But a Lassie Yet.

BY THOMAS SWIFT.

Continued from last week.

CHAPTER VIII.

Poor Mamie! She had built unto herself a castle of strength and garnered in it the love and hopes of her life; but one awful blow had shattered its walls to their foundation crushing and burying her happiness in the ruins. All the strength and force of her young but well disciplined soul she summoned to her aid, and alone she fought the brave fight. She in vain tried to sleep. Rising, she knelt by her bedside and prayed for strength to bear her burden patiently, and her first bitter tears mingled with her prayers. A soul less disciplined and less truthful would have succumbed and yielded to despair. In her large, generous heart she blamed not Harold, nor did she hate Miss Fortescue for bringing this evil upon her. She did not even pity herself. She bore her trial with Christian fortitude and by suffering was her spirit chastened. Had not Miss Fortescue a prior claim on Harold's affection? True, he had told her that he loved her, and she had been so proud and happy. she had accepted his love as a rare gift from God. But he did not know—he did not realize, then, that Miss Fortescue would recent and yield. Harold was suffering, too. He had been so silent and distrait on the way home. He would come to-morrow to tell her all, and, perhaps, ask to be released; and she would make it easy for him. Never a thought of self.

And how was it with Helen Fortescue? She, too, like Maimie, had ventured all and lost; but unlike her she could not accept defeat. She was willing to sacrifice anything for the heart of the man she desired; the man himself she could not relinquish to another. Without him life would be unbearable, existence, but the blackness of despair. In her own way she loved Harold as much as Maimie did, and with a fiercer intensity; but she loved him for herself. Her pride, her wealth, her station, her womanhood itself, placed in the balance against Harold Fairleigh, would have kicked the beam. She would have married him even with the knowledge that their union would be his unhappiness. Maimie's love almost at the happiness of the man, and her own happiness was in the giving of herself to him; Helen, in her passion, sought the man for herself and her happiness lay in possessing him. Maimie's love was great enough to sacrifice even itself; Helen's, everything but itself.

The day after Helen Fortescue's social party, Maimie received a note from Harold, informing her, that he had to leave the great city at a moment's notice. Bands of Apaches had left the reservation and had defeated the government troops on the borders of Arizona. He was despatched to the scene of the trouble in the interests of his paper. He would write again, soon. The note ended with a little, loving message, which, under happier circumstances, would have caused the blood to mantle in her cheek and her heart to thrill with pleasure. But Maimie only saw in the note a confirmation of her worst fears. Again she beheld Helen Fortescue reclining in Harold's arms; again she recalled his unwonted silence and troubled looks as they drove home; and now, without a word of explanation, when explanation was so much needed, if she were ever to know peace again, he had gone—gone, as it seemed to her, out of her life.

Ah, well, she must suffer and endure, and peace, perhaps, would come to her. Yes, peace would come to her, as it had come to Sister Agatha.

At the thought, a softened light came into her eyes, and a new tenderness into her soul. She would go to Sister Agatha, and lay all her troubles before her. Why should she needlessly disturb her mother's peace of mind? It would be time enough to tell her, when she had brought herself to resign her love. To Sister Agatha, therefore, she went.

It was Sunday afternoon, and Sisters and pupils were at prayers. She also would kneel, once more, where she had knelt so often in the old, sweet convent days. She proceeded down the corridor, quietly entered the little chapel, and glided into the nearest seat. The beautiful, tender service of Benediction was in progress. How peaceful it all was!—how heavenly! The softened light streamed through the stained glass, and fell on the marble altar and on the forms of the worshippers. The tones of the organ and the fresh, young voices rose and fell in the sweet, familiar hymn; whilst the clouds of fragrant incense almost veiled the kneeling figures at the altar.

The hymn ceased, and the subdued chant of the priest alone was heard. Then came silence, broken three times by the tinkling of a little bell. The bowed heads were raised. The Benediction had been given; and something like a strangled sob escaped from Maimie. After the service the big reception-room being occupied by visitors, Sister Agatha conducted her old pupil to a small parlor. The first greetings over, Maimie's face assumed a serious expression, and a mistiness veiled her eyes.

"Sister Agatha," she began, as if they had only been conversing on the subject the day before, "the trouble has come upon me."

And the Sister at once divined what she meant.

