



NEEDLESS.

"Oh, I'm going to name this big daisy
And I know whose dear name it will be;
'Twill be some one I love very dearly.
I'll see if he really loves me."

So the plump, little, dimpled pink fingers
Began tearing the petals away,
While her rosy lips tried hard to murmur
The words she had heard others say.

"These, 'he loves me,'—oh dear, what a bother,
I have pulled off a lot,—that won't do,
I must pull off each petal quite slowly,
But one at a time till I'm through.

"No, I never will take all that trouble,
For what nonsense the whole thing must be,
Just as if I could need any daisy
To tell that my papa loves me."

—Elizabeth B. Cummins, in *Youth's Companion*.

THE STORY OF A SHORT LIFE.

BY JULIANA HORATIA EWING.

CHAPTER XI.—(Continued.)

The third Collect was just ended, and a prolonged and somewhat irregular Amen was dying away among the choir, who were beginning to feel for their hymn-books.

The lack of precision, the "dropping-shots" style in which that Amen was delivered, would have been more exasperating to the kapellmeister, if his own attention had not been for the moment diverted by anxiety to know if the V. C. remembered that the time had come.

As the chaplain gave out the hymn, the kapellmeister gave one glance of an eye, as searching as it was sombre, round the corner of that odd little curtain which it is the custom to hang behind an organist; and this sufficing to tell him that the V. C. had not forgotten, he drew out certain very local stops, and bending himself to manual and pedal, gave forth the popular melody of the "Tug-of-War Hymn" with a precision indicative of a resolution to have it sung in strict time, or know the reason why.

And as nine hundred and odd men rose to their feet with some clatter of heavy boots and accoutrements the V. C. turned quietly out of the crowded church, and stood outside upon the steps, bareheaded in the sunshine of St. Martin's little summer, and with the tiniest of hymn-books between his finger and thumb.

Circumstances had made a soldier of the V. C., but by nature he was a student. When he brought the little hymn-book to his eyes to get a mental grasp of the hymn before he began to sing it, he committed the first four lines to an intelligence sufficiently trained to hold them in remembrance for the brief time that it would

take to sing them. Involuntarily his active brain did more, and was crossed by a critical sense of the crude, barbaric taste of childhood, and a wonder what consolation the suffering boy could find in these gaudy lines:

"The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood red banner streams afar;
Who follows in His train?"

But when he brought the little hymn-book to his eyes to take in the next four lines, they startled him with the revulsion of a sudden sympathy; and lifting his face towards the barrack-master's hut, he sang—as he rarely sang in drawing-rooms, even words the most felicitous to melodies the most sweet—sang not only to the delight of dying ears, but so that the kapellmeister himself heard him and smiled as he heard:

"Who best can drink His cup of woe
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears His cross below,
He follows in his train."

On each side of Leonard's bed, like guardian angels, knelt his father and mother. At his feet lay The Sweep, who now and then lifted a long, melancholy nose and anxious eyes.

At the foot of the bed stood the barrack-master. He had taken up this position at the request of the master of the house, who had avoided any further allusion to Leonard's fancy that their Naseby ancestor had come to Asholt camp, but had begged his big brother-in-law to stand there and blot out Uncle Rupert's ghost with his substantial body.

But whether Leonard perceived the ruse, forgot Uncle Rupert, or saw him all the same, by no word or sign did he ever betray.

Near the window sat Aunt Adelaide, with her prayer-book, following the service

in her own orderly and pious fashion, sometimes saying a prayer aloud at Leonard's bidding, and anon replying to his oft-repeated inquiry: "Is it the third Collect yet, aunty dear?"

She had turned her head, more quickly than usual, to speak, when, clear and strenuous on vocal stops, came the melody of the "Tug-of-War Hymn."

"There! There it is! Oh, good kapellmeister! Mother dear, please go to the window and see if the V. C. is there, and wave your hand to him. Father dear, lift me up a little, please. Ah, now I hear him! Good V. C.! I don't believe you'll sing better than that when your promoted to be an angel. Are the men singing pretty loud? May I have a little of that stuff to keep me from coughing, mother dear? You know I am not impatient; but I do hope, please God, I shan't die till I've just heard them tug that verse once more!"

The sight of Lady Jane had distracted the V. C.'s thoughts from the hymn. He was singing mechanically, when he became conscious of some increasing pressure and irregularity in the time. Then he remembered what it was. The soldiers were beginning to tug.

In a moment more the organ stopped, and the V. C. found himself, with over three hundred men at his back, singing without accompaniment, and in unison:

"A noble army—men and boys,
The matron and the maid,
Around their Saviour's throne rejoice,
In robes of white arrayed."

The kapellmeister conceded that verse to the shouts of the congregation; but he invariably reclaimed control over the last.

