

A Spring Shower.

BY MISS PERAZICH.

Down the drops come, tinkle, tinkle,
With a sudden dash and sprinkle,
Though as blue as periwinkle
Was the sky.

"Some mysterious lokus pokus,
Knocked about us and woke us up,
Cries a little yellow cross,
With a sigh.

There's a roaring! there's a clatter!
There's a rattle and a patter
Of the dust, as comes the patter
Of the drops.

Such a drencher, such a peller,
Is it yet when, halp-killer,
Everything has found a shelter,
Then—it stops.

SHIRLEY CARSTONE.

By ELIZA ARCHAID.

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[CONTINUED.]

She had in her nature that ineffable,

wonderful human sympathy which unlocked

all hearts, young and old, which drew them

and held them bound to her forever. It was

magical, because it was genuine. Young and

old instinctively went to her as to a confes-

sional, and told her their sorrows and their

sins.

It may have been because the undercurrent

of her thought still ran on the poem she was

to have written so long ago, it may have been

because of the suffering and needs she saw

all around her, but Shirley became above all

a messenger of good to women. Her heart

went out above all to the toilers of her own

sex.

Women far and near, the aspiring and

ambitious, the sick, the weary, the starving and

the heart sore, those who had broken their

wings against the solid wall that shut in a

woman's life, these came to her, and they

poured out all their hearts to her, and be-

sought her to tell them what they might do.

As she grew older, and her vision gradually

took in all the round horizon of experience,

many things were clear to her that had been

dark before. It became clear to her that

limited only by the moral laws, freedom of

will is the greatest good for humanity, man

and woman alike.

She taught them to reverence nothing

merely because it is old.

She taught them to look into the heart of

things, and ask: Are courage, wit, intel-

lectual power, the strength to achieve, qual-

ities that belong only to men?

She pointed out to them that the personal

feelings and emotions of man or woman count

for very little in the destiny of the race.

Greater than man's nature or woman's na-

ture is human nature, underlying all, holding

all in its grasp. She showed them how ab-

surd and childish and physiological super-

stitions concerning woman's mind and body

have been taught by medical men through

heavy centuries. They said only because no

woman contradicts them.

Out of the strength drawn from the bitter

cup she herself had drained, though she

knew it not, she was able to tell them that

the individual happiness or unhappiness is a pit-

ifully small thing. That the road to wis-

dom was to lose sight of their own emotions

and sorrows in the culture of the mind, in

broad human interests. That suffering will

no longer be the lot of woman.

She made them, flinging away as far as

may be their personal hopes, fears and

disappointments, to keep step with the grand

music of the onward cycle of time.

She told them to see to it that they did not

lie like clods to be trodden under foot, or

shoved out of the way, but that themselves

be up and working for the progress of

womanhood towards the light—womanhood,

the larger half of the human race. For

greater than passion and gratified petty am-

bition, greater than love even, greater

than all, is the march of humanity into the

light.

Further, as they would find peace for their

souls, she made them never lose sight of re-

solve, never cease to will and to aspire.

Every steadfast effort that a woman makes,

every striving of the individual to become

freer and stronger, even through disappoint-

ment, sickness and weariness, brings a mo-

ment nearer the good time which is surely

coming for the sex. The woman's day is at

hand. It will be a brighter, happier day than

the ages have yet disclosed. She told them

to be sure of that. She told them of her own

unshakable faith that thus the centuries to

come would develop a strong and splendid

race of women, fit mates for the kings among

men.

So she talked with them till their hearts

burned within them. Her voice had a note

like a trumpet ring. From that day on there

was for them no more despair, no more look-

ing backward. Like her they set their faces

forward and pressed on. Women came to

her with tears in their eyes, they sent mes-

sages from half round the world, thanking

her and blessing her for all she had been to

them.

Shirley the Poet became Shirley the In-

spire, the Comforter.

In giving happiness to others she lost her

self and ceased to think of her own sorrows

and disappointments. So she found at last,

in a measure, happiness for herself.

She had somewhat of reward, the sweetest,

highest reward that can fall to mortal lot.

And yet—al! that she had done and wrought

for others could not be accomplished without

some straining at the silver cord.

"O him that overcometh, all things shall

be given," was said of old. Shirley had over-

come; yet little had been granted her. Her

nature to give out always more than she

received. So at last she began to be ex-

hausted. That was the pity of it. A sense of weariness

oppressed her, a distaste for even the daily

tasks she liked best. She said to herself once

more: "The ship must have changed. Her life

seemed far from out."

Alas, alas! It was the heaviest of iron pres-

sures upon the golden hair. The iron pressed

at last upon the golden heart, too.

One day, while she thus sighed for change,

Shirley got a letter. It said:

"My wife is dead. May I come?"

Once more, past youth as she was, her heart

gave a wild bound. She covered her face

with her hands, as had been her wont in her

childhood when powerfully excited. Then

she laughed at herself in scorn, then she was

vered at her folly. After all, was it still only

the same uncontrolled, passionate spirit of

old? Was this all she had learned in these

years of hard discipline?

She shook her head impatiently, saying to

herself:

"Shirley Carstone, you are an idiot."

Be sure the gray twilight is full of sweet

thoughts for her that night. The forlorn

wings would be free to fly at last. Was the

light coming even to her? Were peace, joy,

love to hers too, even after all these years?

It seemed too good to be true. But there

was his letter. It was the supreme dream of her life

flashed across her hapless vision. The poem,

the poem! She would indeed write it now.

The toiling for others, the weary occupation

at tasks she disliked, was over at last, at

last! Nothing would come between her and

her hope.

Once, she thought of

in his pupils

across

"High as he is, distinguished as he is, he

shall be proud of me!"

It was like the sunset sun bursting glor-

iously through a mountain of cloud.

Meanwhile, a thousand miles away, a man

impetuously awaited the coming of the slow

footed days. He could scarcely keep himself

within bounds till the post-train came. States

mail brought him a letter. He was off to

himself to read it with a gasp. He opened

it with untidy hands. It only said:

"Come."

Only that one word.

How he would gather her to his heart and

hold her there forever! Her weak woman's

arms had upborne so much, and so long.

Now his strong man's hands would hold hers,

and strengthen them and steady them the

rest of the way. He would care for her as

no husband ever cared for wife before, be-

cause she had suffered so much. One of his

first thoughts, too, was for the poem. Above

all, she should write her poem at last. He

would uphold her and encourage her while

she wrote. No more weariness or self sacrifice

for her, no more sorrow or loneliness for

either. Light had broken for them both.

He hastened to go. At the moment of

starting an unexpected business matter held

him back. He would wait. He would wait his

impatience, and waited. Another letter from

Shirley in the morning. He opened it and

was stunned to read:

"There is great news for you. I have

found your very dear friend."

The rest of the letter left no doubt of the

truth. Every point of information was sup-

plied, even the name of the young man.

It was one he had given to Myra in the days

of their brief, foolish courtship. The unfor-

tunate woman had a passion for jewels, which

clung to her even in her crassest condition.

One day, then, she had been to the jeweler's

and had bought a ring. It was a ring, proving

there in the midnight, had taken both. It

was the ring which sealed the foolish engage-

ment that had last made it possible to trace the

boy.

No, not a link was missing from this strange

story. Shirley did not say where his boy was,

never, however. The merely told him that

he knew where they were. Boys! Why, they

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