"My poor child," she said. Then there was silence and a secret communion of souls, reflected in the faces of both.

"I can never marry Harold Fairleigh, Sister. He loves Miss Fortescue," said Maimie, finally. The words cost her a painful effort; but they were said. Then she managed to tell the whole distressing story and ended, saying,

"And now, Sister, I am come to ask you what I am to do with my life."

Her voice was firm, and her eyes had grown bright. Sister Agatha saw before her the old, confiding, strong-souled girl, whom she had taught and loved and advised; and her own features quivered with emotion and her eyes filled with tears. She moved her chair nearer, and affectionately clasped the girl's hand, and then, for a few minutes, they sat in sorrowful silence,—the one who had suffered, struggled and conquered, the other, suffering and bravely struggling.

"My poor child," softly murmured the Sister, "my poor Maimie! I can scarcely credit this dreadful thing you tell me. There must be a mistake. Harold looked so honest, so true—" and she stopped. Did the image of another man who had looked honest and true, but was neither, rise before her and give her pause? Who knows? She continued,

"You must be patient under this severe affliction, my child, and wait, and God in His own good time will give you peace. You can pray—pray for light and guidance and peace, can you not, Maimie?

"Yes, Sister, I can pray—I will pray, but—I can never be the wife of Harold Fairleigh out of a mistaken affection he sought me, but his heart is Helen Fortescue's. He must be free to marry her. His happiness demands it. But what am I to do, then? Could I not become a nun?" she asked, with sad vehemence.

The Sister smiled gently as she replied,

"That would require greater sacrifices than you are prepared to make, dear, I am afraid."

Maimie grew very serious, a soft light illumined her features and there was a world of pathos in her low, tender tones.

"Sister Agatha," she said, "I remember some beautiful lines of poetry, you used to be fond of quoting. They ran thus,—

"He that loves most hath most to lose,
And willing loss is love's best prize;
The more that Yesterday hath lov-ed,
The more To-day can sacrifice."

"I love Harold very, very dearly, and I shall never love another man. I know, I feel that he would keep his pledge to me; but he would not be happy. I am willing to sacrifice anything for him, even my love itself. He shall be free."

The Sister gazed with pity and admiration on the glowing face of the lovely girl.

"Harold is not worthy of love such as yours, Maimie. No man is," she observed.

"And yet it is all his, Sister,—all," returned Maimie with voice quivering. "But I shall write and tell him that he is free and then—I shall take the veil."

Sister Agatha smiled again and said, "I think, dear, you will yet be a very happy wife; for I still believe there is a mistake somewhere. We must not utterly condemn Harold yet."

"I am not condemning him, Sister; only I know what my eyes beheld, and I cannot forget how he once loved Miss Fortescue."

"Then, as to you becoming a nun, dear,—you are young, and in youth, sudden and keen sorrows, like yours, are apt to distort and make the future look gloomy and hopeless. No matter how desirous you may be, you would not, under existing circumstances, be received."

Maimie's face fell at this crushing intelligence.

"No, my child," went on the sister, "you must first allow the test of time, and give God an opportunity of proving your vocation. You are wealthy. You have a good, loving mother. Tell her all, and induce her to take you abroad for awhile. See what travel, change of scene and change of faces will do for you. Pray, Maimie. Ask God to help you and to make your path straight and plain for you. Then, in a year's time, if you still persist in your desire to enter religion, we will see what can be done. Meanwhile, I shall pray that, long before that, you may be a happy wife, and Harold your no less happy husband."

They said "Good-bye," and parted.

Once more alone with her thoughts, Maimie felt the desolation of her soul more acutely than ever. She turned over in her mind Sister Agatha's advice; but it failed to cheer her. The sun had withdrawn its light from her life and she was wandering in the darkness. Nevertheless, she determined to act, and to act upon the line laid down for her by Sister Agatha; and in doing so she found some relief.

That night, before retiring, she wrote to Harold. She could not wait until she heard from him. He must know, as soon as possible that she had relinquished all claim to his love. The letter cost her a great effort and not a few tears. But it was written, and the next day despatched to his paper's office to be forwarded to him. It ran as follows,—

"Dearest Harold, —I must begin where it is the custom to end a letter, and ask you to believe me your ever loving Maimie.

