

A Lover's Answer.

Ask the blue-bird bathed in sunlight
Why he loves its golden ray;
Ask the nightingale at even,
Why he warbles forth his lay;

SELECT STORY.

After The Party.

[CONCLUDED.]

EVERYTHING was against them—
there did not appear to be the least
hope. No wonder that the young doctor
looked sad, and found few words or
smiles to the greetings and wishes of a
happy new year.

Mr. Fulton had written to appoint six
o'clock on New Year's Day—in the evening—
for their interview; and when that
was ended Allan knew that the door of
that house would be, for some time at
least closed against him.

What a sorrowful face for New Year's
Eve! cried one friend whom he met.
are you going to the party this evening?

Yes, Allan replied.
He was going to the party—that
might be his last chance for seeing Lau-
ra. He would not neglect it, although
his heart was heavy and sad within him.

This party, always given on New
Year's Eve was a great event in Strut-
ton. It was at the house of Mrs. Ed-
monds, a wealthy widow lady, and was
a custom that she had held inviolate for
more than thirty years.

It was always a pleasant party—plenty
of dancing and music for the young,
whist and chess for the elders, abun-
dant of good cheer for all.

One of Mrs. Edmonds' 'institutions'
was, that when the clang of the church-
bells announced the death of the old
year and the birth of a new one, her
guests should pledge each other, and
drink welcome and success, peace, health
and prosperity during the coming year.

It was a pretty sight, and something
more, to see the guests stand round,
each with a brimming wine-cup, waiting
the last throes of the expiring giant, to
great each other with hearty and loving
good wishes.

No parties were so popular as Mrs.
Edmonds'. No one ever refused her in-
vitations. The only drawback on this
New Year's Eve was that the weather
had grown so piercingly cold, and the
snow fell so thick and fast, it was posi-
tively dangerous for anyone to stir out
of doors.

Notwithstanding this everybody was
going. John Elton was riding over
from The Limes; Mr. Fulton had pro-
mised to take Laura, and had presented
her with a new and valuable white lace
dress for the occasion. The young doc-
tor, more popular than anyone else in
Strutton, was obliged to be there.

He looked forward to it with mingled
dread and pleasure. He should be with
Laura, but it might be for the last time.

Mrs. Edmonds' rooms were, as usual,
quite full. It was rather late before
Allan's arrival. The first object which
drew his attention was Laura. He had
never seen her looking, he thought, one-
half so beautiful; the white lace dress
showed her slender, girlish figure to such
advantage, and a wreath of stary, jes-
samine bound the fair rippling hair.

But Laura's face had lost its bright-
ness; and Allan watched her with a
fierce pain in his heart. Her father
came up and introduced Mr. Elton to
her as a partner for the next dance.
She gave one wistful look at Allan, and
then turned to comply with Mr. Fulton's
request.

He will sell her, said the young doc-
tor, bitterly, to himself. He will sell her,
as a slave dealer, to him who bids most
gold!

He had no gold but love to offer.

Mr. Elton was what is commonly called
a presentable man—nothing striking
either in his appearance or manner; no-
thing that could excite either admira-
tion or dislike—a quiet, prosaic, middle-
aged man, who did not know the mean-
ing of the word romance, and considered
all poetry and sentiment a dreadful loss
of time. He looked substantial and re-
spectable, as he was; but not at all a
suitable partner for pretty, graceful
Laura—either for dance or for life.

Outside, the wind blew in wild, furi-

ous blasts, the snowstorm raged in blind
anger; inside, all was gayety, light, and
warmth. The darkest spot was the
heart of the young doctor. He danced
only once with Laura; it was painful for
both. Yet as her sweet, pale face smiled
upon him, and her two tender eyes met
his own, there was comfort in the look—
comfort also in the thought that she
would never love another as she loved
him.

I shall see you to-morrow at the hour
appointed, I suppose, said Mr. Fulton,
carelessly, to Allan. For Laura's sake
it is high time all this nonsense was
ended.

Too indignant for speech, Allan bowed
and passed on; but the lights and the
music became hateful to him, the
sounds of laughter and gay voices con-
trasted vividly with his own misery. He
gave one more look at the fair face that
was to smile no more on him and hasti-
ly left the house.

The hours that followed were a dead
blank. The winds and snow raged fu-
riously around him, beating upon him,
blinding him with drenching showers;
but he never heeded—his heart was
burning within him—burning with bit-
terness, anger, and love. He had lost
her—his treasured love. What matter
if the snow beat him down and hid him
for ever! He never remembered how
the time went on—he never knew what
road he had taken—he walked on like
one in a dream, stunned with misery.

