THE TRUE WERENESS AND CATHOLIC CHRONICLE

June 14, '82

USELESS FRIGHT. To worry about any Liver, Kidney or Brinary Trouble especially Bright's Disease or Diabetes as iffin Bitters never talls of a cure where a ourclis possible. We know this.

2



he Author of "Guy Earlscourt's Wife, "A Wonderful Woman," "A Mad Marriage," "Redmond O'Donnell," etc.

PART II.

CHAPTER II.-CONTINUED.

There is a tap at the door It proves to be Miss Rice in persor, who wishes to know she is going to sing to-night with Joanna. So Leo goes, and Mrs. Abbott takes another strand of pale gold silk, and looks at Su sanna's flowing tresses with a very thoughtful fice.

She thinks of Joanna and her husband. What Leo has discovered to-day for the first time is a very old story to Leo's mother. It surprised her at first, it puzzles her still, but she does not object to it—she has found it useful in more ways than one. Mr. Abbott, in words, has never, since that first day, objected in the least to the presence of Geoffrey's ward, as they call her, but in action he has objected to her, all these five years, as strongly as man can. He avoids her as he might a snake; if they meet by chance he beats a retreat; If she enters a room where he is, he leaves it; he breaks off whatever he is saying to listen to her when she speaks. If she stays for dinner, as she has on one or two occasions, he dines in solitude.

This is all very remarkable, but more remarkable still is that look his face assumes at sight of her-that look is so extraordinarily like one of shrinking fear. Who is this girl? What is she to the Sleafords? What to her husband, that all this should be so? What secret binds him and this man Sleaford together, in its dark tie?

For Joanna-she is evidently unconscious of her power. She sees that Mr. Abbott avoids and dislikes her, but she is used to that, and does not mind. She dislikes him in turn, so they are quits. That she has any further hold upon him she is unsware. Mrs. Abbott thinks of all this, but she has little desire to lift the veil; the screen that hides her husband's past life as a merciful one; she shrinks from ever knowing what lies behind. If she does not wish for the presence of Mr. Abbott, when her children's young friends assemble at Abbott Wood, she has but to keep Joanna by her side-he will not come. She takes advantage of this to see rather more company than was her wont. Joanna's presence is a guarantee that Mr. Abbott's uncultured remarks will not put har to the blusb.

Brightbrook has some very desirable residents now; very nice people, indeed, come there for the summer, and there is abundance of pleasant society for Leo. Mr. Abbott in- of course, but simple ones always. Joanna trudes not, for Joanna is always there to sing. Long sgo, Mrs. Abbott, who really sees that gaiety would not accord with the not resolutely refused to give her up.

Those five years have not altered him in any way, except that he daily grows more besotted with drink and 'dry rot.' He lets Mr. Abbott comparatively alone ; his pockets are always well filled, his girls and boys well dressed, the old rude plenty reigns at the her, condescendingly, "only she ought to put farmstead, the old 'swarrys' still obtain, it is a bit of pink ribbon or blue flowers in her the rendezvous of a very lively lot of young | hair." men and maidens. People have grown to accept Sleaford and his thriftlers family, and pretty well ceased to wonder at his connection

hink you ought. It nearly killed her, bere. I do not order, you to do so I leave it to your own conscience. But I think you ought.'

That is all. There is a struggle in the wild heart of Sleaford's Joanna-the first struggle between right and wrong, and right conquers. She goes lingeringly up to Olga Ventuor, standing for a moment alone, and stammers out her confession. "It was me," she says, composedly.

didn't mean to hurt you -only to out off your hair. I'm very corry. I hope you-you don't mind !" "You!" Olga exclaim, horror in her eyes.

All the terror of that terrible time returns to her. She looks at her with fear, with abhorrence, and turns and flies.

Joanna stands mute, motionless. Halt an hour after, when Olga, her first panic over if Miss Leo will come and practise that duet and ashamed of what she has done, returns, she finds her standing there still. "I am sorry," Olga said, but her head is very erect as she says it-she does not look sorry. "I do not mind in the least-now. I did not think when I ran away. I hope

you do not mind." The black eyes look at her. They are so fierce, so full of hatred, that Olga recoils.

"I will mind as long as I live!" Joanna says, and turns from her striking down the hand she has half held out.

So ends Joanna's first impulse to try to be good.' Alas! most of her impulses end in the same way.

There are lights, and flowers, and fair faces, and music, and feasting in silent, stately Abbott Wood to-night, for the little daughter of the house is fifteen, and ber friends and Olga's and Geoffrey's are down from the city in force to wish her many happy returns.

