

* * The Story Page * *

A Pirate Story of Newfoundland.

The sun was nearing the western horizon, on a beautiful July evening, when some passengers from one of the "Allan liners," lying in the harbor of St. John's, Newfoundland, ascended a steep hill on the eastern side of the "inlet" to secure a more perfect view of the surrounding country. Standing on the top, enjoying the refreshing ocean breeze and picturesque outlook, they discovered firmly imbedded in the rock a huge iron bolt with a ring attached, and wondered what it was placed there for. A resident friend from Nova Scotia said this was placed there by the first settlers as a fastening for their boats and vessels, which were formerly moored below, and remarked, "You may be interested in a story connected therewith, which the oldest people tell of the long ago."

"Yes," said the visitors, "let's hear the story."

"All right, here it is. Long years ago, when St. John's had another name, and but a few hardy fishermen's huts composed the town, the pirates used to make this harbor their hiding-place, and would help themselves to whatever the helpless fishermen possessed. On one occasion the black flag cruiser had captured a richly laden brig containing a large quantity of gold and silver specie. Some of the passengers who had offered no resistance were made prisoners, and landed, with their effects, under cover of night, at their zealous and were kept under guard. Among these was a rich merchant prince's daughter, who was to be held for a big ransom later on.

One of the buccannery, who had been unwillingly pressed into the cruel service to save his life, determined to attempt the rescue of the young lady the first favorable opportunity, and this soon occurred. (She was on her journey to her father and friends in Chebucto, now Halifax.) The pirates, feeling their security in this secluded and protected inlet, enjoyed the free use of the wines taken from the brig. Ere day dawned its effects were seen, and a big row ensued, during which our heroic friend, who was a *pledged teetotaler*, quietly slipped away, loosened the cords which bound the maiden, and the three men prisoners with her. In company with these, the noble rescuer escaped to the hill-top where we now stand, and by the rope attached to this great iron ring, each quickly descended to the water front, secured a sailing boat, oars, etc., and quickly made their way to the brig, which was left at anchor just outside the inlet. The sailor on watch was easily secured and placed on board the boat; then the compasses, provisions, and what gold the pirates had not discovered, and ere the day dawned the boat's company, with their prisoner, and effects, were speeding away westerly towards Chebucto Bay. In the early morning they were of course missed, and no time was lost in preparing for a hasty pursuit. The boat people saw they were chased, and bent themselves to their oars; it was a race for life or death; sometimes the pirate craft would gain on the boat, then again, as the wind slackened, the boat would gain a little on the pursuer. This chase continued nearly two days, the boat's crew pulling for dear life, when to the joy of all on board a sail was discovered coming east, which proved to be the British man-of-war "Terror," a terror indeed to the pirates, for they dropped the black flag and their vessel was soon put about and headed for their old quarters: she was seen later on to enter the inlet, closely followed by the "Terror," which was indeed "a terror to (the) evil doers," and also "a praise" to the boat's crew, "who did well." The zealous was completely broken up, and those who did not make good their escape inland, were taken prisoners and duly punished.

All this was brought about because one bold, level-headed *teetotaler* defeated his fellow-pirates in their wicked designs. People of our day need all the brain power and physical energy the Author of all has bestowed upon them to succeed in these days of sharp competition. I may add, the rescued maiden was safely delivered to her father and friends, and the heroic rescuer amply rewarded, and was ever after among the most highly esteemed friends of the wealthy merchant and his family. Strange to say, this man was the son of an English nobleman. He became the junior partner in the firm, and later on the worthy husband of the beautiful maiden he so nobly rescued—a reward more highly prized than all else received. So, young people, it pays to be a *teetotaler*.

UNCLE JAMES.

Day of Whole Things.

BY MARY E. MITCHELL.

If you can sit down just a moment till I finish the buttonholes, then you can take the jacket, Miss Florence, there, right by the window! That barrel-chair ain't so uncomfortable as it looks. I'm real mortified you should have to wait when I promised it the first thing. You see, little Fannie Holden is very low and I sat up with him the most of the night, and I suppose I slept too long when I lay down in the morning."

