

[FOR THE NEWS.]

## WHAT IS LOVE LIKE?

BY NED P. MAH.

I lay 'mid the feathery heath  
Stretched prone at the feet of my love  
Her soft lap was my pillow beneath—  
Her tresses my sun-shade above.

An Havana, half-smoked, from my lips,  
She with roseate fingers withdrew,  
Then proclaimed it—held high in their tips—  
"An emblem of passion most true!"

"A vain toy, yet a much valued treasure—"  
She continued, pursuing the joke—  
"An amusement for men's hours of leisure,  
Evanescent, and ending—in smoke!"

Then answer I, dubitant, made:  
"Let a rose the similitude fill,  
Which, though Time may crush, wither, or fade,  
Its sweet odor will cling to it still."

"No! She yields of her sweetness to all,  
And what for that fault can a rose be?  
True passion seeks not to enthrall  
But consumes for the loved one alone."

We disputed until we grew tired,  
Yet I felt at the close of an hour,  
That, as emblem, 'twas clear I desired  
No longer the weed, but the flower.

For choice brands finest flowers may fall,  
Still I tenderly cherish my rose,  
True, its beauty and fragrance charm all,  
But it is in my garden it grows.

## "COLORADO MADGE."

BY JOAQUIN MILLER.

The sharp, silver horn of the clear curled moon—hanging so low in the marvellous sky of Colorado, it seemed you might tiptoe up and touch it from the hilltop—lid hastily down behind Pike's Peak on this evening, as if it did not like to see what was about to happen.

This was in the earlier days of Colorado, when miners slept on their newly discovered claims. A wall of rock and debris from the mine made a sort of fortress against the savage and the storm.

This mine here at Boulder Canon was a new discovery—the richest, the most marvellously rich that ever yet had been found. But as all this has been said of nearly every discovery, these glaring adjectives add but little to the outline of this crude little sketch. This claim, like all other fearfully rich ones, was also for sale. That was why it was so rich. That was why all sorts of people from all sorts of places came straggling in through the narrow passes left in the walls to where Colonel Bill Williams and his friends grouped about their pine-knot fire under the stars of Colorado.

Old Kit, the last of the trappers, a withered, dried-up old man, ready to blow away like a leaf into the river of death—a man who had held possession of all this land of gold long years before—sat moodily aside smoking his last pipe of tobacco. Suddenly he started up, or rather half-undoubtedly, with his hand to his ear.

"What's that?"

"Guess you've got 'em agin, Kit."

"Got 'em agin! It wasn't a woman, I tell you. But I forgot you new fellows can't hear like old Mountain Kit. Yes, that it is agin! Injin women up yonder! Injin women in trouble. Somebody's after 'em," muttered the old man, as he again doubled up and silently sucked his pipe-stem.

"Shouldn't wonder. Snagly, the agent, is red hot after Madge, you know," squeaked out the little doctor.

"Yes, Madge and her old mother have got away from the Reservation again," growled Ginger.

"And is he goin' to take Madge back?" queried Kit, sympathetically, as he again half-undoubtedly and stilled forward.

"Take her back, if it takes the whole united Stat's army," said Ginger, savagely.

"Poor gal, poor gal!" mused the old trapper. "Why her father, boys, was white. Yes, white as—as—well now, he was white as the whitest. And as for Madge, why, she's whiter herself than that agent is."

The old man was full of rage, and stood almost erect.

"Now, you look here," and Ginger, like the bully that he was, came close up to the old trapper, "Snagly, the Indian agent, is a pard of mine in a tradin' post. And you just so slow. If he wants that gal he'll have her."

"Have her, will he? Well, not while old Mountain Kit can lift a fist, he won't. Now, do you just stick a pin there."

But, from the manner of the miners, it was clear enough that neither Madge nor any of her unhappy race had friends in that camp other than the old trapper.

Suddenly Madge stood, or rather crouched, as a hunted wild beast might crouch, right there in their midst. Of course she had come in through the narrow pass in the stone wall that had been thrown up there by the long strong arm of the now resting derrick, but no one had seen her enter. She had come as silent and sudden as the moon had gone. Her limbs were as supple as the panther's—her footfall as light. She looked to be only a waif—a hungry, tired beggar. She had a spotted skin over her shoulder, a short, tattered petticoat hung from her waist; her feet were naked; her breast was almost bare, save the storm of hair that hung and blew about her shoulders as she crouched there

looking back, as if she feared she was followed, trembling, starting, quivering, scarcely daring to breathe.