She has had her wish. It has snowed all day, and now the morn, a brilliant Christmas sickle, shines down on glistening snow; black, bare trees gaunt bedges and avenues but it is windless, and still mild. It is no green yule, and great fires blaze high in gleaming grates, for no abomination of pipes or registers desecrate winter at Abbott Wood. The "mistletos bough" hangs from the drawing room ceiling, though the custom of kissing under it is more honoured in the breach than the observance; holly, and arbutus, and winter berries adorn walls and windows, and there are flowers, flowers, flowers everywhere. A tolerably large company are coming-nearly all young people, for it is understood it is little more than a girl's party after all.

, Remamber | come early, Joanna," is Mrs. Abbott's last injunction ; " and be in your best looks and voice to-night."

Joanna shrugs her shoulders.

'My looks do not matter in the least. My voice I will try and have to order," is her answer. It is for her voice she is here, she knows, not for herself.

She comes early, and dresses in a little room that is kept for her use. There is so much envy and bickering with Lora and Liz, that she keeps but few of her things at home. Mrs. Abbott provides her dresses, will have nothing else, and Mrs. Abbott likes the girl, would have taken her to Abbott Wood 'for good' had Giles Sleaford of dark blue silk, but so plainly made that not resolutely refused to give her up. and chain, her abundant reddish hair braided as tightly and compactly as possible about her small head, and she is ready. And she looks very well, "slim and genteel, and quite the lady," Mrs. Hill, the housekeeper, tells

Joanna laughs.

"To put pink ribbon in red hair would with Mr. Abbott. A billionaire is a privileged good-humouredly. Of personal vanity she being. They are proud of Abbott Wood and has not a particle; her red hair does not She goes down, and Mrs. Abbott glances key.

Then she rises, and they make way for her six young ladies and gentlamen, exclusive of and a thousand times better to dradge in of the smokers, and drankers, and bummers of the pass with a certain deference and wonder." The timily, have furned their hungry atten. Sleaford's kitchen, to cook dradge in of the smokers, and drankers, and bummers of the pass with a certain deference and wonder." The timily, have furned their hungry atten. Sleaford's kitchen, to cook dradge in of the smokers, and drankers, and bummers of the pass with a certain deference and wonder." The timily, have furned their hungry atten. Sleaford's kitchen, to cook dradge in of the smokers, and drankers and bummers of ... Who is she that plain girl with the tion. The Miss Bleafords in brand new silk pots and panar and know no higher, tair life. "Well—be's an out and out good fellow is beautiful voice ?" they ask in undertones. and is beautiful voice ?" they ask in undertones. and have gone to meeting in Brightbrook. I might live as a an animal does their the funde there with them As, she moves on, Frank Livingston meets and brought their friends back with them. her, and holds out his hand. Joanna has cooked, but has refused to wait at "It is the first time I have had a glimpse

of you to-night, Mile. Cantatrice," he says. You sing more and more like, an angel every day. You always make me want to go into a corner and cry whenever you open your month !"

Joanna laughs. The compliment is ambiguous, to say the laast, but her sombre face lights into momentary brightness at his careas words. The next moment he is gone. He has espled Olga standing in a window recess alone. He bends over her, says something laughingly, encircles her slight waist with his arm. Only for a second-with with his arm. a most decided motion she frees herself and waives hin off. It is all in things she is inured; custom has blunted a moment, but in that moment every their edge; she hardly feels their pain. It is trace of gladness leaves Joanna's face. something else, something belonging to that She turns angrily, frowningly away. She will not sing any more. She goes out of the ballroom, finds her shawl and hat, and sullenly quits the house. She glances back at the lighted windows with a darkening face. Music follows her, dancing is recommencing, she will not be missed. She does not care if she ĺ8.

She walks down under the black trees to the gate. There she stops, folds her arms on Mrs. Ventnor. The girl bad gone, the top of the low stone wall, and stands still. There is nothing more coldly melancholy than moonlight on snow ; it suits her mood, this steel-cut landscape, all ebony and ivory. As she stands, a figure comes out of the shadow and approaches her. She stares at it, but in surprise or alarm. "Oh !" she says, ungraciously enough ; " it

fs you !" "It is I. I thought you would come out,

Joanna. You mostly do, you know. Are you going home?"

"What are you doing here?" Joanna demands, still ungraciously, and not moving. "Oh, you know," George Blake answers. "It is my off-night, and I could not keep Try and be civil to a fellow, Joanna. away. Are you going home? Let me go with 70U.

