

Poetry.

THE SHOE SHOP GIRL.

One day when the shadows lengthened
Over the Eastern hills,
Yet the sounds of daylight bustle
Came from the shops and mills,
And the music of peggers and stitohers
For a time inspired my soul,
And I wished I could sing like a poet
A song of a Shoe Shop Girl,

From a dear old home by the seaside
Where sparkling waters flow,
She comes to toll for strangers
In distant Marl-boro-o;
Through heat, cold, storm, and sunshine,
Is not supposed to stop,
But everybody respects her—
At least outside the shop;
She's a friend to all that meet her
In rags or fashion's whirl,
For beauty, talent, and virtue,
Belong to the Shoe Shop Girl.

To beguile the hours of labor
She sings till she is hoarse,
While the broken threads and needles
Provoke her some of course;
The slippery Glove Calf Uppers
Will tumble on the floor,
The wind takes up the linings
Through every open door.

But the rattle of many sewers
Awake her from the muse,
And the castles she builds in dreamland
Fade into goat-skin shoes;
And the skies above the castles
Whence golden sunbeams fall,
Are only the cotton lining
For stitching, after all.

But with courage and resignation
She stitches, stitches away
Shoes for our belles of fashion
And the rich across the sea,
Shoes for the little barefoot
And the lady of high degree,
Shoes for the proud and happy
In palace and marble hall,
While never a thought they cherish
For a weary Shoe Shop Girl.

Sometimes she looks from her window
And longs afar to ride,
For a day of pic-nic pleasure,
But unusually that's denied.

Fine superficial dandies,
French counts, and brainless fops
Won't make an easy conquest
Of girls that work in shops;
They look for something higher
Than simply outside show,—
Wit, wisdom, and politeness,
Are wanted in a beau;
Good looks, of course, are welcome,
Or even stylish dress,
And if all these requisitions,
With money, you possess,
And want a life-long partner
Without false heart and curl,
You might be exceedingly lucky
To get a Shoe Shop Girl.

O, men who flourish in business,
And dwell in palace halls,
On whom no shadow of evil
To harm you ever falls:
Who pile up sparkling thousands
By the labor of the poor,—
But must leave them all behind you
This side of the Eternal Shore—
Remember God the giver:
That life is but a span,
Show justice, love, and mercy,
To woman 's well as man,
Lest, in that heavenly city,
Whose gates are shining pearl,
There'll be no place for the rich man,
But a throne for the Shoe Shop Girl.

Tales and Sketches.

THE OTHER SIDE.

NEW TRADES' UNION STORY.

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CHAPTER XXI.

A few days after Arbyght's return to the city, Mr. Allsound waited upon him and offered him a clerkship in his store. Richard accepted the position gratefully, and warmly thanked Mr. Allsound for the interest he manifested in his welfare; the thanks were wrongly given; Vida Geldamo was at the bottom of it. She had written to Paul a plan which he had carried into execution, and this was the result. Bortha received a letter a day from her new found aunt and cousin, imploring and begging her to visit them; she finally complied. Richard was glad she was out of the city, as he expected trouble, and he was too generous and unselfish to make his sister a sharer of his sorrows. In his new vocation, after a short initiation, he got along charmingly. It was for this same Mr. Allsound that young Trueson worked, and the company and presence of the lad served to make the new hand feel at home.

After he had been in Allsound's employ one week or over, an event transpired that was plainly stamped with the imprint of the Leviathan's tooth.

Many of the Relvason syndicate charged the guiding spirit with over-zealousness, and claimed that had Arbyght been permitted to secure work in outside towns, he would, in all probability, have remained away, and confusion and defeat would not have come upon them. These remarks frenzied Relvason; he gnawed his soul with the sharp fangs of excessive rage. The humiliation of defeat, the abasement of his haughty pride, and worse than all, the loss of money, were to his mind more excruciating than would be the excoriation of his body. And still he smiled, and none would suppose that the sinister calm face of the man, "essentially mad, without

seeming so," was the index to a soul devouring itself with hate intensified.

Arbyght, "the Philistines be upon thee," Tigers, asps.

