

ing audacious and assuring Constance that they would see her at the dance the following week. Jack Granger lingered a moment.

"What a relief!" said the girl brightly. "And now we can have a real good old talk. Jack, you don't know how glad I am—"

"I can guess, Constance," he answered slowly, "and I'm sorry. The disappointment must be so much the greater."

"Disappointment!" she echoed.

"Yes. I—the fact is, Con—I'm not going to accept Mather's offer."

"No?" Her tone was still incredulous. "You see, it's this way," and in simple, yet graphic language he proceeded to relate his plans for the future, and to tell of the rude life he had chosen up in the north. The girl listened in silence. At length, "It must be a big, big life," she said slowly.

Granger caught eagerly at her words. "That's just it, Constance. Big and pulsating, not what I once dreamed of. I think," and he smiled boyishly, "I think I must have been looking for something easy. It's different now. I know that everyone thinks I am throwing away my chances. Perhaps I am, but it's meant sacrifice. Do you remember, Constance," and he turned and smiled at the girl who was absently playing with some violets, "do you remember how we used to read Browning together? And that favorite quotation of mine:—

'Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,  
And the sun looked over the mountain's brim,  
And straight was a path of gold for him,  
And the need of a world of men for me.'

"It always appealed to me, but I never knew what it meant, until just lately."

"And so you have felt the need of a world of men, Jack! And I—am I listed for the path of gold?"

Granger did not reply for a moment. Then he turned and looked at her. The old, sweet look of comradeship looked out clearly from her eyes.

"I suppose, at one time or another, Constance, we come to the parting of the ways. I'm glad you know now, and you've taken my decision as I knew you would—best old chum ever!"

Just for one instant her eyes wavered, but they met his again, dark and clear and true. "That's right, Jack—never forget that. I shall see you again before you go, but this is really good-bye, isn't it? And the best, the best of luck!"

They clasped hands warmly, and in another second he was gone. The girl stood watching until he was out of sight. Then she heaved a sigh, the deep, deep sigh of girlhood, and began to ruthlessly pluck the violets to pieces. Once, a whimsical smile played about her lips.

Spring ripened into summer. Convocation was over, and the companions of four years were scattered to the four corners of the earth. Late in June, his year at the General Hospital having expired, Dr. Jack Granger made his way up into the north country, and there, busily fighting death and disease in the crude life of the mining camp, striving to bear up his lofty standard of ideals in those primitive wilds where nature's laws were all, daily learning more of the hearts of pioneer humanity, he became immersed in his arduous tasks, and the old life became a phantasy of the past.

Sometimes, indeed, in the red glow of the camp fire the old scenes rose before him, and a sweet-faced girl seemed to smile from out the embers. But that firelight picture was the only relaxation he allowed his fancy. "I cannot go back," he would say firmly, "I have chosen."

Thus it was, that far away from the haunts of civilization, with long intervals between the mails, and even longer distances dividing him from his friends, he did not hear the big financial disaster that had befallen the firm of Orme, Mason and Company.

Constance Orme was seated in her favorite nook on the piazza, when she was told of the calamity. When the first rather severe shock was over, a strange, sweet thrill, half pleasure and half pain, seemed to permeate her whole being. "Oh, Jack, Jack," she whispered, "if you only knew! It may be that mine is not 'the path of gold,' either, but the big, big 'world of men.' You poor, dear, chivalrous Jack!"

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THE pines stood black and gaunt against the dusky red-gold of the autumn afternoon. A warm wind blew restlessly across the clearing, laden with smoke and fine dust, and sometimes a whirling cloud of yellow leaves. Constance Orme stepped quickly out of the little log house, locked the door and gazed searchingly around, her face pale and drawn with anxiety. She was thinking of the terrible fire at the mine—the awful disaster which had kept the children away from school that day, and which had cast such a gloom over the little mining town of C—

"How dead the place is," she exclaimed, with a little shudder. "The very wind seems to moan. There—yes, it must be. They are turning in at the church; they are going to turn it into a hospital, and they are taking the injured there now. I wonder if they need help; why, of course they must. Constance Orme, is this all you are made of? Why did you come to this country anyway?"