She stands silent. George Blake is in love with her-she is amazed, but not in the least. flattered by the fact. Plain Sleaford's Joanna as she is, she has some nameless fascination for him. He has been in the of Joanna's innumerable faults that she hates habit of going to the Sleaford's for years, without being in the least smitten by either of being overwhelmed by the gracious kind-of the fair Misses Sleaford. Suddenly ness of Mrs. Van Rensselaar, who has patronwithout knowing the why or wherefore. he is possessed of a passion for this girl Joanna. that holds him as with bonds and fetters. and decidedly short. She turns her back His mother would not approve; Joanna deliberately upon her-her-Mrs. Van Renssnubs him unmercifully-all the same his infatuations deepens with every day.

"Are you coming ?" young Blake asks, " or are you going back to the house ?" She glances over her shoulder once more at

those lighted windows with a frown. " I will go home. Oh, yes, you may come.

They will not miss me-they are too well engaged." "I suppose all the cream of the cream are he says, gayly, drawing her arm there ?" through his, quite happy for the time-' the Van Rensselaars, the Ventnors, and the rest.

Livingston is there, of course ?" " Of course," she savs, shortly,

"And devoted to the lovely princess! Ab, what a match he will make !- beauty, riches, everything-must have been born with a silver spoon in his mouth, that fellow.'

She does not reply. She shivers, and draws her shawl with impationce about her. "How cold it is !" she says, almost angrily.

Do not talk. Let us hurry. It is nearly two o'clock."

But George does talk, gaily and fluently. He talks so much that he is unconscious she | ing king, and his nurse. The old lady asks listens in silence. They reach the tarm, him, you know, to make her son a gentle-

over the fence, looking with those great black, melancholy eyes of hers, at that lowlying, fast-drifting sky

But it is neither the weariness of labour, the dreariness of utter solitude, the loss of a holiday that all the rest of the world is enjoying, that weighs her down. To all these other life that is not connected with Sleaford's-that other life that seems to belong to another world.

The changes that have occurred since the Christmas birth-night party are these : The Ventnors have returned to town, their visitors with them. Before going they had given a party, to which Joanna was bidden, in kindliest, gentlest words, by kindl⁹, gentle of course; it was not optional with her to decline; she is asked to sing, and goes for that purpose. The Abbotts are there, all who were at Abbott's Wood the other night, and many more. Once more Olga, in palest rose silk, looks lovely as a dream; everything she wears seems to become her more than the last. Once more very young men flock around her as butterflies round a rosebud. And at this party something has occurred that has stang this poor sensitive, morbid Jeanna to the very heart. 'Only Mrs. Abbott and one other, have power enough over that heart to sting it to its core 1 it is that other

who unwittingly has done it. Joanna has been singing. Some passionste pain at her heart makes the song-s'despairing love-song-ring out with an intensity of power that thrills all 'who listen,' Mrs. Van Bensselaar, the greatest of all great ladies, has taken the girl's hand in her grand duchers manner, and said some overpoweringly condescending things. It is one patronage and all who patronize. Instead ness of Mrs. Van Rensselaar, who has patronized the greatest artists in her time, Joanna frees her band, and cuts the lady brusquely and decidedly short. She turns her back selanr !--- and moves away. The lady stands petrified-the expression of her rigid amazement and dismay, her strong stare, are too much for Frank Livingston, who witnesses the performance. He retreats into a window recess to laugh. There he encounters Geoffrey Lamar, who, with knitting brows, has also beheld the little scene.

"By Jove !" Frank cries, throwing back his head, and laughing explosively, "it is the most delicious joke! the great Mrs. Van Rensselaar anubbed-snubbed by Sleaford's Joanna! Behold the glare of that Medusa face! On my word, I believe she will have a fit !

"Mrs. Van Reusselaar deserves it !" Geoffrey says, flushing with anger. "Why cannot they let the girl alone? God has given her life." an exquisite voice, and such women as that think to uplift her by their patronizing praise. She bas served Mrs. Van Rensselaar right l"

"Bravo, Geoff'l set lance in rest, and ride forth in defence of your protege. Do you know what it reminds one of ?- that old story of James the First, the baronet-mak-

r to dradge in

have waited on themselves without much ning away !" A she speaks, and she speaks sloud I'll drive you over and back every evenin', As she speaks, and she speaks sloud I'll drive you over and back every evenin', charm. Now they are gone again ; she has much solitude has taught her the habit-a 'There !" washed the dishes, and "redd up," and tired, man comes up the slushy roads, and stands flushed, heavy-heart, she stands leaning near her, unseen.

