

JANET'S CHOICE.

BY ANNIE S. SWAN.

"They say I may marry the Laird if I will, the Laird of high degree."

CHAPTER I.

"He'll be a brow man, some when he likes, or Father's man," said the mother, complacently folding her arms over her snowy apron, and nodding slowly across the cheerful hearth to her visitor, an angular female in a rusty black gown and antiquated, though startlingly brilliant head-gear.

"Oh, I daresay," said Miss Leadbetter, with an affected little giggle. "I'm no sayin' but that Janet's well-favored. But if it be true that she has refused John Galbraith, she's over ill to please; so they say in Gartleston. Ye canna shut folks' mouths, Mistress Dalrymple."

"It wud be a mercy if we could; there are some it wud be a God-send till, I hope they'll get the wheat 'a' in frist. Has ye come to bid to your tea?"

There was nothing inhospitable in Mistress Dalrymple's rather straightforward question. She was accustomed to speak her mind on all occasions, and was said of her that she would not say behind your back what she would not say before your face.

"If it's quite convenient, I have no objections," said Miss Leadbetter, in her simpering way, which somehow always aggravated the honest mistress of Hallyards.

"Oh, it's quite convenient, ye ken that week enough. Sit down a wee or Janet comes in, and she'll tak' ye to lay aff yer bannet. I'm vext about my crimple leg in hairst. It gies the lassie over my muckle adae. But ye wadna think, to look about ye, that there was only ae pair o' hands in the house."

The mistress spoke with a justifiable pride. There could be no spot on earth more spotless, deliciously clean than the wide, low-roofed kitchen of the farm-house of Hallyards. The red bricks on the floor were clean and cool, the roof and walls snowy white, the dresser, the table, and the chairs without a speck on their creamy surface; the tins and the plates in the high rack reflected every glow of sunlight and firelight, the very windows shone again. The wood fire leaped and danced merrily, and the kettle sang its joyous song, suggesting of homely peace and comfort and contentment of the most substantial kind.

The mistress had a "rheumatic leg," and was, therefore, confined to her chintz covered easy-chair, from which, however, she could guide and direct the affairs of the household, not that they needed much guiding, so long as Janet was in the house. Was there ever a daughter so perfect in every respect as "our Janet"?

"Ye are very industrious, Mistress Dalrymple, ye work, work, workin'," said Susan Leadbetter, as she handed the socking from the dresser.

"Eh, these clasher in Gartleston, what will they no say about folk!"

"Ay, what are they sayin' noo?" asked Mistress Dalrymple, with a slow, dry smile.

"They're sayin' that Janet had said 'No' to John Galbraith o' Cummertrees, because she's lookin' a hantle higher. Ah, they say that lass might serve her."

"D'ye hear that, Janet, my woman?" asked Mrs Dalrymple, as a firm, yet light, foot trod the outer passage—Janet's foot, which had music in it for every ear at Hallyards.

"No, mother, what is it? Isn't this a lovely day? Mother, they're at the last breadth of the wheat, as I must get the tea set. But what was it you were saying?"

"No muddle. They're concerned in Gartleston what way ye have said 'No' to Cummertrees, an' Susan Leadbetter has come up to find out 'a' about it."

Janet laughed and it was a pleasant sound. She was a pleasant young woman altogether, Janet Dalrymple—tall, straight, lithe and graceful—with a dainty, proud head, set on a fair, white neck—a pair of lovely, clear, grey eyes, and a wealth of nut brown hair. She looked a lady every inch of her, though her well-shaped hands were neither white nor fine.

Janet Dalrymple was one of Nature's gentle-women, and many, many, may all, loved her, though there were some who grudgingly her beauty, and her pure, lovely and lovable soul. Susan Leadbetter, who had passed from frivolous, empty, selfish youth into sour and disappointed middle-age, looked at Janet with a kind of renewed wonder. She knew for a fact that she would be thirty in October, and yet she was bound to admit that she was as fair as she had been at twenty. Nay, fairer, for there was an added sweetness and an air of exquisite womanliness in her whole bearing which Father Time had given with one kindly hand, while with the other he had stolen away the years. These graces came of Janet's useful and unselfish life, which the grim and narrow spinster could not understand.