Not a great many years ago, a brave, young man, with eyes like yours, saved a little girl's life at the peril of his own. The child's heart went out to him, and it has never come back to her. He was her preserver, her hero,—and he grew to love the child very dearly. Then he fixed his affections on a beautiful, young lady, who also loved him, but for some reason would not marry him. And the little girl was sorry for him, and, in her childish way, tried to comfort him by offering to marry him herself, if he would but wait for her.

The little child grew up, and people told her that she was beautiful. At last the man told her that he loved her and asked her to be his wife, and she was—oh, so happy!

Then she suddenly discovered—it matters not how—that he had made a mistake; that he still loved the first young lady but, through delicacy and fear of wounding his betrothed, he would never tell her so. Then the poor girl was very sad and wretched, because she, too, loved him so. But she was ready to give her life, if need be, for the happiness of her preserver. She, therefore, told him that she relinquished all claim to his love, so that he might be free to marry his first love. I need not say more, Harold. You will readily understand the story.

Maimie Desmond."

The next day Maimie laid the matter before her mother, who, in her loyalty to the man who had befriended them, refused to believe it. For weeks they waited, but no line came from Harold. Maimie could see no object in waiting, since the result must be the same, whether he wrote or returned. Indeed, his return would only be an aggravation of her pain. Her health, too, Mrs. Desmond saw, began to suffer from grief, useless pining and restless inactivity. Their departure, she concluded, would be a relief and a wholesome change. So, finally, mother and daughter took steamer for England.

CHAPTER IX.

Helen Fortescue heard of the departure of the Desmonds for Europe, and wondered at it. Harold away in the South, as she had gathered from the public press, and Maimie Desmond putting the Atlantic between him and herself,—what could it mean? Surely, something must have happened to bring about this sudden and unlooked for separation. Then, two days after, with straining eyes and beating heart, she read in the columns of the New York Herald, under the heading, "Fierce Fighting with the Apaches in Arizona," how the government soldiers had again been worsted with considerable loss, and on the list of the seriously wounded was the name of Harold Fairleigh, the well-known correspondent of that paper. Her love burst forth anew and made the blood surge through her veins, and turned the cold, despondent, almost despairing woman into a living creature of impulse and energy. Harold Fairleigh wounded, dying, and perhaps dead, and she living,—she summoned her carriage and drove to the Herald office. There she obtained the further information that the wounded man had been borne to Tucson, and with a letter from the manager she set out for that distant place. Three days afterwards, tired as she was with her long and weary journey, she was sitting by Harold's bedside. His wounds were serious, and owing to unavoidable lack of attendance and the heat, they had taken a dangerous turn, and threatened to become fatal. Weak with loss of blood and delirious with fever, he looked at her with eyes that knew her not. The doctor came and went, leaving his instructions to be carried out by the nurses and Helen, who hardly ever left the wounded man's side. And all through the long night of delirium she watched and tended him with unwearied patience, listening to the unfettered words that unceasingly flowed from the fever-freed tongue. And many a time did the proud head of the beautiful woman bend in anguish down, down to the pillow, until it lay beside the sufferer's face, whilst, in his unwitting cruelty, he told of his love for Maimie. Every word was a stab, and she could have shrieked in her agony. Then he would speak of their own illstarred love, their love of long ago. Yes, he had admired her, loved her above all other women, and,—it might have been—it might have been. And Helen would wring her hands growing thin with watching and intense suffering, and in her passionate grief and half-suppressed storm of fruitless regrets, cry aloud,

"Oh, Harold, pity—have pity on me!" all forgetful that he understood her not.

And still she watched and could not sleep. Sleep?—would she ever sleep again until she was wrapt in that sleep that comes but once to every child of humanity?

The doctor came, and after carefully examining his patient, turned to Helen and said,

"If he does not sleep within the next few hours, he will die."—And the pale, stately woman clasped one hand to her heart, whilst she steadied herself by resting the other on the table; and the doctor knew how it was with her. He departed, and she began to count the hours that now seemed to glide by all too quickly; but still the bright, fever-stricken eyes were wide open and the weakened voice, at intervals, babbled on. At last it ceased, and the tired eyes closed and she thought he was dead. She looked again, and saw that it was not death but sleep.—sleep that was to bring back reason, and possibly, life and health. In due time the rested eyes opened, and she saw in them the light of recognition; but he was too weak to speak. She gave him nourishment and a prepared draught, and he again relapsed into slumber. Helen gave the nurse in charge, and retired to try to snatch a few short hours of much needed repose.

