

HOUSEHOLD.

Love.

The night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one,
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one,
Yet the light of the whole life dies
When love is done.

—Bourdillon.

Halcyon Days.

(Fannie Chilbers, in the 'Union Signal'.)

Sunnydale Marsh had a delightful situation on the right of a rushing, winding river. Night was approaching, and as the sun in cloudless splendor hovered above the distant mountains, the fields of the surrounding territory were not unlike miniature seas of golden light, broken only by the long, slanting shadows cast by the tallest peaks.

In the doorway of a pretty farmhouse, all unmindful of the primitive beauty and grandeur of the scene before her, stood a woman not yet thirty, although the sprinkle of gray in the rich, dark hair, and the wistfulness of the soft brown eyes told of heart-aches and longings borne in secret.

'Charles, I hear you intend driving to town to-morrow; do you think there will be room for me?'

There was a moment of suspense for Marie Nelson, who had timidly approached her husband as he sat on the veranda, smoking and reading his evening paper.

'No; I shall be in a great hurry,' he gruffly answered, without lifting his eyes from his paper.

Mrs. Nelson slipped back into the house. She felt that her heart would surely burst at her husband's indifference to her. Oh, for a glimpse of the home she had forsaken for him; for a sight of the high-walled garden with its old-fashioned tangled flowers; the crimson and gold in the evening sky; the homeland; and, above all, a glimpse of her mother's face! But no. She had been trained to rigid ideas of duty by that mother, and here were her children and the man who had ceased to love her, yet the pent-up anguish of her heart burst forth in a cry so deep and bitter that her husband dropped his paper and assumed an attitude of formidable defense, anticipating a 'scene.'

There was no 'scene,' however, for Mrs. Nelson went straight to her baby's crib, and, throwing herself upon her knees beside it, she wept herself to sleep. An hour later when her husband sought her she was still sleeping, a smile upon her parted lips like the smile she was wont to throw back at him in the nights when the clock would strike ten, and they had to say 'Good night.'

Fully thirty seconds Mr. Nelson stood regarding that smile. It stirred strange memories, for his lips suddenly closed and his brow darkened. Ah! Conscience, with remorseless finger was pointing to the men and machinery which had multiplied the comforts of his labor, and the drives with which the rainy days had been beguiled. Then, as unerringly, it pointed to the isolation of her life, without any social contact to enlarge her mental horizon. Even books had been condemned as 'too expensive,' yet there was always a willing expenditure for new and improved farm implements which played no part in the monotonous activities of her work.

Like a thief, Charles Nelson stole to the summer kitchen, and for long hours, pencil in hand, he added, subtracted and divided long columns of figures, until the old, hard look returned to his face. Thrusting the pencil into his vest pocket he went quietly to bed.

Marie Stuart, when only seventeen years of age, had married Charles Nelson, then an enthusiastic young farmer, twelve years her senior, and both had cheerfully come to Sunnydale Marsh to battle with the soil for a living. That was almost thirteen years ago, before the advent of roads, or the lumberman's axe had been applied to the thickets. For two years theirs was an ideal life in which they worked and sang together. Then came the purchase of the farm and the building of the pretty

home in which their children had been born. Increasing prosperity, however, claims its due. There came a day when increasing gains had brought diverging cares in which a silence fell between them; and, without any apparent cause, the song was hushed; the sunshine was shadowed, and they seemed to grow steadily apart—one engrossed in her children, yet silent and observing of the other's neglect, and that other, revelling in his work, harvested with clock-like regularity from sun-up to dusk, and even then was loath to leave his task.

The following morning as the men were filing in to breakfast she heard one of them ask for the line of work for the day.

'Follow up the harvest,' returned Mr. Nelson, looking towards the fields; 'but first of all harness Queen and Bess, as I intend going to town.'

A half hour later as Marie Nelson watched her husband drive out into the smooth gravelled road in the cool, white light of the early morning, her throat became dry and parched, and for a moment her heart seemed to cease beating as she thought of the utter loneliness of the hard, dreary day to which he had left her without even a farewell glance, and were it not for the little ones—her eyes sought the river, but something in the red glow stealing across the waters frightened her.

All that day as she went to and fro about her household work she found it hard to repress the bitterness in her heart. They had been married nearly thirteen years, and yet she could count on the fingers of her two hands the number of times she had been to the village. True, at first, there had been neither roads nor horses; then the babies came to occupy her time, and again there was no resting place in the village save the grass-grown waysides, unless it was the crowded little store which had not even a chair for tired ones like her. Yet at times so great was her longing for a change of scene that she insisted upon going to town with her husband, although she knew she would have to stand for hours while he sought the shelter of the warm saloon. Often at these times she carried a crying babe in her arms while another child fretted at her side.

