saw you," Anice answered.
"I wur niver there before. I went to see for mysen. I ha' read the book yo' gi' me, an' thee'r things things in it as I niver heard on. Mester Grace too—he coom to see me an' I axt him questions. Theer wur things as I want to know, and now it seems loike it becoms clearer. What w' th' pictur,—it becoms w' th' pictur,—and th' book, an' what he said to-day i' church, I've made up my mind."

She paused an instant, her lips trembled.

"I dunnot want to say much about it now," she said. "I ha' not gotten th' words. But I thowt as yo'd loike to know. I believe i' th' Book; I believe i' the Cross; I believe i' Him as deed on it! That's what I coom to say."

The woman turned without another word and went away.

Anice did not remain in the garden. The spirit of Joan Lowrie's intense mood communicated itself to her. She, too, trembled, and her pulse beat rapidly. She thought of Paul Grace and wished for his presence. She felt herself drawn near to him again. She wanted to tell him that his harvest had come, that his faithfulness had not been without its reward. Her own labour she only counted as chance-work.

She found Fergus Derrick in the parlour talking to her mother.
He was sitting in his favourite position, leaning back in a chair before a window, his hands clasped behind his head. His friendly intercourse with the family had extended beyond the cere-

monious epoch, when a man's attitudes are studied and unnatural. In these days Derrick was as much at ease at the Rectory as an only son might have been.

"I thought some one spoke to you across the hedge, Anice?" her mother said.

"Yes," Anice answered. "It was Joan Lowrie."

She sat down opposite Fergus, and told him what had occurred. Her voice was not quite steady, and she made the relation as brief as possible. Derrick sat looking out of the window without moving.

"Mr. Derrick," said Anice at last, after a few minutes had elapsed, "what now is to be done with Joan Lowrie?"

Derrick roused himself with a start to meet her eyes and find them almost sad.

"What now?" he said. "God knows! For one, cannot see the end."

CHAPTER XIX. RIBBONS.

The light in the cottage upon the Knoll Road burned late in these days, and when Derrick was delayed in the little town, he used to see it twinkle afar off, before he turned the bend of the road on his way home. He liked to see it. It became a sort of beacon light, and as such he began to watch for it. He used to wonder what Joan was doing, and he glanced in through the curtainless windows as he passed by. Then he discovered that when the light shone she was at work. Sometimes she was sitting at the wooden table with a book, sometimes she was labouring at some task with pen and ink, sometimes she was trying to use her needle.

She had applied to Anice for instruction in this last effort. It was not long before Anice found that she was intent upon acquiring the womanly arts her life had put it out of her power to learn.

"I'd loike to learn to sew a bit," she had said, and the confession seemed awkward and reluctant. "I want to learn to do a bit o' woman's work. I'm tired o' bein' neyther th' one thing nor th' other. Seems loike I've allus been doin' men's ways, an' I am na content."

Two or three times Derrick saw her passing to and fro before the window, hushing the child in her arms, and once he even heard her singing to it in a low, and evidently rarely used voice. Up to the time that Joan first sang to the child she had never sung in her life. She caught herself one day half chanting a lullaby she had heard Anice sing. The sound of her own voice was so novel to her, that she paused all at once in her walk across the room, prompted by a queer impulse to listen.

"It might ha' been somebody else," she said. "I wonder what made me do it. It wur a queer thing."

Sometimes Derrick met Joan entering the Rectory (at which both were frequent visitors); sometimes, passing through the hall on her way home; but however often he met her, he never felt that he advanced at all in her friendship.

On one occasion, having bidden Anice good-night and gone out on the staircase, Joan stepped hurriedly back into the room and stood at the door as if waiting.

"What is it?" Anice asked.
Joan started. She had looked flushed and downcast, and when Anice addressed her, an expression of conscious self-betrayal fell upon her.

"It is Mester Derrick," she answered, and in a moment she went out.
Anice remained seated at the table, her hands clasped before her.

"Perhaps," at last she said aloud, "perhaps this is what is to be done with her. And then—" her lids trembled,—"it will be a work for me to do."