An agent was sent to Allsound with discretionary power. He sounded the merchant on identity of interests, then he pleaded, next he attempted to bribe. Allsound would like to discharge the workman. He hated him because he did what himself could not, dared not do—saved Paul's life, and in her presence, too. But he knew it would displease Miss Geldamo, and he was too shrewd to be caught with chaff. Vida Geldamo's hand was, commercially speaking, worth a million of dollars, and it was from a commercial stand-point Mr. Allsound regarded her and wooed her. He was incapable of either human or Platonic love, not having manhood enough for the former, or soul enough for the latter. He loved, or rather courted, her father's gold, and that was worth more than the syndicate could offer.

The leviathan was foiled, but not appeased. Vida Geldamo returned to Chicago. The next evening Mr. Allsound, Mr. Spindle and Estella Relvason called upon her. They found her in raptures over country air, boundless room, broad fields, warm-hearted, generous, sociable people, horse riding, and innumerable other attractions unknown to city life. Still there was about her a sort of subdued melancholy that contrasted strangely with her former verve and sprightliness. While they were yet discussing the country, Paul and Richard, unannounced, entered the room. Vida's face brightened, then saddened.

Spindle stared and nodded at Arbyght; Allsound recognized him with the lofty air of a man of conscious distinction and superiority. Miss Relvason was introduced, and bowed coldly, stiffly, haughtily. Richard bowed to each with deigned civility, while a satirical smile played and danced round his eyes and mouth. Vida's quick eye—the eye of love—noticed the lurking ire and hidden mortification in his face. She was irritably provoked, but she did not choose to show that she cared; still she was revenged. She gave her hand to Richard, and showed by her smile and kind words that she was pleased to see him, and to cap the climax of his and her triumph, she called him cousin.

All this was not only genuine, it was designed with wondrous nicety to soften Richard and make the rest of the company treat him at least with the form of respect and deference. Nor did it wholly fail, but at the word cousin they stared and gaped, then Vida explained, and when she ceased, the company were sufficiently assimilated to converse uninterruptedly. Richard was not quite at home, but Vida brought her woman's wit and tact to his aid whenever any of the more astute conversational diplomats puzzled or perplexed him. But after a while Vida found him well able to sail smoothly. His sentences or remarks, it is true, did not have that complete, refined, complimentary obsequiousness in which everybody endeavors to exhibit the exalted proficiency of others and their own nothingness. This would be all very well if there was reality in it, but there is not. It is reciprocal, mocking, hollow sycophancy. Richard's remarks were sometimes quaint, but they were at all times sententious, vigorous, and to the point.

"Mr. Arbyght, will you be generous enough to permit me to inquire how the union is?" said Mr. Spindle, placing an insinuating, deprecating emphasis on the word union.

"It lives and thrives," answered Richard, with a mocking sneer, partly in allusion to the abortive attempt to destroy it. Spindle felt the force of the rejoinder, and did not venture on that ground again.

"Do you sing, Mr. Arbyght?" asked Miss Relvason, asked Miss Relvason, with the air of an artiste.

Vida colored perceptibly, bit her lip sharply. "I sometimes sing," he replied quietly, then added, with a twinkle in his eye, "My voice has considerable compass and tone, but, unfortunately, it has a serious drawback." Mr. Allsound winced.

"And pray, what may that be, if, without impertinence, I may be permitted to ask?" "Why," said Richard, "the compass of my voice is such that it invariably fills the room, the house, but the drawback is that it invariably empties it."

Vida smiled approvingly, the others laughed. Miss Relvason went to the piano and dashed off a sparkling air from Verdi's Rigoletto, and then tried to interpret a passage in Gounod's Faust. This was Greek to Richard, and it is more than likely it was so to the performer. Vida then played some sprightly national airs, and the company were in ecstasies. The music of the old masters may do well enough for concerts and operas, where it is fashionable to seem entranced, and applaud what you do not understand, but for the drawing-room the sweet, simple airs of our childhood are far more acceptable.

Richard was asked to sing by Spindle, Allsound, and Miss Relvason. They asked him to humble, because they thought he could not sing. He declined demurely, but looked pleadingly at Vida.

"I will play the accompaniment for you," said Vida.

"Then I will sing." He went to the piano, picked up the music, and made a selection. Vida looked at him reprovingly, and said softly, "Not that."