"Kill myself," she repeats in a low tense tone, "and why not? It is the shortest solution to the difficulty. Perhaps, even he Joanna find favor in the eyes of his patrons, would care then ! But not contemptuously, But Dan judges it is not well to dazzle her the would say "By Jove, you know-poor with the whole splendid truth. Joanna sits Joanna !" and waltz with Olga ten minutes after. Still, I swear, I have balf a mind to go down to Black's Dam and do it ?"

At this moment she is bandsome: her sallow cheeks flushed, her black eyes shining with unboly fire. She strikes her clenched hand, in her desperate mood, on the bar, so as to bring blood. The strange fascination

that has held George Blake from the first sweeps over him like a restless torrent now. He leans forward, his face flushing darkly red.

'Don't drown yourself, Joanna,' he says do better. Marry me !'

She looks at him. She has not heard him he, has overheard her, but he does not discompose her in the least. She looks at him a full minute without speaking. It is one of the traits of Joanna's curious character that she can stare any man or woman alive, out of countenance, without winking once.

"" Do better !" she repeats. "Would that be doing better ?" Her eyes never leave his face. "Are you'rich ?" she demands.

No, poor -poor as a church meuse, a penniless beggar of a paragraphist, but it would be better than Black's Dam."

"Would it ?" she says again. " I am not so sure of that. Black's Dam would end everything-going with you would not. It would be only 'exchanging one sort of hardship for another. And I don't want to marryyou /"

"I am awfully fond of you, Joanna," the poor young fellow pleads. "I would work is a sharp hissing through the air, and it de-for you. We could live in New York on my seuds. It rises and falls again, quick as for you. We could live in New York on my pay. And you would have a good time. I light. Then, with a scream of passion, pain, get free passes to all the theatres, you know, and all the sights, and that. We could turns upon him. In that moment a mad board, you know. You would not have to power possesses her-she is stronger than he. And you would like New York. Do work. think of it, Joanna!"

"New Vork," she repeats, and her great eyes light. "Yes, I would like New York. I will think of it, George Blake." She declines further courtship, does not

summarily enough. "I wish you would go. I don't want to task. I am tired to death-ob, so tired ! so | flies. tired!" drawing a long, hard breath. I was up nearly all last night. I will go in and go

to bed.' " And you will think of it, Joanna ?" "Ob, yes, I will think of it. I would like to go to New York. I cannot endure my

life here much longer." "And I may come soon again l'

"Come whenever you like," she says, half impatiently, balf indifferently. "I suppose 1 ought to feel pleased-I have so few friends -but I don't. If I ever run away with you, you will be sorry for it all the rest of your

It is an ominous prediction, and he thinks

of it with bitterness of spirit in after days. But the glamour is upon him now; he would | panic of horror and deepair at herself and not have his eyes open if he could. 'I will risk it,' he answers, fervently.

will risk all things, so that you come '

Three days after this Mrs. Abbott announces a second change. 'The week after next,' she says, 'Leo, and

has no intention of running away with George

Blake-she thinks as little of him as of the

She feels wearled and aimless; the feeling

What is the use of feeling sorry Mrs. Ab-

It is a perfect January evening-cold,

the conversation immediately stops.

very twigs that snap under her feet.

and she loves so few-so few.

esgerness.

spits, have gone to meeting in Brightbrook, and brought their friends back with them. Joanna has cooked, but has refused to wait at table. UThere is your dinner, wait on yourselves, have waited on themselves without much have waited on themselves without much argumbling for everything has been done to as

Dan closes this brilllant offer with flourish. To do Herr Watjen justice, he has offered double that amount for each night with the promise of an increase, should Joanna find favor in the eyes of his patrons. mute as a fish.

"Well," he cries, "don't ye hear. " One fifty a night to do what you darn please with D'ye hear?" "I hear."

"Why don't ye answer then ?" Dan's voice and temper are rising. The girls exchange aggravating I-told-you-so smiles. "I want an answer. Is it yes or no ?" "It is no.

She says it so composedly, that for a moment he cannot take in the full force of the refusal. He gives a gasp, and sits with his mouth open. "Wh-a-t !"

"I say no. I wouldn't sing in Watjen's beer gardens for a thousand dollars a nightfor ten thousand dollars a night! I wouldn't set foot in it to save his life and yours !"