"Hello, Madge, what's the row now?"

The girl did not answer. The stern and unfriendly voice of Colonel Bill Williams and the half sneer on the faces of all showed her at a glance that she had not fallen among friends.

"Madge, why don't you claim to be white and stay with the whites? You have a right to do that, and then they can't take you to the Reservation at all," added the colonel, more kindly.

Should she open her proud lips to utter the scorn she felt for a race who could treat her and her people as they were treated? Should she stoop to say, My mother is starving up yonder on the rocks only a stone's throw away, where she is hiding from the man-hunters? Did it need any words to tell these men that she would live or die with her mother and her mother's people?

"Say, Madge, you could get a job down at the Hurdy Gurdy House to sing and dance if you'd claim to be white; then you could get some clothes," urged the colonel, as he looked at her thin, bare arms, while she still stood trembling, looking back, listening, her nostrils extended, her pale lips set in silence.

Ginger, meantime, had risen and moved cautiously around towards the door or entrance through the great high stone wall, and before she could guess what it meant, he stood between her and her beloved mountains. She was a prisoner. The hard, merciless man laughed wickedly as he threw his strong arm before her when she was about to spring past him and escape.

She had not spoken yet. But now she turned about, half-threw up her hands in sign of submission, and for the first time stood erect.

She was tall, and, had she not been starving, she would have been strangely, savagely, fearfully beautiful. Had she been well clad and cared for, she would at that moment have looked the royal princess in body that she was in soul. But this valid rose, set thick with thorns, was only a bud that perhaps would never blossom.

These men all had seen her before. This canon, this land, these mountains were her home, her inheritance. She had played when a child with the shiny bits of gold and silver that these strong men were going mad over now. Her people had galloped their horses over all this gold for a thousand years. But now the white man had come and was digging, digging, digging everywhere—digging graves for body and for soul.

Yes, all these men knew Madge very well—her pride and her recklessness. Not a man there that did not know how impregnable was this girl's virtue, how she scorned and despised them every one, too.

Ginger sat himself down on a rock near by the pass in the wall and waited for Snagly, the agent, whom he knew was after her and would soon be there. The girl moved about the inclosure dimly lighted by the flaring pine knots, but did not speak. This was a wild beast that had been caught in a cage. She was gliding about as if to try the bars, to see how to escape from the cage. At last her eyes fell on a little uncovered tin bucket back among the buffalo robes and blankets. She leaned over cautiously and looked at its contents. It was full of provisions—sandwiches and a roast fowl for somebody's supper. The girl glanced up towards the rugged mountain above her. Then she measured the height of the stone wall before her. Her black eyes gleamed with a terrible purpose. Her mother was starving up there. She was going to steal this, leap up and over that wall like a starving wolf and save her mother, who would die rather than surrender and go back to the Reservation.

Old Kit, bent, broken, helpless, had sat all this time back obscurely in the corner; but his eyes, his every sense, had followed and understood her. He came out from his place and sat between the flaring and fitful pine-knot light and the little tin bucket. But how could he help her, this man who could not even help himself? The girl did not seem to notice him, or indeed to see any one now. She stretched her long slender arms just once, as if to make certain that they were free; she drew the thong that girded her a little together, put the storm of midnight hair back a little from about her piercing eyes, and that was all. She had not spoken one word. She had not even deigned to look at the man who sat keeping watch at the narrow little pass through the great ugly wall. Only old Kit seemed to suspect her purpose. The miners talked in little groups together about their mines. They had forgotten the girl was there. At length she seemed ready. She threw her hand up to her ear as if listening, looked up the ugly cliff above her where her mother was hiding and starving, looked hard at the steep and savage stone wall before her, and then darting down like a hawk she caught up the little bucket and leaped across the open space at a bound and on up the stone wall.

Up, up! She stops. It is too steep for her failing strength. The jagged quartz cuts her feet and hands till the white wall of rock is red. Her hands relax their hold on the sharp rock, and she falls back bleeding and bruised at the very feet of the man who had sprung forward from where he was keeping watch at the pass in the wall.

"Now, what do you mean?" called out the colonel.

"Told you so!" shouted Ginger, as he took her by the hair and forced her to rise.

"Injins will be Injins, boys," said the doc-

tor, and he picked up and set aside the little bucket.