Midnight had long passed, the chim-
ing of the joy-bells had reached him, the
snow still fell heavily and deep. Thick,
dense darkness covered the earth, when,
suddenly, the young doctor's attention
was attracted by what he felt sure was
a low moan, a moan indicative of extreme
anguish. He listened attentively, but
all was silent as death.

When he awoke up fully to recollection,
his first effort was to endeavour to
discover his whereabouts. It was a
difficult matter; but, from the shape of
the road, as defined by the trees, and by
the noise of the river, he imagined he
was not far from The Limes, John El-
ton's home. He felt unwilling to leave
the spot, certain as he was of having
heard those dismal moans. He spent
nearly an hour peering about in the
darkness. At last half-buried in a mass
of snow, he found the body of a man.

Just at that moment the mail cart
passed along the road, and Allan called
loudly to the driver, who stopped and
came to his assistance. He had two
lights, and held one of them to the face
of the man, which felt cold and chill as
death. Allan almost dropped the uncon-
scious figure he supported, when the
light from the lantern showed the fea-
tures of John Elton, his successful rival.

I will leave you one lamp, sir, said
the driver, and will send you help im-
mediately, but I dare not stay, or my
bags will be too late for the mail train.

He drove off leaving the young doc-
tor alone, with the man whose gold had
bought from him his love.

It was to Allan Carlton's honour that,
during the long and dreary watch he
kept there, no thoughts save of infinite
pity and compassion entered his mind.
Relief came at last, and the master of
The Limes was carried home. Even
then, but for Allan's vigorous efforts he
would hardly have recovered. For sev-
en long hours the doctor watched him,
using every resource known to skill and
art. No mother could have tended a
darling child more carefully.

He was rewarded when John Elton
murmured feebly:

Doctor, you have saved my life.
The explanation was very simple.
Mr. Elton, elated by his triumph and
prospect of winning the prettiest girl in
Strutton for his wife, had drunk perhaps
one glass of champagne too much—cer-
tainly not more. He was elated and full
of spirits, but nothing beyond.

As he was galloping rapidly home,
his horse, frightened by the wind and
snow, threw him and went off full speed
without a rider. He fell in the midst
of a large, deep snowdrift, and had al-
ready lain some hours when Allan heard
him moan.

That one moan, caused by the intense
pain of his fractured ankle, was the
means of saving his life.

All night Allan Carlton watched the
sick bed. Towards morning his patient
fell into a deep sleep, which lasted some
time and helped him on the road to re-
covery. When he did wake, the first
sound he heard was the chiming of the
joy-bells for the new year, the first
thing he saw was the sad face of the
young doctor who was that day to lose
his love.

Heaven bless you, doctor, he said,
gently, you have saved my life! It is
New Year's Day: let me wish you a
happy new year.

But Allan Carlton shook his head
with a gentle, patient smile, and said
there was no happiness left for him.

He had not meant to tell his story,
but Mr. Elton drew it all from him by
degrees.

Stay with me, he said, until five; one
of my men shall drive you into Strut-
ton.

And when Allen went to bid him
good-bye, Mr. Elton slipped a small fold-
ed paper in his hand.

You saved my life, under providence,
he said; all I have belong to you.
Make me happy by accepting this, and
remember I know all I give with it; and
I give that all cheerfully to a noble gen-
tleman, far, far better than myself. Not
one word of thanks—go. It is but a
physician's fee.

Tears of gratitude and joy dimmed
Allan Carlton's eyes when he unfolded
this paper and saw a cheque for five hun-
dred pounds.

The interview did not end as Mr Ful-
ton had expected, but the happiness
which shown in his daughter's face
more than repaid him. The money was
paid over, the partnership arranged, and
before the next joy-bells were rung, Lau-
ra Fulton had gone to the doctor's pret-
ty home. John Elton was best man at
the wedding, and made some magnifi-
cent presents to the bride.

A Legend of Norway.

HRIEK, mad winds, your wild cries
but soothe the aching of my heart!
Great Odin, that all my battles and my
victories should be rewarded thus! ex-
claimed the Viking, his proud head
bowed with sorrow.

He stood upon the verge of a high
cliff overhanging the sea, within sight
of a rude pine vessel that rode and
tossed on the reckless waves. He could
see the armour of his brave followers
flash in the sunlight; he could hear
their shouts of triumph and glee as they
thronged the deck of the ship; but
those shouts, which had so often aroused
the spirit of his leader, now grated
harshly on his ear. His heart was
wrung with grief, and he could ill
brook the sound of mirth. He had re-
turned to the rocky shores of his native
land, after a long absence, crowned with
the laurels of victory. His name had
echoed through the north. All Norse-
men bowed at the name of the mighty
Harold.

