

world's broad sunlight. The orator of the day was speaking in a ringing, earnest voice, that fell on one ear, at least, like the chime of silver bells. Among the audience his introduction was greeted by little whispers of enthusiastic commendation. A year ago he had had a reputation as leader in all manly sports, a high-bred, high-spirited, merry young fellow, prime favorite among his mates, but rather a "black sheep," when viewed from the professors' standpoint. Suddenly he had become a "reading man" in the strictest sense of the term. He neglected no bodily exercise, but performed this, too, as he did his other tasks, cheerily enough, but without any of the buoyancy and irrepressible joyousness that had been his chief charm to his associates. Guy Forest had grown "peaky" some agreed, but those who loved him most began to think his jaunty airs well replaced by the sweet gravity of his eyes, and the beautiful manly dignity of his altered mien.

Coughs from the audience began to interrupt the speaker; his own clear voice grew husky now and then; wreaths of smoke began to be visible under the dome.

"Hush!" cried some impatient voice and in an instant all was wild confusion. Even the rostrum was invaded in the vain hope of finding an easier outlet. Only the young speaker kept his place. Like a clarion rang his reassuring tones:

"Keep your seats! Be quiet! The doors have been opened. Everything is being done as quickly as possible. There is no danger yet. Do not crowd the passage-ways. There is time for all to escape quietly."

In an attitude of easy unconcern he stood just under the spot in the roof where a tongue of flame was licking downwards. Only his eyes sought hither and thither among the writhing multitude. Ah, there she was! Like a star Mercy's face shone out on him, utterly pale, with thrilling eyes fixed on his face. She, of all, was obeying his words implicitly, keeping her seat with a little blue shawl tightly clutched in her hands, and resting on the back of the seat in front. She had come here for the last time before her marriage with Mr. Howard, and he was standing by, imploring her to come on or it would be too late.

Frantic at length, he took her arm and tried to force her from her seat, and Guy, lifting his hand without a word bade her go, and she rose at once as in a dream. But—

"Oh my God!" It was Guy who said the words between his set teeth. For a great beam came crashing down from the high dome, bringing with it the heavy chandelier. A great cloud of smoke, dust and flying pieces of timber filled the air. Above the din of frightened voices, the stir of hurrying feet, a woman's cry—loud shrill and agonized—reached Guy's ears and pierced his heart. Where was she?

Ten minutes ago Mercy had been sitting under that chandelier listening to his voice, with a face full of a curious pain and pride and interest. Dr. Copeland and his wife were beside her, and one of her little scholars, a fair-haired child was leaning her head against her arm. Mr. Howard had been seated on the other side, more attracted by Mercy's glowing face, apparently, than by the speaker's voice. Now, where were they all? Guy did not stop to think all this, but the question seemed suddenly to concentrate every power of his mind.

"Mercy!" he cried, leaping from seat to seat, towards the spot where he had seen her stand—"Mercy!"

He found her on the other side of the pile of debris, saved as if by miracle. She was kneeling, with a face of agony, trying to lift Mr. Howard's unconscious head, oblivious of the fact that a fiery death was closing in about her.

"He is dead!" she said lifting to Guy her piteously pale face, with blood trickling from a cut in her cheek.

Without a word he caught her in his arms as if she has been a child, and seizing the frightened girl who still clung to Mercy's arm, he forced his way, with the superhuman strength of great excitement through the smoke and stealthy flames, and crashing timber and mad-dened crowd to the pure, sweet safety of the outer air. Mrs. Copeland, no longer severe, but a cowering, frightened, wretched mother, fell on her little daughter with a cry of mighty joy. She had been torn from her in the press. Mercy, who had been struggling to free herself from Guy's iron grasp, no sooner felt herself at liberty than she turned to him with a prayer in her face that he understood at once. To her dying day she never forgot the look he gave her in return—the lofty look of courage and comfort—and then he plunged back into the glowing furnace from whence the last struggling beings had escaped. To Mercy on her knees on the ground watching, with her whole soul in her eyes, it seemed years before he reappeared, and then he came, slowly dragging an unconscious form by one arm. His other arm hung limp and lifeless from a shred of ragged sleeve. The engines came dashing up just then, and a stream of water was turned on the two in the doorway. Mercy saw Guy smile, she saw a whirl of gleaming engines, scarlet coats; she heard Doctor Copeland cry out something and run forward; she saw a sudden quiver shake the great building, and heard a crash that seemed to rend the heavens, and then she saw and heard no more.