Again it was sundown, and again Marie Nelson stood in the farmhouse doorway. Like a long white ribbon lay the road for two miles, then it made a sharp turn; crossed a tiny bridge and wound its way around the foot of a long hill, then straight ahead again for five miles to the village. It was over this road Mr. Nelson must come in order to reach home.

'They are cutting the last strip now,' she murmured to herself, transferring her gaze to the distant fields in which vast stretches of grain were falling before her husband's binders.

Fifteen minutes later he drove into the barnyard. There was a step on the threshold, and he entered the summer kitchen, calling:

'Mamie, Mamie.'

A look of unspeakable joy almost glorified the pale face. The name was hailed with the ecstasy of a mariner suddenly coming upon a beacon light in the pervading gloom of despair. Surely her husband had not been to the saloon that day. Too much amazed to speak she dropped the breadknife upon the table, while her sweet brown eyes took in her husband's animated countenance. They were a few feet apart but their glances met. Throwing wide his arms, as in the long ago, he folded her to his heart.

'This is absurd,' she laughed almost breathless; 'the men—'

'Bother the men! Come out and see what I have brought you, Mamie,' and taking her unresisting hand drew her across the step. There, tied to the back paling, was a dainty black mare harnessed to a roomy buggy.

'Dolly and the buggy are yours, Mamie, and hereafter you can drive yourself and the children to town, or about the country, when you feel like it—which I honestly hope will be every day, while I and the men take a turn at the dishes.'

Speechless she sat upon the wooden step, her apron to her mouth, her eyes fastened on the long coveted equipage, while her husband rattled on with the volubility of thirteen years ago.

'To-day,' he said, regarding her as man after a long absence regards something that he loves, 'I sold my entire oat crop for a big price, including the two thousand sacks in the granaries which were left over last year; and,

Mamie, you remember the forty-acre tract I owned out in Olympia Marsh? Well, I traded that for a piece of timber land on the hill; the mare and the buggy were included in the deal. Then—O, I forgot to tell you that while standing in Lane's store, Mrs. Lane came in and said that the Lewis building, next to the Person's photograph gallery, had been donated by Squire Marsh—"Prohibition Marsh," as we used to call him,—to the Woman's Christian Temperance Union for a Hall, a library, a reception room, a sort of nursery for the children while the mothers were at Camp Meeting in the other towns, and—I must tell you, for you'd never guess the rest—Old Marsh's brother and I went halves for a piano, only on paper, however; but Mrs. Lane is coming out to-morrow to talk it all over with you.

'Mamie, Mamie, why girlie,' what's the matter?'

The poor little heart, so long famished for the youthful affection of the man it had chosen in love for its master threatened to be quiet forever until its owner dropped her head upon her husband's knees and gave vent to its emotion in sobs not loud but deep. What a change twenty-four hours had wrought in her life. No longer would the coming days be filled with lonely broodings, and for once in many years she felt she was kneeling at the altar of unalloyed happiness. Surely that smile upon her sleeping face had been directed by those in Heaven who loved them both.

About eleven o'clock the following day Mrs. Lane drove up and the entire morning was spent in planning for a fair to provide carpets, books, toys for the children and music other than the voice of the countrymen discussing oats, ploughs, cattle and so forth. It was named the 'House of Rest,' and above its arched gateway the stranger would read 'Welcome.'

Dreary, dark November has arrived. The 'House of Rest,' however, is ablaze with lights. Sweet, home voices greet you as you enter and you feel the spirit of solidarity is there. Here through the long winter the Woman's Christian Temperance Union Meetings were held, and the farmers, finding how welcome they were, came with their wives and sweethearts, gratefully partaking of the fragrant coffee that was always the signal for the dear old ballad—'Home, Sweet Home.' Was it any wonder that these men were serenely indifferent to the fact that the two saloons, which had often proved the nightmare of their wives' dreams, were compelled to close their doors and migrate to where the chimneys were thicker and the women had nothing to say about their factories of sin.

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The Deacon's Conversion.

(The Rev. A. C. Dixon, D.D., Boston, in the 'Northwestern Advocate'.)

In a city church of about one hundred members, there had not been a conversion in several months. I called the members together and told them that I would be glad to preach every evening for at least two weeks, provided they were willing to unite with me in prayer and effort for the salvation of the lost.

I had come to the meeting prepared to make a talk on the first chapter of John's gospel, in which Andrew found Simon, his brother, and brought him to Jesus, and Philip brought Nathanael. To my surprise the oldest member, and in some respects the most influential in the church, rose at the beginning of the meeting and said that, as the pastor had requested a free expression of opinion, he would be frank enough to say that he did not believe in so-called revivals of religion. He liked the regular service of the church. If special meetings were held he would attend them, because