"That or nothing," he replied bluntly. Vida struck the sentient keys, and in a clear, soft voice, Richard sang:

"I'd offer thee this hand of mine,
If I could love thee less;
But hearts as warm, as pure as thine,
Should never know distress.
My fortune 'tis too hard for thee,
'Twould chill thy dearest joy.
I'd rather weep to see the froe
Than win thee to destroy."

The music ceased.

"I don't like the song," pleaded Vida in a husky voice, (her eyes were moist.) "Its pathetic idealism always makes me sad," she resumed in a clearer tone. Mr. Allsound coincided. He felt annoyed, and could not help showing. Vida turned very red—not love—but said nothing. In a few moments all the company were gone.

Next morning Spindle called upon Allsound, before the latter had risen. He was, by request, shown into Mr. Allsound's room.

"Well, what do you think of last night's episode?" said Spindle, with malicious sarcasm.

"I hardly know what to think," said the other disconsolately.

"This mudsill is evidently in the way," continued Spindle, in a tone of mock sympathy.

"Do you think he has the impudence?"

"There, there, I know him; don't trouble yourself about his impudence. You will find him well up in that commodity," tauntingly interrupted Spindle.

"I'll discharge him this very day," thundered Allsound.

"That won't help your case," nonchalantly remarked the visitor.

"Why not?" The volume of voice was increasing.

"How will your case be bettered so long as he remains in the city?" asked Spindle with provoking bitterness.

Hell was now raging in the breast of Allsound.

Spindle went close to him, brought his eyes out of their cave-like recesses, and looking knowingly into his face, said, or rather hissed, in his ear, "he must be disgraced and driven from the city."

Before Allsound could rightly comprehend the force of these words, Spindle was gone.

Going down to his store that morning Allsound thought and thought; he thought hard, very hard. Satan was with him. In turning a corner he observed a locksmith's sign; he paused, glanced around, then hurried on. "A thief doth fear each bush an officer." Allsound was in his heart at that moment a criminal. In Allsound's store there were two safes, an old fashioned safe with an ordinary key, and a modern safe with a combination lock. That morning when he reached the store, he took the key of the old safe out of a drawer, and with it he went back to the locksmith, whose sign he noticed an hour before, and ordered a duplicate key. Next morning he called there and secured both keys. On one side of the store a black walnut partition, some seven feet high, ran back thirty feet from the large front window, parallel to, and fifteen feet from, the wall, enclosing a space, the upper end of which was occupied by the book-keeper, and the lower by a desk for general business. In this place the clerks usually hung their overcoats—it was now quite cold. Allsound slipped or glided stealthily into the enclosure, spoke a word or two to the accountant, then, as he glided stealthily out, he adroitly slipped the duplicate key into the inside pocket of Arbyght's overcoat. He left the store shortly afterwards, and in about an hour returned, accompanied by Sergeant Soolfire. The accountant and other clerks were unceremoniously called together, and the officer gave each, as they severally appeared, a sharp, probing, crucial look.

"Are there any more?" he asked, abruptly, as the last man came up.

"No," returned Allsound.

"Then I think you are mistaken," said the Sergeant. He spoke decidedly and smiled incredulously.

"I am sure I am not."

"You are sure?" interrupted the Sergeant, as he faced Allsound and regarded him fixedly, penetratingly. Allsound quailed and stammered: "It must be so—I—I think that it can't be otherwise."

"Men," spoke the Sergeant, facing round, "your employer says he has lost large sums of money—perhaps he has, but I can hardly trust myself to believe that his suspicion—that among you will be found the culprit—is well founded; however, as he has lodged complaint, I am in duty bound to search your persons, and, if necessary, your places of abode, for evidences of guilt, if there be any."

The men were dumbfounded, but cheerfully submitted to the search. It revealed nothing. The overcoats in the enclosure were then examined, and lo! a duplicate key of the old safe was found in an inside pocket of the accountant's pocket. The Sergeant smiled knowingly, the accountant looked bewildered, the others stared.

"Oh! Sergeant," broke out Allsound, in an alarmed voice, "there is surely some mistake—"

"Hold, hold," said the Sergeant; "let us see if this key unlocks the safe from which you claim the property has been abstracted." Yes, it unlocked it.

"I tell you it's a mistake," again pleaded Allsound. "I would trust my whole fortune to that man; I won't appear against him; I

would not have him arrested for half my store."