There is no mistaking this time. He voice rivgs with scorn, and she turns to leave the kitchen. Dan Sleaford leaps to his feet like a tiger, and seizes her by the arm. "Say that again, d---- you !" he cries

hoarse with possion-" say it again !" . She looks at him unflinchingly, her eyes

lashing fire-literally flashing fire. " I wouldn't go to save your neck from the gallows," she says, between her teetb, "where it is due!'

He waits for no more. The array of horsewhips from which Giles was wont to select for her benefit is still there. He seizes one, blind with fury and drink ; there rage, that those who hear never forget, she She wrenches the whip out of his grasp, lifts it-the butt-end this time-and brings it down with all the force of fury across his head. It lays it open-the whip has a heavy handle; a rain of blood pours over his eyes, and blinds him. He relaxes his hold, stageven ask her edorer in, and dismisses him gers backwards blindly, and falls. There is a simultaneous shrick and rush. Joanna flings the whip into the midst of them, and

> She is beside herself-she knows not what she has doue, or whither she is going. She rushes on like a mad thing, heedless of all obstacles, and falls prostrate at last on the edge of Black's Dam. As a huuted animal files instinctively to its lair, so her feet have carried her here, and here she falls, panting, spent, for the time being perfectly insane. Jud Sleaford has often predicted that she will murder some of them, and Jud's prediction seems to have come true at last.

CHAPTER IV.

IN WHICH JOANNA RUNE AWAY.

How long she lies she cannot tell. A the deed she has done fills her. Has she murdered him? She has threatened often enough to kill some of them in her upgovernable bursts of temper if they will not let her alone-has she done it at last? It is not sorrow that stirs her, nor fear; it is a panic of darkest despair and misery such as in all

its burly lord; he has in a great measure discompose her in the least. made the place; he is the seigneur of the soil. owns half the village, and the big white hotel that in summer is so well and fashionably filled. Hillside breezes, trout treams, gunning, boating, bathing, fishing, all are here, and city folks come with their wives and little ones, their maid servants and man ser-

vants (sometimes), and enjoy them. Mrs. Abbott likes Joanna, and takes an interest in her welfare. Yes; but Joanna loves Mrs. Abbott, reveres her, admires her, thinks her the most beautiful, accomplished and perfect being on earth. Her worship to this great lady is, to a certain extent, her religion, her salvation. If she is tempted to do wrong, to give way to passion, the thought, "Mrs. Abbott will not like it," is Joanna's guerdon, her praise the girl's delight; to please her is the highest ambition of her life. The lady has tried to teach her, to make a Christian of her, to give her yet a higher standard, but it is not so casy to evangelize this young heathen. The leopard does not change his spots. Joanna does not change her nature in spite of beautiful music, painted windows, embroidered altar cloths, and the flowery periods of the Rov. Ignatius Lamb. She listens, and chafes inwardly, and yet as constant dropping will wear a stone, so five years of this have subdued the girl, and made her turn her thoughts, with a certain stricken awe, to these great truths she leads and hears. There is a heaven, and she may go to it-she, Sleaford's Joanna, quite as readily as fair Olga Ventnor herself. That fact she has grasped, and it does her good, increases her self-respect, and spurs her on to better things. She is far less fierce, she gives up bad language, she tries to listen in silence to the taunts and sneers at home, to rise superior to her surroundings. But oh ! it is weary work-it is a never-ending struggle; she falls back again and again; the old bitterness; the old despair clutch hardly at times. Envy, hatred, her and all uncharitableness devour her heart, and tear it to pieces between them. It is an abnormal life she leads-two lives, and she is supremely miserable. She strives to be content, to be thankful—it is impos-sible. She loves Mrs. Abbott, she reveres her, she would do anything in the world to win her praise-the best of this poor Joanna begins and ends there. To her she is passionately grateful; to the rest of the world her heart is like a stone. Even to Geoffrey, her first friend, she is almost apathetic-she likes Leo, that is all. There is, perhaps, one other exception, but this exception only adds to her unhappiness-it fills her with a gnawing, miserable unrest. She feels wicked and helpless, and all the time she longs to be good, to be noble, to be true. Her good and bad angels war strongly for the soul of Joanna.

Long ago she confessed her first sin-her attack upon Olga Ventnor. She goes to Mrs. Abbott and confesses it voluntarily, looking downcast and ashamed. The lady listens very gravely.

"I feared so," she says; "it is good of you to confess it, Joanna. To be sorry for a fault -- is to amend it. But I think you ought to

"spologize to Miss Ventnor."