When next Harold awoke, her eyes sought the nurse, and wandered around the room, as if in search of some one. Just then, Helen entered the room. At the sight of her a faint smile stole over his pale features and he weakly moved his hand along the bed towards her. With a low, half-stifled sob, the weary, long suffering woman knelt by the bedside, kissed the thin, wasted hand and rested upon it her burning forehead.

"Helen."

She raised her head quickly at the sound and gently placed a finger on the lips that had uttered her name. She then, according to the doctor's orders, administered unto him and, seating herself, took his hand, and it remained in her warm clasp.

The day came when Harold was permitted to talk. After piecing together the present with the immediate past, he desired to know how she came to be there. She told him. His eyes opened wide with wonder, which gradually softened into a look of gratitude. He silently pressed her hand, and the simple action flushed her cheek and made her eyes grow moist. To conceal her emotion she walked over to the bureau and presently returned with several letters. Breaking the seal of the largest envelope, he found inclosed Maimie's letter. He read it and without a word returned it to its envelope. Then for some minutes he lay still and thoughtful, with the letter in his hand. Neither then nor during the succeeding days of his convalescence did he ask for Maimie or mention her name. Meanwhile, Helen Fortescue surrounded him with all that money could buy and lavished upon him the wealth of tenderness she had hoarded up for him in her heart, which clung to him more passionately than ever. And Harold admired, wondered, pitied. There were times when, touched by her constancy and affection and swayed by a strange tenderness for her, he would have given much to be able to banish Maimie's image from his heart, and offer the one thing that could reward Helen Fortescue's devotion. But Maimie was suffering, too. The tender lines, breathing the noble spirit of self-sacrifice, appealed to all that was high and best in him. He understood his girl-lover. He never doubted the sincerity of her motives, though he often wondered at them. In those first days of convalescence, his affection for her did not waver. But events were shortly destined to happen, which took his constancy and tried that affection to the utmost. For, as he grew in strength his faithful nurse showed unmistakable signs of weakness and declining health. Her hands had grown thin and transparent and her cheeks, hollow. Dark rings had formed under her glorious eyes and dimmed their brightness. She assumed a cheerfulness and an energy which she could not always maintain; and Dr. Smith, noticing these changes, prescribed for her and ordered complete rest. The great strain she had put upon herself, the sudden change in climate and surroundings, the arduous duties she had undertaken and so faithfully discharged, and a secret but more insidious foe to health than all—these had undermined her constitutional, weakened her system and rendered her an easy prey for any disease that was prevailing round. A low, consuming fever seized upon her, which she was too weak and too indifferent to her fate to combat. Without Harold life was worthless. That was her secret conclusion. Had he but given evidence that he loved her still, she might even then have thrown off the dread grasp of disease; but he gave no sign, and, indeed, she looked for none. And so the disease, unopposed, developed and grew, and finally held over the poor, weakened energies its undisputed and fatal sway.

When Harold was able to leave his bed Helen was confined to hers. The doctor intimated that her condition was precarious, and her mother was sent for. The progress of the disease was unexampled. The physician could hardly account for its rapid strides. Medical resources seemed powerless to stay its fell course. He knew not of the hidden poison that lurked and worked in the poor, tried heart; but Harold knew all, and the sad reality shook and appalled him. Though the object of two fond hearts, he was no coxcomb; but a man of a warm and sympathetic nature. It is not to be wondered at, if under the peculiar circumstances of his position, Maimie's image was put away in the background. Death was hovering over her who had given her life for his and thought but little of the sacrifice. A great tenderness arose in his heart once more for the woman who lay dying, perhaps,—dying that he might live. Was it merely pity or the slumbering ashes of his former passion fanned into life again? He stopped not to inquire; he cared not to investigate. He only knew that it was there. He only knew that all doubting that the woman, who had loved him with a great and exceptional love, lay in the darkness around death's portals, yearning for the cheering light which he alone could bring; listening for the word which he alone could speak. That word should be spoken. Helen should, if possible, be brought back from the gates of death or her path made brighter through them.