"I rather think there was a mistake made by somebody," said Soolfire, slowly shaking his head, and speaking very deliberately. "As you wish it, I will not make any arrest, but I will keep this key, and perhaps it may some day unlock this mystery, or mistake, as you term it." Allsound turned pale and trembled, but dared not remonstrate.

That afternoon, as Arbyght was returning to the store, he met Lionel Trueson, who had just left there.

"Richard," said the lad sorrowfully, "you must leave the store at once."

"Why?"

"That key was placed in your pocket."

"You astonish me!"

"It is true, nevertheless."

"The key placed in my pocket," musingly but emphatic.

"Yes."

"And you—"

"Question me no farther," said Lionel, hurriedly, as he darted past him.

Now it was Richard's turn to think, and think hard.

He left the store.

For two weeks he diligently and untiringly searched for employment, and found none; nor was he alone in this fruitless search for bread. The committee, it has already been remarked, were discharged, but it remains to be told that they were also proscribed, and had it not been for the material aid of the union, generously bestowed, many little mouths would have already hungered for the common necessities of life. Trustgood and McFlynn were men of large families, men who, like Goldsmith, believed "that the honest man who married and brought up a large family did more service than he who continued single and only talked of population." They were men who loved their little ones, their cherished ones, and this love dulled the edge of poverty's sting, and rendered a life of exacting, laborious, never-ending toil, not only bearable, but almost enjoyable. But now, as day after day sped by, they returned to their cheerless fire-sides with haggard looks and dull, aching hearts. No man would employ them, money they had none, and cold, dreary joyless winter—that time "when icicles hang by the wall, when blood be nipt and ways be foul"—was already enfolding them in the icy embrace of famishing despair. Their stereotyped answer of "no work," to the mute, expectant look of their noble-hearted wives, was indeed sad and pitiful to hear. But they believed they were right, and that the hand of God, though not felt in their behalf, was nevertheless near; that though their fate was cast in sightless gloom, the light of justice would one day penetrate and dispense it; that God, as Cowper beautifully expressed it, behind a frowning Providence, hid a smiling face.

Oscar Wood was single, was more boy than man; not yet had "manhood darkened o'er his downy cheek." He was a young Canadian, of ruddy complexion and soft, yielding, graceful manners; as fair and beautiful as girlhood could wish; a smile and kind word he ever had for all. Truly might it be said of him, that "none knew him but to love, none named him but to praise." Yet he was all ardor, all spirit, all soul, when occasion required it. He was one of the first that joined the movement, nor was he least in it, like young Azim,

"Soon as he heard an Arm Divine was raised To right the nations, and beheld, emblazoned On the white flag (Labor's) host unfurled, Those words of sunshine, 'Freedom to the World,' At once his faith, his sword, his soul obeyed The inspiring summons; every chosen blade That fought beneath that banner's sacred text Seemed doubly edged for this world and the next: And ne'er did Faith with her smooth bandage bind Eyes more devoted, willing to be blind, In Virtue's cause; never was soul inspired With livelier trust in what it most desired Than his, the enthusiast here, who kneeling, Believes the form, to which he bends the knee, Some pure, redeeming angel, sent to free This fettered world from every bond and stain, And bring its primal glories back again."

One day Alexander Fargood ran across Richard Arbyght, and during the conversation that followed, Mr. Fargood suggested that the proscribed workmen might flank their enemies by becoming employers as well as workmen, that is, to start business, necessarily on a small scale, for themselves. "Should you conclude to act upon the suggestion I have thrown out," said Mr. Fargood, taking leave of the victimized toiler, "you can rely upon me for any assistance it is in my power to render." Richard thought the matter over, sought the others and talked it over with them, and the result was a determination to give the scheme a trial on a co-operative basis. Richard had a thousand dollars, which he saved while in the army, and McFlynn and Trustgood mortgaged their homes for an equal amount. Oscar Wood was to share alike in the proceeds of the firm, notwithstanding his inability to invest any capital. Though young, he was provident and careful, but being the only support of a widowed mother and an invalid sister, his earnings were all swallowed up in the gaping maw of subsistence.

