

"Where do all these fine thoughts come from?" she exclaimed, mischievously. "I don't believe there is anything half so good in Freemasonry."

"Don't you run down Freemasonry," he said. "Come, let us take a drive out to old Peter's."

Peter Clamp was well known throughout the city. There were those who regarded him as a semi-lunatic; there were others who listened to his plans and shook their heads gravely, pronouncing them good, but impracticable in the present generation, and there were still others who were talked into thinking old Peter a long-headed man, and into assisting him in carrying on his work by making him large loans. In his youth he had been an engineer, and had dreamed out this plan, over which he had pondered until a fortune had been left him, and he had been awakened to a sense that his dream might come true. The fortune had all melted away; he had grown old, and no great machine had astonished the world. The children who had listened wonderingly to his first explanations had grown to be young men and women, and mingling with their old interest some pity and amusement, often went to the old barn in which he lived, in the outskirts of the city, to hear him relate the progress of his great scheme.

He was so intent upon his work that day that he did not hear the two young people drive up, nor see them when they entered the barn. The sun, shining in at the open door, had crept around to where he sat, and was falling over the scanty gray locks of hair, and the small, spare figure, with stooping shoulders. He raised his head suddenly, as he became aware of their presence, and showed a face, every line of which had settled into a painful intensity. His greeting was hurried and eager; he had just hit upon a small improvement which he was anxious to explain, and he spread his charts and drawings all out upon the table. The great machine was to be a house builder; tired men were no longer to carry hods of brick upon their shoulders, or to endanger their lives upon insecure scaffolding. The machine was to be self-acting, requiring but little management—not only raising the brick, but, by an ingenious contrivance, laying them. Thus, the walls of a building could not fail to be plumb, and work would be done quicker, and better, and cheaper in the end.

"But what of the many you throw out of employment?" suggested Hazelthorne.

"That has always been the cry against machinery," said old Peter, testily; "but the sequel has proved that the masses were benefited."

"But will it pay in the end?" asked Hazelthorne. "You have grown too old to reap much of the benefit."

"Yes, but I shall have done a great work."

"But think how much you have lost of enjoyment, of comfort."

"One must learn self-sacrifice to achieve success."

"How soon do you think it will be finished?"

"If I had a thousand dollars," said old Peter, anxiously, "I could set it up in a year."

Glenn Hazelthorne hesitated a moment, and then said: "I think I could let you have that amount."

Old Peter grasped eagerly at the offer. "Could you? just for a loan, you know; you should have interest; it would more than repay you in time."

Smiling at his eagerness, Hazelthorne wrote off a check, and received the old man's note of hand; then, seeing that Letty looked uninterested, he proposed going. It had all been stupid enough to Letty; the dusty old barn, with the iron things that she never understood, and the talk about rotary motion, and wheels, and pullies, and levers, and she had relapsed into silence, and into thinking that Grange was gone, and what should she do? So she gave a sigh of relief when they were, at last, out of sight of the old barn.

"What made you give him that money?" she asked; "it will come to no good."

"I suppose not," said Glenn, carelessly, "but the old fellow has such a stupid time of it I thought I would give him a little pleasure."

Letty thought that was just splendid of Glenn Hazelthorne, and she looked her admiration.

"I am coming to-night," said he, as he left her at her own door; "you know Grange said I was to take care of you."

And she smiled back at him as he drove away, thinking how sunny and handsome he looked.

What could Glenn do? Grange had put her in his care, and he could not see that sweet face look cloudy. And if that night, when Letty laid her head upon her pillow, she forgot to sigh because her lover was gone, it was just as he said it must be. But there was Wolverton speeding away on his journey, with a look gathering on his face that showed the parting lay heavier at his heart than he had allowed Letty to see, for