

and laying them against the wasted haggard cheek which once was round with rosy childhood.

This was the first commission.

Then he wanted garden flowers, and he wanted a water-melon. They cost so much in Paris; it was to be a treat for an Italian hurdy-gurdy boy with white mice, who had broken his leg, and who cried all day and all night for his mice which were taken from him in hospital. Dr. André was keeping the mice, and very tiresome it would have been had he not enlisted the services of a wild little street-imp of a girl who lived in the same house—Fifine, to whom he had once done a great service, rewarded by marvellous adoration and fidelity.

Then Dr. André wanted some butter and some fruit for a tea-party he was going to have, consisting of five children who had all come out of hospital doing him credit, and to whom he meant to give tea-parties until their little pale faces bloomed again. Half-fed children,

these went to his heart, and for them he wrote gaily, he would prey unblushingly on his farmer aunt.

The hamper that was got ready to go to Paris was crammed to over-flowing. Génie started to take it to the station herself, but she had to sit down constantly to rest on the way, until she suddenly encountered Monsieur Canière.

There was a brief contest between his elegance and his goodness of heart, but the latter conquered, and removing his gloves he carried the hamper himself to its destination.

"I do not know how to thank you, monsieur," said Génie gratefully as they reached the hot, glaring little station, and Monsieur Jean sat down and fanned himself. He was very warm, for the hamper was heavy, and moreover the consciousness of his good action gave him a glow of pleasure.

"You could never have done it, mademoiselle," he said, "It demands the arm of a man."

"It does indeed, monsieur; it was

too much for me. I am infinitely obliged."

They walked home together, and as they reached the door Monsieur Jean made a profound bow and said, "My mother is an invalid, mademoiselle, as you know. She bids me say that a visit from you would greatly gratify her."

"I will come with pleasure at any time that may suit Madame Canière," said Génie simply.

"Then this evening after dinner you will do us the honour?"

"If Madame Féraudy can spare me I will come."

"And, mademoiselle, to show you that your wishes are my law, my mother dines to-night on a boiled fillet of veal."

"You are too good," said Génie fervently, and she looked up at him with such deep gratitude in her soft grey eyes that Monsieur Canière there and then determined that his mother should try a sweetbread to-morrow.

(To be continued.)

OUR SUPPLEMENT STORY COMPETITION.

AMY'S DELIVERANCE.

A STORY IN MINIATURE.

FIRST PRIZE (£2 2s.).

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TO THE COMPETITORS.

DEAR GIRLS,—It has given me great pleasure to look over your papers. I have examined them *all*, and find the average very high. The composition is generally good, and the ideas invariably so, even in the youngest. It is a great privilege to see one's own thoughts so carefully reproduced by so many, for there were 308 competitors. All cannot win a prize, but all can derive benefit from such an exercise, requiring thought, method, and care. Some were disqualified by not having carefully attended to the *rules* of the competition, and one seems to have mistaken the story; but on the whole, it is surprising and very gratifying that so many should thoroughly grasp and clearly set forth the ideas of another writer. If my little story has taught you a few things, or led you to reflect on the need of deliverance from our besetting sin that every Christian must experience in this life, I am indeed more than content—I am very glad; and I beg to thank you all sincerely for the honour you have done me.

Yours truly,

ANNE MERCIER,

Author of "Amy's Deliverance."

FIRST PRIZE ESSAY.

THIS is not a tale of romantic heroism, as the title might suggest, but none the less interesting and infinitely more instructive as the story of a deliverance from that terrible if familiar enemy, Self. We are introduced to Amy Bowdon and her mother at the sculptured entrance to the beautiful church of St. Owen in old Rouen. Amy is pretty, but peevish, and her mother, whose sad, sweet face betokens a recent bereavement, is hurt by her waywardness. She has undertaken this journey to La Belle France mainly in the hope that the change of environment may brighten her daughter's spirits.

Amy was the spoilt child of a spoilt father. An only son, and his father's idol, deprived of a mother's care at an early age, weakened by prosperity and praise, he had lived life for the pleasure it could give him, and had imparted not a little of his temperament to his only daughter, whom he treated as a playmate, ministering to her whims and pleasures rather than fostering the woman within her.

But life has its clouds and storms as well as its roseate dawns and purple sunsets. Amy's father dies suddenly. His own father, from whom he was estranged, had predeceased him, leaving his fortune for Amy when she should come of age. A liberal sum was allowed for her education, but Mrs. Bowdon had to meet heavy bills incurred by her husband, and resolved to economise and pay the most pressing out of the allowance made for Amy, keeping the true facts of their position from her until she was older. A "candid friend," however, out of revenge on Mrs. Bowdon for marrying the man she admired, tells Amy she is her grandfather's heir, and her mother is using the money and concealing the facts from her for her own purposes. She informs Mrs. Bowdon what she has done. Mrs. Bowdon weakly refrains from acquainting Amy with the true state of affairs, and

Amy, with a poisoned mind, mistrusts her mother.

At this juncture we are introduced to Edith Shepherd, an English girl living with her father at Rouen. She is engaged as governess to Amy, and, hearing the mother's story, determines to undertake the regeneration of her wayward charge. Her own devotion to her father, the filial love of the Bonnevals, whose *château* Amy subsequently visits with Edith, the useful work carried on among young people at "L'école Ménagère" have their lessons. Mrs. Bowdon afterwards goes to Brittany. Edith is invited to accompany them, but determines to stay with her father, whose sight is failing. Before they part, Edith wins Amy's confidence, and advises her to ask her mother all. Amy's heart is melted, when she returns home and finds a birthday present from her mother is a new frock and on it a silver cross, bearing the words "L'amour c'est le croix." She tells her mother she will be good, and, as she is now fourteen, Mrs. Bowdon opens to her the sealed book of their family history.

Shortly afterwards Amy is rescued from a great danger, and her mother's thankfulness for her escape finds a response which proves how perfect is Amy's Deliverance.

They return to London, where Amy continues her studies. Her happiness is complete, when a letter arrives from Edith announcing that she is about to marry Mr. Buxton, the clergyman who took them to "L'école Ménagère," and that they are going to start a housewifery school in the slums, and want her co-operation. The story leaves Amy verging on her majority, doing with a will the work that lies next her hands, seeking to uplift and instruct and to forward her Master's Kingdom, and bearing the laurel of a sanctified life as the sign of Amy's Deliverance.

EVA M. MOORE.

* * This essay is printed exactly as written without any correction.—Eo.