"Tell Janet the next bit, Susan," said Mistress Dalrymple, with a kind of quiet enjoyment as her eyes, full of beautiful motherly pride, followed her daughter about the kitchen. David Dalrymple and his wife had given to their one child whatever benefits ample means could supply. They had sent her to a boarding school even in the very face of many solemn warnings from Gartleston busy-bodies, and she had come to them with an added refinement, but otherwise unchanged. The hands which could bring such sweet melody from the keys of the piano in the best room could also knead the lightest of bread, and mold the yellowest and sweetest butter; the feet, so graceful and swift in the dance, were also untiring in the exercise of domestic labor; and the voice which had been trained to read French and sing modern songs did not disdain the rugged mother-tongue which had made the music of her childhood. A paragon is she, my Janet? May be, but I can tell you where you can find her marrow.

Looking upon that calm, serene face, and by the still serious eyes, Susan Lead-

better could not find courage to repeat the most spiteful item from her repertoire of gossip. There was something about Janet which even made her shudder at the strand upon which she had come. Janet's own sweet charity, very boundless and very long-suffering, rebuked the tale-bearer as she had never been rebuked before, and she was glad to make haste away after an early cup of tea, on the plea that she had another errand to fulfil on her homeward way.

The "last breadth" of the wheat seemed to be a heavy one, for Miss Leadbetter had her tea and took her departure, and still there was no sign of the incoming of the reapers from the field. When the door was closed upon the visitor Janet came over to the fireplace and stood there a moment in silence. The mother, with the unerring intuition of love, saw that the depths of the serious eyes were troubled.

"The crater's clasher dinna bother ye, my Janet," she said, quietly.

"No, oh no. The faintest smile trembled on the grave, sweet mouth, then suddenly her color rose fitfully, and her eyes fell. "Mother," she said, and her voice fell very low, "he has come back to Pitcairn."

"My lassie, I feared it. He'll no bide awa'."

"Then I must go, mother, away to Aunt Jean's for a little, for I cannot stay here and bear it."

A slight shiver, which was almost a sob, shook her from head to foot. Her sweet, proud mouth trembled, and with a quick, even impatient, gesture she brushed her eyes with her hand. There were two tears, large hot drops, which veiled the mother's heart. Janet did not often "greet," her heart must have been very sore.

"Whatever you think best, my lassie, just you dae. Father an' me think ye canna dae wrong. Oh, that him or me could bear it for ye."

Janet smiled a wan, uncertain smile.

"I thought I had forgotten, but when I saw him the day I knew I had not. Mother, it is a fearful thing to set your heart so on a man."

"Ye saw him, then?"

"Yes, in the field with his gun. There were other gentlemen with him. Yesterday was the 12th."

"I doot, I doot, Janet, the Leddy o' Pitcairn will need to come to. As far as I can see the Laird is as determined as you or she is."

Janet shook her head, and just then a general fall upon the stairs of hurrying feet, and excited, anxious tones. Janet ran to the door, and there saw a sight which almost made her heart stand still. Borne upon the stout arms of her father's workmen was a prostrate, unconscious figure and the face showed ghastly white in the mellow glow of the autumn sun. It was the figure of the Laird of Hallyards, and the face of Archibald Lundie, Laird of Pitcairn, for when Janet Dalrymple would have laid down her life.

CHAPTER II.

When David Dalrymple saw Janet in the doorway he took two long hasty strides to her side.

"Keep a brave heart, my lass, he's no dead," he whispered in a voice which only Janet could hear. "If I could I wud have been afore them."