Derrick's friendship and affection for herself held no germ of warmer feeling. If she had the slightest doubt of this, she would have relinquished nothing. She had no exaggerated notions of self-immolation. She would not have given to another woman what Heaven had given to herself, any more than she would have striven to win from another woman what had been Heaven's gift to her. If she felt pain, it was not the pain of a small envy, but of a great tenderness. She was capable of making any effort for the ultimate good of the man she could have loved with the whole strength of her nature.

When she entered her room that night, Joan Lowrie was moved to some surprise by a scene which met her eyes. It was a simple thing, and under some circumstances would have meant little; but taken in connection with her remembrance of past events, it had a peculiar significance. Liz was sitting upon the hearth, with some odds and ends of bright-coloured ribbon on her knee, and a little straw hat in her hand. She was trimming the hat, and using the scraps of ribbon for the purpose. When she heard Joan, she looked up and reddened somewhat, and then hung her head over her work again.

"I'm makin' up my hat again," she said almost deprecatingly. "It wur sich a faded thing."

"Are yo?" said Joan.

She came and stood leaning against the fireplace, and looked down at Liz

thoughtfully. The shallowness and simplicity of the girl baffled her continually. She herself, who was prompted in action by deep motive and strong feeling, found it hard to realize that there could be a surface with no depth below.

Her momentary embarrassment having died out, Liz had quite forgotten herself in the interest of her task. She was full of self-satisfaction and trivial pleasure. She looked really happy as she tried the effect of one bit of colour after another, holding the hat up. Joan had never known her to show such interest in anything before. One would never have fancied, seeing the girl at this moment, that a blight lay upon her life, that she could only look back with shrinking and forward without hope. She was neither looking backward nor forward now,—all her simple energies were concentrated in her work. How was it? Joan asked herself. Had she forgotten—could she forget the past and be ready for petty vanities and follies? To Joan, Liz's history had been a tragedy—a tragedy which must be tragic to its end. There was something startlingly out of keeping in the present mood of this pretty seventeen-year-old girl sitting eager and delighted over her lapful of ribbons! Not that Joan begrudged her the slight happiness—she only wondered, and asked herself how it could be.

TO BE CONTINUED.

How to Preserve Fading Eye-Sight.

The Magazine of Pharmacy gives the following rules for the treatment of the eyes for those who find their sight beginning to fail:

"Sit in such a position as will allow the light to fall obliquely over the shoulder upon the page or sewing. Do not use the eyes for such purposes by any artificial light. Avoid the special use of the eyes in the morning before breakfast. Rest them a half a minute, while reading or sewing, or looking at small objects, and by looking at things at a distance, or up to the sky; relief is immediately felt by so doing."

"Never pick any collected matter from the eye-lashes or the corner of the eyes with the finger-nails; rather moist it with the saliva and rub it away with the ball of the finger. Frequently pass the ball of the finger over the closed eyelids towards the nose; this carries off any excess of water into the nose itself by means of the little canal which leads into the nostril from each inner corner of the eye."

"Keep the feet always dry and warm, so as to draw any excess of blood from the other end of the body. Use eye glasses at first carried in the vest pocket attached to a guard, for they are instantly adjusted to the eye with very little trouble; whereas, if common spectacles are used, such a process is required to get them ready that to save trouble the eyes are often strained to answer a purpose."

"Wash the eyes abundantly—every morning. If cold water is used, let it be flapped against the closed eyes with the fingers, not striking hard against the balls of the eyes. The very moment you are conscious of an effort to read or sew, lay aside the book or needle, and take a walk for an hour, or employ yourself in some active exercise not requiring the close use of the eyes."

How to Make Money.

Most people are aware of the famous advice given by the thrifty Laird of Dumbiedykes on his deathbed to his son and heir: "Plant trees, Jock—they'll grow when ye're sleepin'!"
The saying may be modernized into: "Insert advertisements, ye men of business—they will work while you are sleeping."

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Moral notification, while indispensable in some cases, is a relic of ancient days when the bill-sticker and bell-man reigned supreme, and is at best but rough and ready compared to the neat "ad" catching the public eye along with the pungent "leader" or the latest local news.

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