'Oh !" Joanna says, with a gasp. "That is quite another thing-to tell this kind, good, gentle lady, is easy.'

at her approvingly. Quite plain, severely simple, yet well dressed-it is as it should be; Joanna does her no discredit. " If only you sing as well as you look, my dear, I shall be quite satisfied," she says,

kindly. Leo is there, all in white-a costly toilet, white lace over pearl-coloured silk, and strands of pearlu in her dark perfumed hair.

Her bronze eyes shine, her cheeks flush, her childish face is bright with excitement. She kisses Joanna in childinh glee. Mr. Abbott reconnoitres once, sees Joanna, and flees. The company come early, and come rapidly

-it is in the country - city hours do not nor Villa, with Olga and Frank.

Olga is like a vision, like an Undine, like a water lily. She wears some pale, sheeny silk, half slivery, half green, with quantities of tulle, and bunches of pale pink rosee. Even Joanna catches her breath as she looks at her. That gold hair, that clear, starlike face, that imperial poise of head and and shoulders, that exquisite water nymph dress.

"Oh !" Joanna says, " how lovely ! how lovely !"

"How lovely !" a voice cohoes.

It is Gecilicey Lamar, whose deep gray eyes glow as they look on this Peri. A second later, and he is by her side. Frank Livingston, looking insonciant and handsome, comes over to present his felicitations to Miss Abbott. The rainbow throng meets, mingles, disperses Joanna, in the shade of a great jardiniere, watches it all. Frank engages Leo for the first dance; Geoffrey has Olga; others seek partners; dancing begins almost immediately. Colonel Ventnor seeks out Mr. Abboit in the library, and with two other papas enjoy a quiet game of whist,

4. The band music rings merrily out, the young people merrily dance. Joanna does not dance. Young ladies are in the mejority -as it is in the nature of young ladies to beand no one notices her until it is time to sing. Then she glides to the piano at a signal from Mrs. Abbott, and her fine volce breaks through the chatter and hum, and talkers stop perforce to listen. She singe alone, then with Leo, then alone again, for his use. For it is not New Year's Day, and people crowd around her, and there is soft clapping of gloved hands and gentle murmurs of praise.

Sing us a Christmas carol," says Mrs. Ventnor ; "to-morrow is Christmas Eve." She thinks a moment, and then in softened voice, a little tremulous, she sings a very old hymn :

"Barthly friends may change and falter, Earthly friends may vary; He is born, who cannot alter, Of the Virgin Mary." "Ob, how sweet!" Mrs. Ventnor says, tears

in her eys; "please-please sing another. Your voice goes to my heart." The girl lifts two dark, melancholy, grateful eyes to the lady, and sings again :

- "He neither shall be born In house nor in hall, Nor in the place of paradise, But in an ox's shall, He neither shall be rocked In silver nor in gold, But in a wooden mapper

- In silver nor in goid, But in a wooden manger That rocks upon the mould."

wrapped in quiet and darkness, without meet-ing a soul. All are in bed, but Joanna has a like, Lucky," says the king, "but the deevil a month with the Ventners. The only dif-

"Good-night," she says, "and don't be so foolish waiting for me another time. What Joannas singer if you like, Lamar, but-your would your mother say ?"

He laughs.

" My mother thinks I am virtuously asleep in New York. We do not tell our mothers everything. It would not be good for 'em. Good-night, Joanna."

He goes off, whistling, through the white, still, frozen night. Joanna gets in, and reaches her room, but she does not go to bed. She sits there in the chill, ghostly moonlight a long time--so long that the moon wanes, and sets, and the stars fade out, and the deep darkness that precedes dawn falls on the earth. Far off at Abbott Wood, ber of youthful guests are staying in the house; nearly a dozen more come from Vent-por Ville with Olse and French sky is not darker than the set tace of Sleaford's Joanna.

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH JOANNA CAPS THE CLIMAX.

It is the afternoon of New Year's Day-a windy and overcast alternoon. Fast drifting clouds are blown wildly over a leaden sky, "onding on snaw;" a gale surges with the roar of the dea through the pine woods; far off, the deep dispason of that mighty sea itself blends its hoarse roar in the elemental chorus. The marshes lie all flat and sodden with recent rain and melted snow. It is a desolate picture on which the girl looks who leans over the gate at Sleaford's, and gazes blankly before her. with eyes as dreary as the landscape itself. She looks flushed and weary, and with reason; the long soughing blast sweeps cool and kindly as a friend's hand over her hot forehead. Her wild hair blows about in its usual untidy fashion-her dress is a torn and soiled calico wrapper. No "neat-handed Phillis" this, no spotless dimity household divinity, but simply Sleaford's Joanna resting after the toils of the day.