Cool breezes fanned her cheek. Her head lay on Mrs. Copeland's lap on the bank of a little stream. Little Ellie was standing over her with eyes of awe and sympathy, her fair hair dotted with flakes of black, and her white dress scorched and soiled. A flash of remembrance came to

Mercy. She raised her head, and her eyes fell on a knot of gentlemen gathered around a prostrate form. It was not Mr. Howard, for, to her great surprise, he stood among them, pale and with a great bruise on his forehead, but otherwise unhurt. She tottered to her feet and called him to her. He saw the horror in her eyes and motioned her back, but she would not heed. "It was I who killed him," she said, in a strangely hollow voice. "I sent him to you, and now he is—dead! I will not look if you say not—there is no need. If looks could bring him back to life he should not lie there long!"

Doctor Copeland was bending over what was left of Guy Forest, with his ear to the breast. There was a moment of breathless suspense, and every heart in that little group was lifted in the prayer that the bright life of the young hero might not be quenched so suddenly.

"He lives!" Doctor Copeland said, rising hastily. "Louisa, my dear, we will take him home with us." Mrs. Copeland, holding her child, whose life the student had saved, by the hand, could offer no remonstrance, and, in a few moments Guy, unconscious, but with a feeble motion about his heart, was borne to the house around which his thoughts had vainly circled for many months. Mercy saw him no more. It is only in books that the sweet duty of nursing the hero back to health and strength devolves upon the heroine. The "Mrs. Copeland" of this world, however, moved by pity, gratitude or other softening influences, are ever mindful of the proprieties. So Guy lay in an upper chamber, with the nurse and the doctor, and sometimes Mrs. Copeland, and after a day or so, his own white-haired father, to encourage him to "take up the burden of life again."

Youth is hopeful and Guy really wanted to live, though much of life's sweetness was gone for him; so he progressed steadily, though slowly, towards recovery. It was long before the low fever, which the doctor ascribed rather to previous excitement and overwork than to the effects of the fire, could be subdued, and then, there was still his broken arm! As his mind grew clear and active once more, he began to wonder how much time had elapsed since Mercy's face had shone out on him like a star that terrible day; and, after asking his father to tell him the day of the month, he turned his face to the wall and lay there many hours perfectly still. She has been a wife one week! That was the thought his weak reason was battling with. But that same evening he heard a shrill childish voice in the garden beneath the window cry out, "Oh, Miss Mercy, I have found a five-leaved daisy!"

In his weakness he began to tremble violently. How vividly it recalled that Spring day, a year ago, when she had appeared to him on the brow of the hill! This, and the fact of her being still here, still "Miss Mercy," bade fair to destroy the resignation he had been striving so hard to attain. What did it mean?

After some days he found his way to that window, and looking down, could see Mercy in a low garden-chair, quietly sewing, with the children about her. Or, sometimes, she would read to them in a sweet, girlish voice about "Briar Rose," or "Cinderella," or "Little Goody Two Shoes." One evening his father having left him to make arrangements about his removal to his home, he was sitting there alone, when she began to sing, softly, as if afraid of being heard, but not so softly but that his ears could catch each word she uttered. Everything, from Mother Goose's melodies to Mendelssohn's, seemed equally pleasing to her little audience. They sat about her in a charmed circle on the grass, their white dresses flecked with tints from the western sky.

"Oh, wert thou in the cauld, couldst blast,  
On yonder lea"—she sang—"on yonder lea,  
My plaidie to the angry air,  
I'd shelter thee! I'd shelter thee!  
Or did misfortune's bitter storms  
Around thee blow, around thee blow,  
Thy shield should be my bosom.  
To share it all, to share it all!"

Her voice and the brilliant sky, and the odor of the violets and hyacinths, seemed to wake the pulsing life in Guy's young breast, and to call to him: "Come down! come out! be as happy as we are!"

"Or were I in the wildest waste,  
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,  
The desert were a paradise,  
If thou wert there, if thou wert there!  
Or were I monarch of the globe  
With thee to reign, with thee to reign,  
The fairest jewel of my crown  
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen!"

Her sewing lay on the grass and her hands were folded, and her wistful face turned towards the setting sun. A sudden commotion and bashful settling among the children attracted her notice, and she found herself alone and face to face with a shadowy apparition bearing but little likeness to the strong young Hercules who had wrestled her from death not two little months ago.