An old three-story brick building, formerly used as a store-house, but now deserted, was rented, and after some alterations, made to answer for shop, yard, and storeroom. This building stood close to the river, its foundation resting on piles, the walls rising almost from the water's edge, that is such portions of it as raised from the foundation, or first story. About sixteen feet of the lower story, on both

sides, one facing the river, the other the street, were not walled up. The old store was built up to the first story in this shape:—



A large iron pillar was then placed in the vacant corner, from which great wooden beams stretched to either wall, and on these beams the walls were continued two stories higher. Right over this pillar was a room which Richard fitted up as a sleeping apartment, which Oscar and himself occupied, as owing to the enmity with which the employers regarded the movement, it was deemed advisable to keep constant watch over their property.

The four men finally began operations, but made no effort to sell or find a market. They stored their work for the first week in the various rooms of the old building. One very dark night all the manufactured ware was removed to Fargood's storeroom, and by him sold, no one suspecting that it was not his own. But it was soon discovered by Spindle that the man had disposed of their work, and of course Relvason and the rest of the employers were also soon in possession of the fact. This Spindle had no will of his own, he was completely and willingly the slave of his employer, another Fadlanson, whose conduct and opinions, as Moore says, were founded upon that line of Sadi—"should the prince at noonday say, it is night, declare that you behold the moon and stars." And even more, he partook of the hate of his employer. In this instance he rested not until he had ascertained how and by what means the men disposed of their ware, and when the secret opened, the men's market closed. They next attempted to ship their work to outside markets, but Relvason's agents watched them closely, and foiled them on every occasion. Three weeks after the incubation of the enterprise, inevitable ruin stared these men in the face. They had on hand a large amount of material, besides their manufactured stock. All their available means were locked up in a commodity for which they were denied a market. Thus far, this was their darkest hour. The dawn came sooner than was expected. Mr. Fargood stood by them. He had just bought a small refinery, and not being able to supply it himself, concluded to obtain the rest of his work from the co-operators. The syndicate attacked him in the Board of Trade, but he left the Board, and snapped his fingers at the ring, and thus Right got a head and shoulders ahead in the race. The bark was now fairly launched, but not on smooth seas. Like the feeble, glimmering lamp which the Hindu maiden commits with trembling hands to the bosom of the Ganges, as a presagement of good or evil to her absent lover, and watches with terror its disappearance beneath the dark waters, or with joy its safe passage through engulfing waves, so the frail bark sailed upon a sea that every moment threatened it with disaster and ingurgitation, and its progress was watched with eyes as eager and hearts as pulseless as those of the superstitious girl.

One night Richard was out later than usual, being on a visit of mercy to some sorely-pressed brother, and when he returned he found that Oscar had not yet retired—that he was seemingly waiting for him, and that he was evidently disturbed.

Oscar had seen something. Looking out of a window that fronted the river, and from which a good view on either side could be obtained of the foul, murky stream—he, that night, noticed a small boat move silently and cautiously up to the old building, where it remained a few minutes, and then moved across the river, and became lost in the shadow of a large pile of lumber that projected over the docks.

In that boat were three crouching, muffled figures. Richard laughed and made light of the matter, but Oscar could not be dissuaded from thinking that some dreadful calamity was impending. For the first time in the knowledge of those who knew him, the smile left his face and the color faded from his cheeks next day he was moody, uneasily restless, and indisposed to work. Richard watched him thoughtfully, and towards evening went out and bought two Colt's revolvers, one of which he gave to Oscar. The poor, dejected fellow brightened at once. That night, as Richard left the old building, he observed a repulsive looking man standing on the opposite side of the street. Richard advanced towards him, seeing which, the man moved away and darted down an alley. About ten o'clock, Richard returned, and lo! the same repulsive looking man was standing in the same place. Oscar was sleeping sweetly, and perhaps dreaming of his home beyond the lakes, when Richard entered the room. Sleep on, dream on, unconscious Oscar! The shores of your loved Ontario, the smiles of your sainted mother and angelic sister, in whose sunshine now you bask, will soon fade, perhaps forever, from your pure young mind, and purgatorial gloom and darkness shroud your boyish soul!

Richard lighted the gas, examined his pistol, laid it down, then went out into the large cheerless room; he went to the window facing the river, and threw it up. A cold, snow-laden blast swept with a sullen roar into the room; he peered through the deep, thick darkness without; a slight snow, the first of the season, was falling, falling with melancholy stillness. Hark! a low, peculiar whistle sounded dismally over the dark waters—sounded like the wail of a lost soul! Richard shuddered and peered again into the thick dark-