"It's a shame for you to do a stitch!" exclaimed Florence, impulsively, as she noticed the red, tired eyes and pale face. "Ted doesn't really need the jacket to-day."

"It's good in you to say that, but if it ain't the jacket it's something else; I cannot afford to lose a whole day." Miss Perry's needle flew in and out of the fine blue cloth. "Your little brother'll look real nice in this suit; he's a handsome boy, anyway," she said.

"How do you like my new gown, Miss Perry?" Miss Perry looked at the girl. The brown hair waved about the soft face; the dark eyes sparkled with happy young life, and the cheeks glowed with healthful color. The new dress was simple, dainty, and perfectly adapted to the girlish figure.

"It's sweet?" said Miss Perry. "It looks just like you."

Florence laughed. "Do you know that is a very pretty compliment?" she said.

"I suppose now, it's new—all new—not made over or anything?" asked the little seamstress.

"Why, yes," replied Florence, amused at the question. "Why do you ask?"

"Nothing; only I was thinking how nice that must be. I never had a new dress in my life."

Florence stared at the small, thin figure. "What do you mean?" she said.

"Just that, dear. I never had a new dress in my life."

"I never heard of such a thing!" gasped the girl. "Very likely not, Miss Florence. Your pa is a rich man and you're his only daughter. There were eleven of us counting the boys, and little enough to feed and clothe us on. Six girls, and I the youngest. Dresses were handed down from one to another till they were all worn out. My gowns were mostly made of two or three put together. The children used to call me 'Patchwork Quilt.'"

"I remember one dress in particular," she went on smilingly. "I can see just how it looked. The skirt was stripes, the waist was in spots, and the sleeves were kind of flowered all over. You see, it was made out of Ellen's and Jane's and Sarah's. Mother was real proud of having made me so neat and comfortable, but I was just mean enough to be ashamed. It makes me feel sorry when I think how hard mother worked for us, and we not half appreciating it."

"Didn't they ever buy you anything new?" exclaimed Florence. "I think they were unkind."

"No, no, dear child! You don't understand. There wasn't much money to spend on clothes, I can tell you. I remember one apron—'tires,' we called them—that was bought on purpose for me, and I was proud as Punch till it was made up. It was real pretty, white with a narrow blue stripe, but being a remnant, there wasn't enough to get it all out. So mother put it on a yoke made of a piece of an old dress of hers—dark brown calico with a yellow figure. Somehow they didn't go together very well!"

"But since you've grown up, Miss Perry, you must have had new dresses."

"No, Miss Florence, never. I'm forty years old, and I've never had a new dress. You see, Jane got married, and so did Sarah. Well, Sarah died and left me all her clothes. Her husband was pretty well off, and there was some real good things amongst them. Then the other three died here at home, and of course I got all their things, except what I gave to Jane. Jane has a hard time; her husband's a dreadful ailing man. Well, I've been wearing out the clothes ever since, and ain't all worn out yet."

"It's been lucky for me getting all those clothes—me having so much sickness and not being able to earn right along. But once in a time I get real ungrateful, and think it would be kind of nice to have something new all over—not any scraps of piecings. There, you must think I'm awful complaining!"

"Complaining, Miss Perry! But why don't you buy yourself a real pretty dress without waiting to use up all those old things?"

"No, dear," said Miss Perry gently, "I need the money for—other things. There is bonnets, too," resumed the little woman, biting off a needleful of twist. "I guess there are enough bonnets and trimmings to get me through my natural life."

"Sometimes I think most everything in this world is a patch or a make-over," she proceeded. "If it ain't done over meat it's warmed-over potatoes, and if it ain't them it's a little mess of beans and a dab of hash to be got out of the way together. There's always leavings-over! I don't even work at anything real good and steady. Sometimes it's mending and sometimes it's nursing, and again it's button-holes. But it's always something, thank the Lord! Leavings-overs are a heap sight better than fallings-short!"

"Miss Perry, you said you couldn't afford to lose a whole day's work. Don't you ever take a holiday?"