"Oh!" she said, "how rash of you! Sit down!" What else was there to say! He had saved three lives! He was enthroned in her heart, hero of heroes! Every fibre of her being had been filled with thoughts of him, and prayers for him, for many days; but not in real life do young ladies throw themselves at their hero's feet and cry, "My preserver!" So she only looked at him and thought ruefully how very pale he was, and wished that Mrs. Copeland would come and order him back to bed. One of the children stole back and laid a daisy on Guy's knee. It was little Ellie showing thus her gratitude. Guy lifted the daisy, looked at it and

then at Mercy, and she saw, to her terror, that his eyes were heavy, as if with unshed tears.

"Oh!" she said again, and looked away. She could not bear those eyes.

"Was Mr. Howard hurt at all?" Guy asked. "Only bruised and stunned." That was all she could say, but her heart seemed to have stopped beating. The crisis had come.

"I am glad I saved him for you!" The words seemed to Mercy full of unearthly sweetness. Why would he say such things instead of asking her some questions? If she had only known it, the question "When? when?" was echoing through his soul, but he could not ask it. He closed his eyes and leaned back, as if he did not mean to speak again. So Mercy stole up behind him, and presently he heard a shy voice say: "You saved him—but not—for—me!" At the same moment, like a snowflake, a hand slid down on the arm of the chair, a bare lovely hand which used to wear diamonds, but was ringless now. Guy felt strangely dazed.

"Where is he?" he asked at length, staring at that little hand, but not venturing to touch it. "He is gone," Mercy's voice answered, half-laugh, half-sob. "He jilted me, Guy; he said he would not marry me. Was not that sad?" "God bless him!"

Guy did not ask her any questions. Perhaps he was too weak. That hand belonged to him now, he knew, and so he took it, and pulled her round where he could see her face.

"Mine," he said softly and seriously, as if not quite sure that happiness was his at last. "All mine now! But poor, poor Howard—he was more noble than I could ever be! My courage was mere brute instinct—his is glorious self-sacrifice!"

Mrs. Copeland, seeing from her window Mercy kneeling beside Guy, with her head against his arm, only sighed a little. Mr. Howard had prepared her for something of the sort. Only, why would young people be so regardless of appearances?

"It shall be in the shape of a five-leaved daisy," Guy was saying inspecting the hand that lay in his; "that was my talisman, you know!"

"Nonsense!" Mercy answered. "Do you think I ever would have given up Mr. Howard for you? He gave me up!" The daisy had nothing to do with it. But Guy, with a mock-earnest face, "after being jilted, I was so dreadfully afraid of being an old maid—"

"That you are willing to take anything—even a wreck like me!" he said, with a glance at his bandaged arm. But a sudden, thrilling pressure of the fingers he held hushed the words on his lips, and a happy silence fell upon them.

#### ECHOES FROM LONDON.

A SUBSCRIPTION is to be raised for Joseph Bennett, who has fallen and broken his arm, thus necessitating his resignation of the billiard championship.

It is rumoured that the Earl of Aberdeen or the Earl of Rosebery will have the green riband of the Order of the Thistle, vacant by the death of the Earl of Airlie.

MR. W. EASSIE, C.E., is building a house in which electricity will be utilized to such an extent that if it accomplishes only half of what is promised, register offices for domestic servants will soon be a thing of the past.

MISS SANTLEY, the daughter of our finest English baritone, will make her first appearance on the platform at Miss Kuhn's concert at Brighton on the 28th of November. On this occasion Mr. Santley will sing—the only time this season.

THE Marquis of Londonderry has struck on a happy thought. He raises coal in Durham, as all the world knows; but he is now selling his own coal, and as his prices are below the retail merchant, he is likely to do a good business. In these days of falling rents the idea is worth attention.

A PARTS journal contains this important telegram from London: "A revised New Testament has appeared." After all what harm does stale news do people who are ignorant of all news. It has been observed, nations have ever the Governments they merit; readers have ever the telegrams they deserve.

THE *Queen's Book*, when it is published in a cheap edition, will be issued in five small six-penny volumes. They will contain, unabridged, Sir Theodore Martin's life of the Prince Consort, and they are expected to sell very rapidly. At all events the publishers will begin with an edition of twenty thousand copies.