He now at last returned home to
receive the blessing of his aged father,
and to lay his laurels at the feet of his
lady-love, and claim as a reward, her
hand. But, alas! his hopes were crush-
ed—his bright dreams dispelled by a
shock; he had returned too late. The
great Jarl, his venerable father, now lay
sleeping in his grave, and Ingeberg
Hakon, his beautiful betrothed, had
proved false, and was, on that very night
to be wedded to an enemy.

These terrible truths he could scarce-
ly realize. What did all his triumphs
and honours avail him now? There
was none to share his glory; he had
lost that which was dearer than life
itself.

Descending from the cliff on which
he had been standing, he turned his
steps in the direction of a wild, massive
mountain, towering in the distance. He
walked fast, for night was fast approach-
ing, and the snow was beginning to fall.
The wind howled and moaned through
the tall pines above him, and awoke
strange fancies in his brain; but wrap-
ping his furs more closely about him, he
still quickened his pace, and soon reached
the base of the mountain and com-
menced the perilous ascent with ease
and agility; but he finally reached a
large, open space, over which he made
his way with difficulty, as the
storm and the darkness had increased.
But these obstacles did not stop the
progress of the bold Norseman, who had
fought fiercer battles than this war with
the elements.

At last he came within sight of a dark
Gothic structure, whose sombre aspect
sent a chill through his heart. He
stood before the home of his childhood
for the first time in many years, and
yet he felt no joy: there was no loved
one there to greet him; his father had
left it to dwell with the gods of Val-
halla.

He knocked at the iron gates violent-
ly; they were opened by an aged man,
whose flowing locks were as white as the
snow without.

Well, old Lars, dost thou not know
me?

Can it be my master, the bold Harold
returned from the wars? exclaimed the
old porter, overcome with emotion.

As the stern Viking gazed on the old
servant, his expression softened, and he
muttered,—

There is at least one to welcome me
home.

Art thou alone and unattended? in-
quired Lars, in surprise, as he conducted
his master through a narrow stone
passage.

Yes, alone, and sorely grieved, he an-
swered, gloomily.

Presently he found himself standing
in a large hall, dimly lighted by torches
and a bright pine-wood fire, that burn-
ed and cracked on a great hearth.

He could scarcely realize that he
stood again within the halls of his
father's home.

He seated himself before the fire, and
gazed about him on the dark, stone
walls, where hung the armour and weap-
ons of many a departed Viking, of

whose glorious deeds he had so often
heard.

But hark! what sound was that? It
grew louder and louder, until it became
deafening.

Harold listened; there was also music
but it was nearly drowned by the yells
and cries of many voices. He heard his
name shouted above the din, and fol-
lowed by a wild burst of applause that
loudly echoed through the mountains.

The door opened; a number of at-
tendants entered, and announced to
their lord that the castle was surround-
ed by a great number of his country-
men, who had come to welcome him
home. Joy lit up the noble features of
the Viking; for a moment he forgot his
sorrow, and, proudly straightening his
tall giant-like form, he commanded the
portals to be flung open, and a feast to
be prepared.

The castle was quickly thronged with
a vast number of Norsemen, and the
great, gloomy halls, that had long been
a stranger to the echoes of song and
laughter, now rang with their shouts.
Loud and hearty was the welcome they
gave to their renowned countryman.
The hospitable board soon groaned
beneath the weight of viands, and the
Norsemen's favourite 'mead' flowed in
abundance. Joy and revelry prevailed,
and none was gayer than the host. At
each toast offered he drank cup after
cup of the tempting mead, as if to
drown the anguish of his heart.

The festivity lasted many hours, with
unceasing hilarity.

Harold then repaired to an empty
hall, and, throwing a fur mantle care-
lessly over his shoulders, and fastening
a knife in his belt, passed through the
corridors, and found himself on the out-
side of the castle.

The storm had ceased, the moon
shone brightly and its rays lit up the
scene with brilliancy.

But Harold did not heed the change;
he was too much occupied in mind; he
walked with a hesitating step, as if he
would return, yet, stopping, muttered,—
Hear me, ye gods! I vow to see her
ere I sleep.

He flew over the snow.
Onward he went, until he reached
the mountain's top.

From this dizzy height he saw the
lights in the valley.

Without stopping to admire the gran-
deur of the scene, he quickly descended.

He seemed as if inspired by super-
natural powers.

Those words, I vow to see her ere I
sleep, awoke all the fierce fire of his na-
ture.

He reached the city, and, though it
was long after midnight, found it all
astir.