The red farm-house behind her lies silent and sombre, the bark of one of the many dogs, now and then, alone breaking the silence. The household are away, except, the master, and he is sleeping off a heavy dinner, washed down by copious draughts of whiskey, in the upper chamber, sacred to have not Liz and Lora to receive their gentlemen friends? Neither the weather nor the roads being propitious, and Sleaford's being two or three miles out of the way, the young ladies have accepted the invitation of a couple of their friends, and have gone en grande tenue to Brightbrook to receive. Dan and Jud, in their Sunday best, are " calling ;" Gile, Joanna and the dogs are keeping house.

It has been no holiday for the girl; she has never had a holiday in her life. There has been a dinner-party at the farm-house, and she has been cook. The office has been no sincource. There has been a goose stuffed with sage and onions-a large, vulgar, savory bird to roast-a turkey with dressing to boil-s plum pudding ditto, sundry vegetables, and stewed fruits to go with these dainities. Yesterday a huge beckteak and kidney pastry was concocted, and a ham

bolled. To these viands a select company of her soul cries out in its bitterness. "Better, est of both sexes perform for the amusement

cases are similar. You may make Sleaford's lessons, instead of coming here.' mother herself cannot make her a gentle-Joanna listens almost anathetically. Yes, the only difference. And yet she is uncon-

woman." He goes off laughing. A figure, standing motionless, hidden by a flower-wreathed pillar, has beard every word. And the white marble of the pillar is not whiter than her face. Livingston is quoting Shakespeare over his shoulder as he goes : ζ.

*Ob, when she's angry she is keen and sbrewd ; She was a vixen when she went to school And though she is but little, she is fierce !" An hour after he comes up to her, as she stands a little spart, after singing again a sweet little Scotch ballad, that has touched even him.

"I foresee we are all going to be proud walk. of our Brightbrook nightingale," he says, gaily. "When your blography is written, bott is going away ? What is the use of feelwe will recall-and put on airs in conseing sorry for anything-loving anything? It quence-that we knew and heard you first. is only added pain. By the bye, the honor of discovery lies with Lamar. How was it. I wonder, that I, knowing you so long before him, never sparkling, clear. There is snow on the found you out, or thought what a singing bird you were ?"

She looks at him. To this day he does not understand, perhaps, the fiery wrath and scorn of her eves.

"You!" she says, and he winces and stares at her tone "You! Why, you never thought of any one but yourself in all your life!'

"Upon my word," says Mr. Livingston, when he recovers a little, "here is a facer ! First she floors Mrs. Van Rensselaar-now me. What have I done, I wonder? I haven't been patronizing-have I, Olga?" Miss Ventnor's beautiful short upper lip

go a step-you'll see." curls. "She is never very civil, but to-night she is really quite too horrid. Mrs. Van Rensselaar is very angry." Then she remembers Joanna is her mother's guest, and stops. "1 suppose it is to be expected, poor creature ; ever let her go."

the better way is to say nothing to her at all. jen would want her now," remarks Jud. This waltz is yours, I think, Frank, if you wish to claim it." If he wishes? Frank's blue, speaking

eyes answer the question, but Olga only laughs. "Keep your sentimental looks for Resa

Brevoort, sir," she says, tossing back her sunshiny tresses; "she believes in them-I do not No. nor your pretty speeches, eitherso don't go quoting Tennyson at me! Young men who quote postry and look as you do at every girl you dance with, ought to be howstrung or put in the pillory."

means what she says. She laughs at Livingston's love-making; she derides his tender glances; she declines being flirted with, but or some cause it annoys her. Perhaps she does not choose to make one in the long litany of Frank's flirters. Of that family

"You know Waljen's? You've heard of Watjen's ?" he says, in the same insinuating tone; "him as keeps the lager bler garden and concert hall up the village? He's lately come from New York, you know, and does as her life sho chafes more and more; either they do it there."

Yes, she has heard of Watjan's-a low arc killing her. "Why have I ever known these people ?" brook most do congregate, and where the low.

himsel' wadna mak him a gentleman." The ference it will make to you, Joanna, is that cold, numb soul and body. A hurried step you go to Miss Rice's cottage for your daily crunches over the frozen ground-there is an exclamation-a hand touches her shoulder, and strives to lift her head.