It is announced that the firm of Kegan Paul & Co., of Paternoster-row, is in future to be styled Kegan Paul, Trench & Co. Trade is looking up. For a long time the son of a Duke and the brother-in-law to a Queen's daughter has been engaged in a city house. In Mr. Trench we have the son of an Archbishop.

THE Countess of Clar-mont has written a spirited letter on the state of affairs in Ireland. She proposes the formation of the "Ladies' Loyal League," with branches throughout the

country. Her ladyship says:—"Let the women of each county in Ireland desirous of joining the Ladies' Loyal League send in their names to the central office situated in that county's chief town. Let committees be formed to supply wholesome literature able to counteract the Land-Leaguers' trash now sown broadcast among the people. The committees and Ladies' Loyal League could help the honest poor who are persecuted by these revolutionary tyrants, and, as far as possible, protect them and their helpless dumb animals, on whom, to the shame of humanity be it said, spite is often wreaked. I will gladly receive any suggestions on the subject of this letter that has for its object loyalty to our Queen and country."

MEN and women who were children twenty years ago will be shocked to hear that there is some probability that the once famous Polytechnic Institution in Regent street is about to be turned into a music hall! The lease of the building with the whole contents, including two shops in Regent street to the right and left of the entrance, as also a private house in Cavendish Square, can be acquired for £17,000, and it is estimated that about £5,000 more will be required as a working capital. There is a proposal now under consideration to establish a winter garden, with concerts in the daytime similar to those given in the Pavilion at Buxton, and in the evening to have the usual vocal and semi-dramatic entertainments so much in vogue at the music halls. The lease of the building has thirty years to run. It is held at a rental of £500 a year, but the house in the square and the shops in Regent street bring in more than that amount, leaving the main building rent free.

IN consequence of the Countess of Bective's welcome agitation in favour of English made goods, many drapers are renaming their French-made stock. The whole range of home-spun or rough woolen materials, which bore all sorts of titles, from "beign" to "vigogna," may now be met with bearing such titles as "Scotch homespun," "Leeds manufacture," "Bradford serge," &c. Tickets with the single word "cashmere" written upon them now give place to "Bradford cashmere." Many houses give prominence to cards upon which Lady Bective and committee inform the public that "These goods are English," or made of "bright British wool, and recommended for wear," &c. This revolution is not confined to dress goods, for we may occasionally see hosiery, ribbons, trimmings, and other things bearing the "English mark." There is no doubt that a much needed impulse has been given to the manufacture of British made goods by the efforts of Lady Bective, and those associated with her in her patriotic task.

#### ECHOES FROM PARIS.

PERE DIDON, the Dominican orator who was sent to a monastery in Corsica to study the works of Thomas Aquinas, as a punishment for the liberal character of his sermons, has returned to Paris. The cheerful submission of the learned monk to this rule is worth recording in these days; and his colleagues have welcomed him back with friendly enthusiasm.

MADELEINE BROHAN, of the Comédie-Française, who has spent her holidays in the Tyrol and Switzerland, gives an amusing account of the Swiss railways. Like love in a cab, it is all the time *au pas* and *d'heure*. "One day," says Madeleine Brohan, "as the train was moving out of the station at Geneva, a gentleman followed us along the platform, talking business with a friend who was in our compartment. Five minutes passed and the conversation still continued, the train moving along the rails and the gentleman along the platform. At last the gentleman said: 'Well, excuse me, good-bye; I must go ahead of you for I am in a hurry'."

THE days of climbing Vesuvius have not yet gone by, notwithstanding the railway up to the cone. Last week two eminent British Judges (one of them verging on to three score and ten) tooted it from the Pompeian side to the summit. More will accomplish the same feat, and give the funicular railway the go-by unless that institution along with Italian Government funds some means of protecting travellers from the annoyance and the positive insults of the so-called guides, who are no better than ruffians, who swarm at the upper terminus of the "funicular" and insist *nobis volens*, in helping you up to the mouth of the crater. If you persist in going on your own legs without their aid, you are subject to insult and are driven away from the path by the cry of these brigands, "that is my road, you cannot walk upon it without paying me!"

STORY OF CARLYLE.—Carlyle walked a great deal in order to make his dyspeptic stomach a little reasonable. But sometimes when the great, homely and grizzly old man was walking, with his big eyebrows almost showing from under the brim of his slouch hat, and his long, old-fashioned coat was almost sweeping the pavement, he would stop and pick up a bit of cast-off bread from the street and place it on the kerb-stone, so that some poor man who came along might find it.