It was the wedding night of Jarl
Hakon's beautiful daughter.

Wrapping himself yet more closely in
his furs, Harold entered the festive halls
and in the multitude escaped notice.

Pushing his way cautiously through
the crowd, he reached a side room, where
he secreted himself.

It was the room of Ingeberg.

He gazed eagerly around, but could
not find the object of his search.

Suddenly his attention was arrested
by a well-known voice.

The door of the hall opened and a
group of maidens entered.

In their midst stood the charming
Ingeberg, radiant with beauty.

Soon her companions left her, and
she was alone.

Her smiles instantly fled; a sigh es-
caped her snowy bosom, and, sinking in-
to a couch close by, she gave vent to a
torrent of tears.

The young Viking was eager for his
prey.

Was this the maiden's joy on her wed-
ding night?

A wild thought seized him; it might
be that she loved him still.

He stood before her.

She gazed on him with horror, as if
she saw a phantom.

Ingeberg! he passionately exclaimed.

Harold, she answered, hast thou re-
turned at last? Was I not forgotten?
Alas! thou art too late; I am the wed-
ded wife of a viper, whom I hate.

By my father's command alone I am his
wife. Oh, mighty Odin, grant that I
might die this night!

She flung herself wildly into Har-
old's arms.

My Ingeberg, it is not too late! he
cried. You are my betrothed, and, in
the sight of Odin, you are my wife.
Come, fly with me beyond the seas; we
shall yet be happy! My ship is anchor-
ed on the coast. Come, Ingeberg fly!
She hesitated a moment, and love
overcame her scruples; and forsaking
bridegroom, father, home, all but Har-
old, she blindly gave herself to him,

discovered; but what cared they? They
were now beyond the reach of their pur-
suers.

But, while intently watching the coast
they did not heed the darkening sky,
nor the rising gale until the vessel be-
gan to rock violently.

Ingeberg clung to her lover, and still
listened to his sweet words and returned
his caresses.

The wind grew stronger; the angry
waves dashed madly against the ship.

The Viking's crew, with desperate
strength, struggled to control the vessel.

The tempest raged with unabated fu-
ry, each moment increasing, until the
sturdy sailors who had so boldly breasted
many a storm on the rough North Sea,
were forced to despair. They had
braved death more than once, and now
that they were about to meet it, did not
shrink, but took a savage pleasure in dy-
ing with their chieftain, whom they wor-
shipped.

With his one arm around the trem-
bling bride, Harold prayed to the
mighty Odin.

Darling, we must die! broke from the
pale lips of Ingeberg.

Yes, my Ingeberg, but we shall die
together, he answered, as he drew her
closer to his breast, and with triumph-
ant smiles beaming on his face, as if he
gazed into the face of death, he still
sent prayers to Odin.

The tempest raged, the black waves
swallowed up the little ship, and life's
bubbles broke upon the surface of the
mighty deep.

ONLY A FLOWER TO GIVE.

Mother asked little Phebe Cary,
have you nothing I can carry to poor
aunt Molly?

Phebe's mother was poor, and her
closet was very scant that morning.

I wish I had, Phebe, said she. Can
you think of anything?

Phebe thought.

I've only a flower said the little girl.
I will take her a sweet pea.

Phebe had a sweet pea which she
planted under her window and as it
grew and flowered, both mother and
daughter loved and enjoyed it. Phebe
picked one and ran down to poor aunt
Molly's cottage, this was a poor old sick
woman, who for a whole year, had laid
in her bed suffering with great pain.

In the afternoon a lady called to see
aunt Molly. She saw a sweet pea in a
cracked tumbler, on a small stand by
the poor woman's bed.

That pretty posy a little girl brought
me this morning, who said it was all she
had to bring, said aunt Molly looking
up with a grateful smile. I am sure it
was worth a great deal to know I'm
thought of; and as I look at it it brings
up the image of green fields and the pos-
ies I used to pick when I was young;
yes, and it makes me think what a won-
derful God we have. If this little flower
is not beneath His making and His
care, He won't overlook a poor creature
like me.

Tears came in the lady's eyes. And
what did she think? She thought, if
you've only a flower to give, give that.
It is worth a great deal to the poor, the
aged and the sick, to know that they are
thought of.

A FRIEND of mine a country clergy-
man, who with very small means does
very large good in his parish, confided
to me last September, over our pipes, his
conviction that the very small share of
brains possessed by farmers had been
given to enable them to invent excuses
for not subscribing to schools and char-
ities.

ANTICIPATING the death of Brigham
Young, a Louisville merchant wants the
contract to supply his family with crape
and bambazine.

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