"Now, I guess you'll help me keep her here till Snagly comes, won't you? I seed you fellows lookin' dark at me as I sat there, you in particular, colonel. Well, now, don't you see I'm right. Injins is Injins. It's the cussed bad blood that's in 'em. The Injin will out every time."

"Yes, send the little cuss back to the Reservation. Let Snagly have her if you like," said the colonel, as he brushed the dirt from a bruised knee and limped around to the other side of the fire. For he, too, had sprung up and tried to reach the girl when he saw her about to fall. But whether to help or harm was not certain to any one.

At mention of the Reservation the girl became wild and desperate. She threw herself imploringly before the strong, bearded colonel, and lifted her face as in piteous prayer.

"Well, what did you go and steal for?"

Still the girl did not speak. But now she could not lift her face. Her eyes fell to the ground, and she stood mute, motionless—all bowed and broken before him as he accused her.

"Madge, if you hadn't stole my dinner; if you hadn't done that, Madge, I'd let you go. Yes, I would; hang it, gal, I'm sorry for you; yes, I am, and if you hadn't stole that little bucket, my gal, I'd a chunked that Ginger out of that door before two minutes more and let you go; yes I would, Madge. But you see now I can't, for you've stole."

The trembling old trapper staggered forward, and, standing between, cried wildly:

"She didn't steal! I stole it and I gave it to her."

"What, you—you, honest old trapper Kit?"

"Yes, I—I old trapper Kit. Now, let her go, won't you?"

"Yes, I will. Go gal," and the man pointed to the pass in the ugly wall.

Just as he spoke there was a rattle of bootnails over the boulders in the little narrow pass, and Snagly, the Indian agent, followed by an officer of the United States army, and two men with manacles at their wrists, entered the little inclosure. The Indian agent—the man-hunter, with the United States army at his back—stopped there and glared at her. The girl lifted her face now in silent petition to every man there. One after another, as her eyes met theirs, they turned away without a word, shaking their heads sullenly. Three centuries of hatred towards the Indian was in their blood.

"Caught at last, eh?" triumphantly chuckled the Indian agent, as he at length came forward, followed by the men with manacles at their waists. He stood before her, gloating at her utter discomfiture and helplessness. Now she should be his—his at last, body and soul.

She stood up, tall no longer. Her eyes had lost their lustre, her long, bony arms hung down, low down, tired, so tired now. Her magnificence of hair mantled her. Her breast lifted a little. That was all. What could she have been thinking about?

The fire burned low at her feet. The stars above her—every one—came out, stealthily, as it were, on tip-toe and peeped through the key-holes of heaven to see what the United States was doing there now under the vast free skies of Colorado.

"Caught at last, eh?" again ejaculated the brutal Indian agent, as he took one step nearer to the trembling child, as if about to lay hold of her.

"Caught, caught! Why, man, you speak of her as if she were a dog for the pound." The brawny Scotchman who said this had just unrolled himself from a pile of blankets back under the other wall, where he had taken shelter after a hard day's digging. He was a foreigner, and of a race slow to comprehend. He was now for the first time, since the fugitive had entered the inclosure, getting pretty well awake.

The agent only looked at the stranger and then motioned his men to approach. The officer, who evidently did not like his work, was slow to obey his master, the Indian agent.

"Oh, save me from that man—from that man of all!" at last cried the girl, throwing herself before the kindly officer. "I will die rather than be taken. Oh, you did save me once. You did help me once to escape—"

"Quiet! You will betray me and ruin all. I dare not help you, Madge, where the agent is."

"But it is death to be taken. Oh, it is more than death!"

"Well, now, it is not so bad as that, Madge! If Snagly wants you, you go back," said Ginger, familiarly coming forward.

"But see how she trembles. This will kill her," protested the officer.

"Oh, she's just making out! Say, where did you sleep last night?" called out the red-headed ruffian.

The girl shrank from the monster and crouched before the stranger, as if he could help her. Then, turning to the ruffian, she cried, as she threw her long, bony arms in the air, and pointed to the rocks above:

"Where was I last night? Up yonder on the high, rocky ledge, with my poor starving mother, hiding! hiding! hiding from him and his men! And there were rattlesnakes there in the rocks, rattling and hissing all night as we lay crouching, hiding, starving!"

"Poor, poor lass!" muttered the foreigner.

"Oh, why is this? You all can come and go at will. But I—I am hunted down like a wolf. Why is this?"

"Bih, you Injin, don't take on like that," sneered the agent, as he again approached. "Come, your mother must go back to the Reservation. Don't you want to go back, too?"