"I am a brave," she answered back quickly; then, in her clear, decided way, she bade them bring their burden into the house. She was in the best bedroom before them, and had turned down the fair white coverlet, where the scent of the lavender lingered, and laid aside the lace cover of the pillows with hands which never trembled. In an emergency Janet Dalrymple could be utterly forgetful of self. But when one of his companions, a medical friend from the South, opened the vest, and she saw the red stain on his breast, she closed her eyes for a moment and turned away. The agony of that moment was never forgotten. It was the old story, a loaded gun, a foolhardy scramble through a close hedge, the pulling of a trigger by a treacherous twig, and there lay the Laird of Pitcairn, apparently dead. It was providential, however, that the surgeon was at hand. The pellets were extracted without much delay, and he recovered consciousness in a degree, but it was impossible that he could be removed from the farm. But who could nurse him there? His mother was in Italy, and there were only servants at Pitcairn. Janet watched by him when he slept, and prepared all his food, but after he had been a week at Hallyards he had never looked upon her face. He awoke to full consciousness one drowsy afternoon, when the subdued glow of the sun shining through the white blinds lay in golden folds over all the quaint, sweet lavender-scented room. In the chair by the bed the housekeeper was dozing; he recognized her at once, and even the room seemed strangely familiar. He looked round in a kind of mild wonder. The white curtains looped about the bed with bunches of yellow ribbons, the quaint prints against the old-fashioned wall-paper, on which roses and lilies and forget-me-nots clambered in impossible confusion, the china jars on the mantel filled with bunches of honesty and wild grasses; where had he seen it all before?

"I say, Willis, where am I?"

The sound of the voice awoke the woman with a start.

"Oh, sir, are you awake. Did you speak before? I hope I have not been too careless," she said, anxiously.

"No, no, I'm just this minute awake; where am I?"

"At Hallyards, sir. Don't you remember being carried in?"

"No. The only thing I remember was the gun going off. Hallyards! How long have I been here?"

"Six days, sir. It happened last Friday. This is Thursday."

"Is my mother here?"

"No, sir, but we are expecting her every minute."

"Have you nursed me all the time?"

"Oh, no, sir."

"Who helped you?"

"Miss Janet, sir; and if I live to be a thousand I'll never see a better nurse nor a sweeter young lady," said Willis, with quiet enthusiasm, not dreaming, of course, that what she was saying could be of any special import to her master. She had not long been an inmate of Pitcairn, and so had not heard all the gossip of the place. "Why, she's learned me a lot; me that's been forty years

in the best families, and her not more than twenty, I'll be bound."

"So she don't get the best of it, sir; and Doctor Holroyd, he says if you live you'll have got to thank her. You should hear him on Miss Janet, sir; it wud do you're heart good."

"Ah, my mother is on her way home. She knows I am here, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir; but excuse me, I must go and tell the doctor. He's staying here most of the time; and Miss Janet too; she'll be so glad."

The housekeeper rose, and when he was left alone an extraordinary change passed over the handsome face of Archibald Lundie.

"My Janet," he said to himself, "there was no mistaking the air of proprietorship with which these two words were uttered. His meditations seemed to be singularly sweet, for he had a smile on his firm lips and in his honest eyes, when the door opened, and he turned eagerly, it was only his friend Holroyd, looking overjoyed at the summons to come and see him awake."

"You'll do now, old fellow, though it was a near shave, by George. I've been jolly anxious about you. What do you feel like, eh?"

"Uncommonly hungry, Jack. Can I get something to eat?"

"Of course. You hear that, Mrs Willis? Run and tell Miss Dalrymple. She'll be only too glad to send in a specimen of her glorious culinary art. Issy, Archie, he added, with the door ajar, "are there any more of your daughters like Miss Dalrymple in Scotland? Fit to be a duchess, by George, she is, and yet one of the sweetest women in the world."

"Hold on, Jack," said the Laird, a trifle testily. "I wish you'd get me something to drink, I'm confoundedly thirsty, I can tell you."

The young surgeon ceased his rhapsodies, and proceeded to attend to his patient's wants. The Laird persistently watched the door the whole evening, but his eyes were never gladdened by the vision for which they longed. At last, when the dusk had fallen, and the house-keeper sat quietly knitting by his bedside, he put his questioning into words.