"Bless you, Miss Florence! I don't remember ever

being idle a day. I was going to, though; I was going to the Baptist picnic last week. You know they went to Oak Grove, a real slightly place, they tell me, and right by the lake. I got all ready, and if Mrs. White didn't go and sprain her ankle!"

"Why did that keep you? She has a daughter, hasn't she?"

"Oh, yes; but Rose is young, and, of course, wanted her good time. I saw she was terribly disappointed, so I said, 'I'll stay with your mother, Rose,' and you never saw anybody more tickled. There, Miss Florence, there's the jacket, and tell your ma I hope it'll suit. It's been a real refreshment to see you, and I hope you won't think I'm cross and ungrateful, complaining as I have!"

Florence stooped over the little woman with a sudden impulse. "There's a whole kiss all for yourself," she said.

Miss Perry's thin cheek flushed under the unwanted caress. "Bless her kind heart!" she said, as she watched the girl's light figure go down the path. "I declare, I'm fairly ashamed of having run on so about myself. It was real grumbling. I don't believe I'd have done it if I hadn't been so worn out sitting up, and then being disappointed about that Henrietta. Well, Jane needs the money more than I do the dress—poor girl!"

Florence Heath walked slowly along the elm-shaded street, thinking of Miss Perry. The sun was high and hot, and the road dusty. Col. Heath's lawn stretched smooth and inviting. As Florence turned toward the house, one of her little brothers came rattling down the broad drive in his shining cart behind his pony.

The big mansion which stood back on the top of the slope looked cool and restful with its wide piazzas and gay awnings.

"Never anything new or whole, and I never had anything else!" thought the girl.

Florence found her mother on one of the piazzas, swinging to and fro in a willow chair.

"What is it, dear? You look tired. It was too warm a walk for you. You should have let James drive you down."

"Mamma, I have everything and Miss Perry has nothing. Why is it?" said Florence, as she threw herself into a hammock.

"That's a pretty hard question to answer all at once," responded Mrs. Heath, with a smile. "Tell me about it, dear."

Florence told her story. "I don't think I ever knew," she concluded, "just the difference there is between my life and some other people's. Oh, I suppose I knew, but I never saw it so clearly. It doesn't seem right at all!"

Mrs. Heath watched her daughter's face. "One can always share," she suggested.

Florence was silent a moment; then she said: "I'd like to give Miss Perry one good whole day!"

"Miss Perry might have whole things if she didn't share, Florence. She has a shiftless sort of a sister in Greenville whom she helps a great deal. I suspect most of her earnings go there. She helped those poor Larkins and made clothes for the children, and she is always going where there is sickness. I don't know of any one who does so much good in a quiet way and with so little means, as Miss Perry."

Florence sprang out of the hammock, scattering the soft pillows right and left, went over to her mother and kissed her.

"I think I'll try a little of the sharing business myself!" she said, and went into the house.

The phoebe-bird uttered its plaintive note in the chestnut tree close to the window and woke Miss Perry from a sound morning nap.

"Mercy!" she exclaimed, as she looked at the loud-ticking timepiece which adorned her mantel-shelf. "Five o'clock! I'm getting a dreadful habit of sleeping late. It's mortal lazy, and a sinful waste of time, but somehow I ain't so spry as I used to be."

She flung open the green blinds and let in the radiance of the early morning. The sun had risen into a blue and cloudless sky. The feathery tree-tops stirred in the gentle breeze, and flower-scents and bird-voices filled the air. It was just the morning to fill one's heart with a pleasant premonition of coming good.

"I feel as if something nice was going to happen!" said Miss Perry to herself as she looked into the beautiful, fresh world. "But there! What am I thinking of?" It'll be button-holes, or maybe Jane'll want me to tend Willie through one of his colic spells!"

Breakfast over, Miss Perry sat down in her little sewing chair and took up her work; but for some reason the needle would not go, and her thoughts would wander far from the little garments she was fashioning.

She was gazing at the swaying elm-tops, and her work had fallen from her hands, when a rousing rap at the door startled her into consciousness of the present.