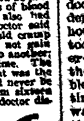
(To be continued.)

They are only bubbles, those maiden fancies of love, marriage and motherhood. But what beautiful bubbles they are! Who does not wish that all these fancies could end as did the old fairy stories, "and they lived happy ever after." Pain soon pricks the bubbles, and nothing remains of all the hope and gladness of the bride but a bridal veil and a piece of stale wedding cake.

The only way in which happiness can be realized in marriage is by being forearmed against its dangers. Most young women are ignorant of the fact that irregularity means a derangement of the womanly functions which may have far reaching consequences after marriage. With this derangement at the start there often follow the drains, ulcerations and inflammations which make life one long misery.

A certain cure for irregularity and other diseases peculiar to women is found in Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. It contains no alcohol neither opium, cocaine nor other narcotic.

"I feel so weak I did not have breath to walk across my room," writes Miss Idbell Miller of Mount Providence, Calloway Co., Ky. "My periods occurred too often and the hemorrhage would be prolonged and the loss of blood very excessive. I also had pain which the doctor said were fainting fits. My stomach would cramp until I could not straighten. I did not gain strength from one monthly period to another and petrael all the time. The doctor told me he did not know what was the cause of my trouble and he would never be any better. I lived in this way from sixteen years old to twenty-three, when the doctor died. After this I was advised by a kind friend to try Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, which I did and before I had taken two bottles of it I could work all day. I took in all six bottles of the 'Favorite Prescription' and about five vials of Dr. Pierce's Pellets. I used no other medicine. I have never had a return of this trouble since."



Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets clear the complexion and sweeten the breath.

Our Native Herbs

A purely vegetable remedy, containing the best and most beneficial properties known to Nature, and entirely free from any mineral drug or injurious stimulant. Sufferers in every part of the world have been cured, and willingly testify to its wonderful merits.

I was a sufferer from Neuralgia and Sick Headache for a number of years. OUR NATIVE HERBS cured me after all other remedies failed.
MRS. A. M. TIBBETTS, *Port Greville, N. S.*

I was afflicted with Salt Rheum for 25 years, and OUR NATIVE HERBS has entirely cured me. I also recommend it as the best medicine I have ever used for stomach troubles.
MRS. JOSEPH HEMLIN, *35 Barker St., St. John, N. B.*

Every box of OUR NATIVE HERBS is stamped with registered number, and contains a guarantee. If directions are followed and no cure is effected, we will refund your money. There is 200 days' treatment in each box. A positive remedy. A certain preventive. If your druggist does not keep it, we will mail you a box on receipt of $1.00.

Also sold in powdered form.

THE ALONZO C. BLISS CO.,
232 St. Paul St., Montreal, Can.

ing off with her chin in the air. "When you get ready you may hang my coat up to suit yourself; I'm not going to touch it. I don't suppose Miss Wright will want it lying there all day, and you know what she always says about flinging things around."

Meantime, at the other end of the room, Herbert Decker, after rummaging two or three times through his desk and book-bag in a vain search, broke out fretfully.

"Just my luck! I've gone and forgot that old pencil again. I do believe a lead pencil is the smallest thing on this earth; it's forever getting away from a fellow!"

"I guess your luck won't turn," said his brother Charlie, "till you shorten your last morning nap a little and quit rushing everything through at the end of about ten times the proper speed."

"I didn't ask your opinion, thank you," said Herbert. "When I wish to engage a private chaplain I'll let you know. Say, Al Jones, will you lend me a pencil?"

"Can't do it," said Al. "I don't keep supplies for the whole school!"

"Not even of manners, do you?" retorted Herbert, snappishly.

Half way towards the door two smaller boys were scuffling over an atlas, and across the aisle a little lame lad had just shaken his flat in the face of a neighbor, whom he suspected of laughing at his deformity.

Miss Wright, the young teacher, had been trying hard to shut her eyes to the brewing storm about her. She felt dull and out of sorts herself, and now, as she looked at the overcast faces in her school-room and remembered the long hours that stretched ahead, she heaved a long, deep discouraged sigh.

Midway in the sigh the door once more opened and shut to, letting in a little rosy-cheeked girl wearing a plaid shawl over a much-darned frock. This was Minty Morris. None of the other girls wore a shawl, and none of them had quite so many patches as she; but I doubt whether anybody had ever a thought about that—certainly nobody minded.