"If Miss Janet has nursed me so faithfully, she has not shown much interest in my restoration. Isn't she coming in to see me?"

"No, sir; she's awa'."

"Awa'! Where, in the name of wonder?"

"Awa' to see her aunt, I think Mrs Dalrymple said. They drove to the station, at any rate, so she has gone away in the train."

Archibald Lundie bit his lips, and turned his face to the wall. It was just like Janet—proud, determined, conscientious to the last, in spite of all her sweet unselfishness. For half an hour he spoke no more, and then there was the noise of an arrival, and in a few minutes the sick-room door was opened, and an anxious mother ran in and fell upon her knees beside the bed.

"My son, my darling son, I am so thankful I have got to you at last. I thought I never should—I have had so many delays."

The tears stood in the proud eyes of Marion Lundie, as she looked upon the prostrate form and pale face of her only son. The part of her mind that was devoted to Janet Dalrymple, and there he lay, and she owed his life, they had told her, to the nursing of the girl she despised.

"I'm all right, mother—don't bother," he said, with his old affectionate smile.

"And they have cared for you like their own in this house. God bless them! I'm all right, mother—don't bother," he said, with his old affectionate smile.

"She has gone away because of me, mother," the Laird of Pitcairn made answer, gravely, and with his honest eyes fixed on his mother's face; "and it is only you who can bring her back."

CHAPTER III.

Aunt Janet was the wife of a hard-worked surgeon in the manufacturing town of Hazelrigg, and was as busy among her little boys and girls as her husband was among his numerous patients. It was a jolly, happy household, where the stir and din never ceased from morning till night. More than once Janet Dalrymple had found it a blessed relief from the quiet of Hallyards. Aunt Janet asked no questions when she arrived that August evening without any warning, but gave her the warm, motherly welcome which never failed.

As for the eight, they went wild over Cousin Janet, who could tell such lovely stories, and who was never too tired or too much occupied to share their romps, though Uncle Alec came in to his tea he looked rather quizzically at Janet as she shook hands with her, noting the unusual lack of color, and the heaviness of her fine eyes. Of course they had heard of the accident that had happened at Hallyards, and knowing a little of Janet's trouble they surmised correctly what was the meaning of her sudden invasion of their abode. Janet was sitting in her own room that night with her dressing-gown on and her hair hanging all about her shoulders when Aunt Janet came in. Janet was very dainty in her dressing, and liked everything nice about her. As her mother often said, she was "work like" when at her work, but when it was over she could appear like "a real leddy."

"That's your uncle away out again, Janet, my mother's baby, my dear; the seventh this week. Poor man, he's trotted off his feet. I won't sleep till he comes back. May I come in?"

"Yes, of course."

Janet smiled at the round, sweet, motherly face beaming at her through the half-open door. In spite of her demure, Janet had never been known to fall in a single case; it cannot fail, for it is a combination of the most powerful pain subduing remedies known. Try a 10 cent sample bottle of Nerviline. You will find Nerviline a sure cure for neuralgia, toothache, headache. Buy and try. Large bottles 25 cents, by all druggists.

"Was troubled with headache, bad blood and loss of appetite, and tried all sorts of medicines without success. I then tried one bottle of Burdock Blood Purifier and found relief in 10 days." A. J. Meindle, Mattawa, Ont.

Says a Washington correspondent: "It is regarded here as very creditable to Mrs Harrison's good feeling that she has on the mantle of her boudoir a photograph of the amiable mother and daughter who preceded herself and daughter as the ladies of the White House. It is a picture taken by Prince several years ago only for private circulation, and never allowed by Mrs Cleveland to be sold."

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A REWARD—Of one dozen "TRADER BY" to any one sending the best four lyrhyme on "TRADER BY," the remarkable little gem for the Teeth and Bath. Ask your druggist or address

to stay away," she said, quietly, "but she can't on any one case—less something happens which never will. He knows it very well, and will go away from Hallyards whenever he is able, because he knows he is keeping me out of my father's house, and I wish you would not say any more about it. Sit down and tell me all about Bobbie and Dave and the rest. What are you going to do with all these great boys, I wonder?"