'Joanna !' a breathless voice says. Joanna scious of a pang in listening to the lady's what is this ?'

calmly kind words. She loves Mrs. Abbott, It is a friendly voice. She lifts her stricken, despairing eyes to a friendly face. The sight breaks the torpor of agony, she She goes home that evening, home to Sleaford's, and no prescience tells her it is for the springs to her feet, and flings her arms about last time-the very last time for ever. She his neck.

'George Blake !' she cries, with a choking sob; 'George Blake! George Blake!'

The young fellow holds her to him-pity, terror, blank consternation in his face. "Joanna what is all this? What have you

is growing upon her day by day; she sauntored listlessly along, after a fashion very unbeen doing? What has that-that brute been like her naturally swift, strong, springy doing to you? Do you know they say that you "-he chokes over the words-" that you have killed him ?"

She gives a gasp, and still clings hold of him. The whole world seems slipping away; she seems to stand in the wide universe alone in her desolation, with only this single friend.

ground, white and undefiled, here in this "I have been to the house," he goes on; woodland path-feathery snow on the black, "all is confusion there. Jud has gone for a bare boughs. A brilliant sky is above, pale blue, rich with sunset tints, pearl, ruby, orange, opal, paling slowly to silvery gray. There is no wind. It is a sparkling January doctor; there is blood on the floor, and on the whip-handle they say you struck him with. He is lying, bleeding still, and stunned, on the settee in the kitchen. The gids tay gem, set in hezy mist. She reaches the you have killed him. Oh! Joanna, speak bouse, takes one last wistful look at all that and tell me what it is."

She tries to do so. Her words are broken loveliness of sky and earth, and goes in. The family are assembled, all but old Giles. They and incoherent, but he manages to get at the story-the provocation, the attack, the re-prisal. His eyes flashed with honest indigare discussing some matter with considerable "She won't do it," Liz is remarking; " not nation.

if you offered her as much again. She has "The brute ! the cowardly scoundrel ! You served him right, Joanna-you acted in selfgot all sorts of stuck-up notions since these defence. Even if he is killed, which I don't people have took her in hand. She won't believe, you served him right. But he will A beast like that stands a great "I will see i" growls Dan Sleaford; " and not dic. A beast like that stands a great deal of killing. Don't shake so, my dear; don't wear that haggard face—it will be sll what is more, I will make her feel if she refuses. Set a begger on horseback indeed ! The old man ought to know'd better than right. I tell you it is only what you ought to have done long ago. The black, sullen dog! to take his horsewhip to " If she hadn't gone, neither you nor Watyou !' He grinds his teeth. 'I hope he will bear the mark of your blow till his dying "Hush !' says Lora; "here she is!" and da**v** !'

She slips out of his arms, and sits down on She glances at them carelessly, and a fallen log, her hands clasping her kners throws off her jacket and bat. There is after her old fashion, that miserable, hunted always plenty for her to do when she gets home, but for a wonder neither of the girls look never leaving her eyes.

"I knew you would come here," the young issue orders now. There is a pause-Dan man goes on, seating himself beside her; "it is always your sanctuary in troubled times, my poor Joanna, Oh, my dear! my dear! my poor, ill-used, suffering girl! if I could only take your place, and endure all this for you !"

She holds out her hand to him silently. He is so good, so leal, her one loyal friend and knight. Great slow tears well up, and soften the blank anguish of her hopeless eyes. (1 will tell you what I will do !' he says, after a pause. 'I feel sure the tellow will the tellow will not die-these venomous reptiles are so tenacious of life-still we both feel anxious. It you will wait here I will go back to the house and find out. I will return and tell you the truth-the worst certainly is better than suspense. Only promise me'-he clasps the cold hand he holds hard-'you will-not drinking place, where the rought of Bright- do anything-anything rash while I am gone. He looks toward the pond, lying dark and

(Continued on Third Page.)

breaks it. \$ "Look here, Jo," he begins, in a wheedling tone, "I've got some good news for you. Here's a chance for you to turn an honest penny at last. You'd like to earn some Miss Olga speaks with some irritation. She

pocket money, wouldn't you ?" She looks at him distrustfully, and does not answer. Rough Dan Sleaford in this lamb-

like mood is a little more to be suspected than in his natural state. He is a younger copy of his father, coarseness, cruelty, drunk-

enness included. compact, settled five years ago, she has not heard a word.

And this being New Year's Day, as she stands here alone, and untidy, and at the gare, Joanna is thinking of all this. Every day of

existence perhaps she could stand, but both