"I'd rather die!" and with an instinct that saw something kindly in the face of this quiet but determined foreigner, she turned to him again and pleaded, "Oh, sir, long, long ago, my father lived and was rich in horses and gold in yonder mountains—long, so long ago, it seems, for I was happy then, and oh, so wretched now! Long, long ago, and he loved me, and called me Margie. But now, down at that Reservation they mock at me when I pass, and call me 'Madge, Colorado Madge, Injin Madge.' Oh, I could kill them—kill them every one!"

The Indian agent in the name of the United States was growing angry and impatient. He began to fear that possibly this girl might move this man's pity, and somehow at last escape him. He advanced closer, and roughly laid hold of her shoulder.

"Come, come now, I want to be gentle with you. But, remember, I am your lawful guardian, and I must take you back. Come, go back peacefully under my protection."

The girl sprang from him and threw back her hair. Her whole form shook, but it was not with fear now.

"Your protection! Your protection! What is it? To see my mother's people sickened and perish on the deadly Reservation with only the Great Spirit to herd or to pity them? To see a race of warriors die in savage silence while your Great Father at Washington, and his chiefs about him, hug themselves in happiness and boast to the world of peace and prosperity in the land? Your protection! What is it? To see little children starve that you may grow rich? To see helpless women debased? To bear your insults, your persecutions? Yours, yes, yours! No! no! I'd rather live with the rattlesnakes!"

"Now, look here, none of that! Remember I don't take one more word of insult. So come. And come right along now."

The brute clutched her thin shoulder angrily, and threw her towards the two men with the manacles as he spoke.

But the girl sprang back to the side of the stranger, and, half-hiding there as the agent again attempted to take her, cried out in her desperation:

"Don't you touch me! Don't you dare to touch me, or I will kill you!"

"Nae, don't you touch the lass! Don't you dare to touch her! If you do, begad, sir, I'll—" The mighty fist was in the air, but he was too angry to finish the sentence. He did not want to talk now. He wanted to fight.

Snagly, the Indian agent in the name of the United States, fell back before the lifted fist of this foreigner, and the gleaming eyes of the half-crazed girl, and cried:

"Captain, I call upon you to enforce my authority. Arrest and deliver me that girl!"

"You wretch!" muttered the officer between his teeth, as he drew his sword; then, hesitating, he let his point fall to the ground. Whether he had drawn his sword for the agent or the stranger was not certain.

"Oh, you will help me!" cried the girl to the officer.

"Madge! Madge! A soldier can only obey orders. Alas, the laws make this man my master. An Indian agent commands the army!"

Once more Snagly attempted to lay hold of the almost frenzied girl. But the man from under England's flag threw him back and turned to the girl.

"Come here, me lass!" And throwing one arm about her he shook his fist at Snagly. "You, stop there. There's the line! Now you cross that, and if I don't knock you down, dom me! No true Briton allows any innocent lass to be put in chains, whether she be red or black or white, and I am a son of bonnie Briton!"

"Well, son of Briton you may be, but this ain't British soil," shouted Snagly. The stranger started at this; he held his head in thought, and Snagly continued: "No, you ain't on British soil here!"

"Not on British soil. Not on brave old Britain's soil." The man said this as to himself, and then, slowly, tenderly, pitifully, lifting up the now almost prostrate child, he handed her towards the agent, saying: "Well, then, me poor, poor lass, I'll have to give ye up. I can't save you, lass, I can't. Here, sir, take her. But please, sir, treat her gently. She's only a poor, friendless lass, sir. Treat her gently, I implore you!"

"Mind your own affairs and keep your advice to yourself," cried Snagly, as he again clutched the girl and threw her towards the men. "There! Iron her!"

The girl no longer resisted or remonstrated now. Her head bent very low. Meekly and mechanically her two bony little hands fell across each other to receive the cold rattling shackles. Her hair hung down about her bended face, as if to hide the blush of shame that mantled it in her captivity.

The mouth of Colonel Bill Williams had been working; had been watering to devour that monster, the agent of these United States. His hands had clutched till his finger nails nearly drew blood from his palms. But the rattle of chains now seemed to awaken him to a sense of the awful insult that was being put upon his country, his manhood and his presence. He caught up the nearest thing at hand—a pick that leaned against the wall; he dashed forward, throwing the men with their manacles to the ground, and roared with the voice of a Nu-