Even now, as the men paused to take breath after their "tug," the organ spoke again, softly but seraphically, and clearer and sweeter above the voices behind him rose the voice of the V. C., singing to his little friend:

"They climbed the steep ascent of heaven,
Through peril, toil, and pain"—

The men sang on; but the V. C. stopped, as if he had been shot. For a man's hand had come to the barrack-master's window and pulled the white blind down.

CHAPTER XII.

"He that hath found some fledged-bird's nest
may know
At the sight, if the bird be flown;
But what first dell or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown."

HENRY VAUGHAN.



TRUE to its character as an emblem of human life, the camp stands on, with all its little manners and customs, whilst the men who garrison it pass rapidly away.

Strange as the vicissitudes of a whole generation elsewhere, are the changes and chances that a few years bring to those who were stationed there together.

To what unforeseen celebrity (or to a dropping out of one's life and even hearsay that once seemed quite as little likely) do one's old neighbors sometimes come! They seem to pass in a few drill seasons as other men pass by lifetimes. Some to foolishness and forgetfulness, and some to fame. This old acquaintance to unexpected glory; that dear friend—alas!—to the grave. And some—God speed them!—to the world's end and back, following the drum till it leads them home again, with familiar faces little changed—with boys and girls, perchance, very greatly changed—and with hearts not changed at all. Can the last parting do much to hurt such friendships between good souls, who have so long learnt to say farewell; to love in absence, to trust through silence, and to have faith in reunion?

The barrack-master's appointment was an unusually permanent one; and he and his wife lived on in Asholt camp, and saw regiments come and go, as O'Reilly had prophesied, and threw out additional

rooms and bow-windows, and took in more garden, and kept a cow on a bit of government grass beyond the stables, and—with the man who did the rods, the church orderly, and one or two other public characters—came to be reckoned among the oldest inhabitants.

George went away pretty soon with his regiment. He was a good, straightforward young fellow, with a dogged devotion to duty, and a certain provincialism of intellect, and general John Bullishness, which he inherited from his father, who had inherited it from his country forefathers. He inherited equally a certain romantic, instinctive, and immovable high-mindedness, not invariably characteristic of much more brilliant men.

He had been very fond of his little cousin, and Leonard's death was a natural grief to him. The funeral tried his fortitude, and his detestation of "scenes," to the very uttermost.

Like most young men who had the honor to know her, George's devotion to his beautiful and gracious aunt, Lady Jane, had had in it something of the nature of worship; but now he was almost glad he was going away, and not likely to see her face for a long time, because it made him feel miserable to see her, and he objected to feeling miserable both in principle and in practice. His peace of mind was assailed, however, from a wholly unexpected quarter, and one which pursued him even more abroad than home.

The barrack-master's son had been shocked by his cousin's death; but the shock was really and truly greater when he discovered, by chance gossip, and certain society indications, that the calamity which left Lady Jane childless had made him his uncle's presumptive heir. The almost physical disgust which the discovery that he had thus acquired some little social prestige produced in the subaltern of a marching regiment must be hard to comprehend by persons of more imagination and less sturdy independence, or by scholars in the science of success. But man differs widely from man, and it is true.

He had been nearly two years in Canada when "the English mail" caused him to fling his fur cap into the air with such demonstrations of delight as greatly aroused the curiosity of his comrades, and as he bolted to his quarters without further explanation than "Good news from home!" a rumor was for some time current that "Jones had come into his fortune."

Safe in his own quarters, he once more applied himself to his mother's letter, and picked up the thread of a passage which ran thus:

"Your dear father gets very impatient, and I long to be back in my hut again and see after my flowers, which I can trust to no one since O'Reilly took his discharge. The little conservatory is like a new toy to me, but it is very tiny, and your dear father is worse than no use in it, as he says himself. However, I can't leave Lady Jane till she is quite strong. The baby is a noble little fellow and really beautiful—which I know you won't believe, but that's because you know nothing about babies; not as beautiful as Leonard, of course—that could never be—but a fine, healthy, handsome boy, with eyes that do remind one of his darling brother. I know, dear George, how greatly you always did admire and appreciate your aunt. Not one bit too much, my son. She is the noblest woman I have ever known. We have had a very happy time together, and I pray it may please God to spare this child to be the comfort to her that you are and have been to

"Your loving MOTHER."

(To be Continued.)

THE LORD'S DAY.

(From the *Berman*.)

Speaketh thus the Lord of Heaven,
"In each week three days are seven,
Six of these to thee are granted,
Work to do as may be wanted,
But the seventh belongs to me.
Then will I instruct you duly
How to serve and please me truly,
How as pure and good to be."
Dearest child, forget not,
What the Lord of heaven hath taught!
—Boston Budget.