"Who lives longest will see most," said Aunt Jean, enigmatically, and left the Laird of Pitcairn in peace. For three weeks Janet abode at Hazelrigg, until she heard that Pitcairn had left Hallyards and was going south with his mother immediately. Then she began to talk about going home, and Aunt Janet saw well enough that she was waiting to hear that Archibald Lundie had left Pitcairn likewise, and guessed that she was to go with him, for she knew her own womanly weakness and feared any meeting with the Laird.

So the days went on until Janet had been a month at Hazelrigg. She was sitting in the shabby but cozy drawing-room one afternoon embroidering a white work for her mother's bonnet, when a knock came from the nursery. It was very warm and sunny for September, and the blinds were all down, so that she could not see into the street. She had been playing a little on the old piano which the bairns had battered completely out of tune, and was crooning to herself some of the melodies she had played. But it was unconscious music, for she was thinking over the old theme, and her heart was very sore. Although she had strength to put away from her the love which seemed to be the most precious thing on earth, it had not been done without suffering. If sacrifice and suffering be love's crown then Janet was crowned indeed. She heard wheels presently on the street, and a carriage stopped at the door, but said no word, except to think that it was Uncle Alec's brought back to see if any new message had been left. But immediately the door opened, and when she raised her eyes she saw quickly to her feet, and let all her work fall on the floor. For there was Archibald Lundie looking at her with those honest eyes she dared not meet; and when he had closed the door he just came straight to her, and took the proud, graceful figure in his arms.

"It is no use, my darling, in the name of God, I will be good to you, as well as resign yourself to your fate."

Though it was passing sweet to her free, to be taken, she struggled to be free, and at last, holding herself aloof, raised her sweet, large eyes to his face. No shadow came upon his when he looked into these eyes; her Janet, with all her pride, could not hide the love of her heart. The lips might speak cold, measured words of prudence, but the eyes were eloquent.

"Why have you come to torment me?" she said, and her voice was sharp with pain. "I left you; cannot you be as good to me?"

"It will be good to you, my darling, but in a different way," he said, with that manly and protecting tenderness which is the natural outflow of a great love. "It is no use, Janet. This is the wife God has given me, and nobody shall take her from me. Tell me quick that you have not changed since that day we met together in the Hallyards Woods. There isn't a moment, Janet, for there's some body else longing to see you, and here she is. You'll have to make up to me soon, my lady, for the meagre satisfaction of these moments."

There was a slight knock at the door. "It will be good to you, my darling, but in a different way," he said, with that manly and protecting tenderness which is the natural outflow of a great love. "It is no use, Janet. This is the wife God has given me, and nobody shall take her from me. Tell me quick that you have not changed since that day we met together in the Hallyards Woods. There isn't a moment, Janet, for there's some body else longing to see you, and here she is. You'll have to make up to me soon, my lady, for the meagre satisfaction of these moments."

Archibald Lundie's mother entered. She looked eager and anxious, but even in the agitation of the moment she had time to note with approving wonder the graceful outline of Janet's figure, the proud poise of the dainty head, and the sweetness and strength of her face.

She came directly across the room, and took both Janet's passive hands in hers.

"Kiss me, my dear, and forgive me. Since you are to be my daughter you must learn to care for me a little. I am sure I shall love you very much."

Mrs Lundie capitulated with an exquisite grace. It was impossible to resist that sweet appeal. Janet's eyes filled, and her hands trembled in the clasp of Archibald Lundie's mother. The elder woman placed the girl's hands in her son's strong grasp, and he, stepping down, kissed Janet for the first time. It was a betrothal kiss, and which there was no appeal. Before the year was out Hallyards lost its sweet daughter and Pitcairn gained a new mistress, who found there the sunshine of a blessed life, because of the sunshine which she shed about her where she dwelt.