Minty was smiling and breathless.

"I ran all the way," she said cheerfully. "Our clock never is just right. It's horrid hurrying so, but then it makes a nice relief for you when you find out you're in time, after all."

Here she stumbled over the jacket that Katie Brown had thrown on the floor.

"Somebody's coat will get mussed," she said, hanging it up in place and straightening two or three hats on the pegs as she passed. Then she began to fumble in her dinner pail and presently drew out a splendid crimson apple. She looked at it admiringly while she polished it off on the end of her shawl until its smooth surface shone again. When she was fully satisfied that she had done her best to heighten its perfections, she started across to the corner where Larry Miles, the crippled boy, was still frowning tremendously over his grievance.

Since Minty had come in there had been a lull in the angry talking and the shuffling of feet on the school-room floor had stopped, so that now when she spoke, quiet as her voice was, everybody heard.

"Larry," she said smiling and dimpling in irresistible friendliness, "here's a present for you. Grandpa brought us some of these on Saturday and I saved a nice one just for you. "Don't you like this kind?"

As if Larry did not like all kinds! And so if Grandpa Morris had brought so many apples that "one" more or less, did not count!

I think that every mind in the listening school-room travelled to the little tin pail on Minty's desk and remembered how seldom it was that anything like a luxury was brought to light from under its cover.

Suddenly one of the boys took his hand away from the disputed atlas.

"You can have it," he said, "I don't care."

And Al Jones took out his knife and cutting his pencil in two, offered half to Herbert.

"I guess that was too long for comfort; and anyhow, it's a pity if there isn't some way to get the best of circumstances."

The boy who had roused Larry's wrath leaned over a seat or two to speak to him.

"What are you mad at me about, old man?" he demanded. I was just laughing at the face Katie Brown was making. If you want to fight me for that, all right. But I think we'd better shake hands and be friends."

Katie Brown squirmed uneasily for a time, then she peered over her shoulder at the neighbor whose coat she had maltreated, and finally she turned around and said shyly,—

"My Aunt Mary is going to Europe, did you know it?"

And so it seemed as though the fog and gloom that had thickened crept off under the door and through the cracks of the windows to join the gray March storm outside.

"Dear little Minty!" said Miss Wright, looking over at the desk where Minty, with her tongue thrust into her cheek and a studious frown on her face was "doing examples" with all her might. "Dear little girl! She doesn't know how much she has helped us all, and just by being sweet and kind and contented."—St. Nicholas.

A FELLOW'S MOTHER.

"A fellow's mother," said Fred the wise,
With his rosy cheeks and merry blue eyes,
"Knows what to do if a fellow gets hurt
By a thump or bruise, or a fall in the dirt.
"A fellow's mother has bags and strings,
Bags and buttons and lots of things;
No matter how busy she is, she'll stop
To see how well you can spin your top.
"She does not care—not much, I mean—
If a fellow's face is not quite clean;
And if your trousers are torn at the knee
She can put in a patch you'd never see!
"A fellow's mother is never mad,
And only sorry if you are bad;
And I'll tell you this, if you're only true,
She'll always forgive you, whate'er you do!
"A fellow is mean who would never try
To keep the tear from her loving eye,
And the fellow's worse who sees it not,
That his mother's the truest friend he's got!"

The great lung healer is found in that excellent medicine sold as Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup. It soothes and diminishes the sensibility of the membranes of the throat and air passages, and is a sovereign remedy for all coughs, colds, hoarseness, pain or soreness in the chest, bronchitis, etc. It has cured many when supposed to be far advanced in consumption.

HOW THE STORM WENT ROUND.

The big school-room clock said ten minutes to nine one Monday morning. It was a dark day; a heavy grey fog blotted out all the window panes and really seemed to have crept indoors and nestled down on the spirits of the scholars, who were gathering slick and tack.

Two small girls, standing below the row of pegs where hats and wraps were hung, were arguing with growing temper over the possession of one particular knob. Finally one of them snatched the other's jacket and flung it flatly down on the floor.

"I was here first," she stormed, "so you can just take your coat away. You must have my place."

"Very well, Miss Katie Brown," answered the second little maid, marching