In 10 Days' Time.

Was troubled with headache, bad blood and loss of appetite, and tried all sorts of medicines without success. I then tried one bottle of Burdock Blood Purifier and found relief in 10 days." A. J. Meindle, Mattawa, Ont.

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A Boy's Decision.

Many years ago, Mr Hall, an English gentleman, visited Ireland for the purpose of taking sketches of its most beautiful scenery to be used in an illustrated work on Ireland, which has since been published.

On one occasion, when about to spend a day in the neighborhood of Lake Killarney, he met a bright young Irish lad who offered him his services as a guide through the district.

A bargain was made with him, and the party went off. The lad proved himself well acquainted with all the places of interest in that neighborhood, and he did his work well, and to the entire satisfaction of the visitor. On their return to the starting point, Mr Hall took a flask of whiskey from his pocket, and drank some. Then he handed it to the boy and asked him to help himself. To his great surprise the offer was firmly but politely declined.

Mr Hall thought this was very strange. To find an Irish boy who would not touch nor taste whiskey was stranger than anything he had seen that day. He could not understand it; and he resolved to test the boy's temperance principles. He offered first a shilling, then half a crown, and then five shillings, if he would taste that whiskey. But the boy was firm. A real manly heart was beating under his ragged jacket.

Mr Hall determined to try him further, so he offered the boy a golden half-sovereign if he would take a drink of whiskey. That was a coin seldom seen by lads of this class in those parts. Straightening himself up, with a look of indignation in his face, the boy took out a temperance medal from the inner pocket of his jacket, and holding it bravely up he said: "This was my father's medal. For years he was temperate. All his wages were spent in drink. It almost broke my mother's heart; and what a hard time she had to keep the poor children from starving! At last my father took a stand. He signed the pledge and wore this medal as long as he lived. On his death-bed he gave it to me. I promised him that I would never drink intoxicating liquors; and now, sir, for all the money your honor may be worth, a hundred times over, I would not break that promise." That boy's decision about drink was noble. Yes, and it did do good, too. As Mr Hall stood there astonished, he screwed the top on to his flask, and flung it into the water of the lake near which they stood.

Then he turned to the lad, and shook him warmly by the hand, saying as he did so: "My boy, that's the best temperance lecture I ever heard. I thank you for it. And now, by the help of God, I will never take another drink of intoxicating liquor while I live."—Rev Dr. R. Newton.

ever Despair.

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Things a Lady Hates.

She hates dirt. Every morning she begins a new campaign against dirt, and she does not approve of feather dusters which, as she remarks, set the dust flying in the air, only to settle upon the furniture as soon as her back is turned. She is not content until she has gathered the dust and shaken it out of the window into the universe. That is where it belongs, but, owing to the total depravity of inanimate things, it returns to vex her righteous soul and arouse it to renewed hostilities on the following day.

She hates disorder, though not as intensely as dirt, and she has some times peculiar ideas of what disorder is; but she hates disorder, nevertheless, and

Mr Alex. McBeath, of Stanley, moved a barn for Mr Wm. Dayman, one day last week, a distance of 90 rods, in the short space of five hours. Other practical men declared that it would require at least two or three days to accomplish the work, yet Mr McBeath did it in the time mentioned above, in a highly creditable and satisfactory manner.

Mr Hazen F Murray, of Pictou, N. S., writes: "I was affected with dyspepsia and nervous debility, and tried many remedies without avail, but one bottle of Burdock Blood Bitters much improved me, and two more made me a well man."

Requires no description, since, with rare exception, all at some time have experienced their twinges. Rheumatism is not easily dislodged, only the most powerfully penetrating remedies reach to its very foundations. The most successful treatment known, and it is now frequently resorted to by medical men, is the application of that now famous remedy for pain—Polson's Nerviline. It is safe to say that nothing yet discovered has afforded equal satisfaction to the suffering. A trial can be made at a small cost, as sample bottles of Nerviline can be had at the drug stores for 10 cents, large bottles 25 cents.

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