She ran over the rough ground in nervous haste, and in another minute she was at the door of the little frame church, flushed and breathless. "Oh, please, Mr. Allan, may I come in? I know something of bandaging—"

The mine owner turned quickly at the sound of her voice. "Why, it's teacher!" he exclaimed, and a relieved smile crossed his face. "Yes, yes, come right in, Miss Orme. That is, if you think you can stand it. A good many fathers of the youngsters you teach are in here I guess. Yes, we need help. Easy, now there, Jimmie—Smith, another pail of water."

For one instant Constance experienced a wild desire to run away from the awful scene. "Then," as she wrote afterwards in a letter to a girl friend, "I remembered that my great grandfather died at the battle of Waterloo, and sailed in." And in the same letter, "I never knew of just how much value those First Aid to the Injured stunts were going to be, which we used to take at Madame Henriette's school. But they certainly were practical—"

And indeed it would have been hard to have discovered a more practical young person on that September afternoon than the slim, white-clad girl who moved so swiftly and so lightly among the long rows of injured men. The spirit of the ancestor at Waterloo deepened the rose in her cheek, and lent a rare sparkle to her dark eyes. Other women were there, too; but all instinctively looked to "Teacher," and Constance bandaged, and bathed with cold water, made use of simple devices, and resorted to every possible plan to relieve the suffering. The doctor would not be able to get there till next day, Mr. Allan said, and in the meantime they must do their best.

Infinitely more, the girl's presence imparted a feeling of hap-

piness. Stern faces smiled at her approach, and she was able to utter many a word of cheer. "You're the little teacher the kids talk so much about," said one of the men, as she paused near him. Then his face kindled into friendliness. "And it ain't much wonder."

Constance did not once leave her post during the long hours of that September night. "There is absolute need of me, Mr. Allan," she said, when the mine owner ventured to protest. "I am young and strong, and needed to look after these men."

Her eyes swept around the long, narrow building, and rested on a grief-stricken woman. "And comfort those whom I can no longer help," she added softly.

It was dawn-break, the hour when vitality sinks to its lowest ebb. A deep silence reigned in the rude hospital. Constance, weary with the long vigil, and the mental stress, and awed by that unseen presence of Death which might be hovering so near, stole quietly to the door. It was the "darkest hour," and while she stood and drank in the cool, fragrant air, an impulse seized her to step out into the night. A few moments more, and she was standing in the shelter of a cluster of pines by the roadside.

"The dawn is coming," she whispered to herself, "and the night is fleeing away. And in that hospital over yonder men are playing the game of Life and Death. I never knew what life meant before—but I know now, and those women in there know. It is toil, and service, and suffering, and up here in this great north country—"

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A cool breeze swept through the pines. "It is the shiver of the dawn!" she murmured ecstatically. Away in the east a faint pink light appeared.

Then the sound of buggy wheels, and a man's voice rang out through the gray darkness.

"Hello! is that you, doctor? Yes—drive this way. Pretty well—pretty well—in the name of wonder—Why, it's Miss Orme! I was quite startled by your white dress."

Constance stepped out from among the trees. "Yes, Mr. Allan, I just came out to see the sun rise. Shall I go in now? Has the doctor come?"

"I am glad to say that he is here in person. Dr. Granger, let me present Miss Orme, the Florence Nightingale of the C— mining disaster."

"Dr. Granger and I have met before, Mr. Allan. I did not know—"

"Constance, Constance, it really isn't you!" Granger's voice had the old boyish enthusiasm, and he sprang out of the rig and caught her hands eagerly.

"I will run up and let them know you've arrived, doctor," said the mine owner courteously, and strode briskly away, half smiling, half perplexed.

"But, Constance, I don't understand—" The girl smiled tremulously. "Have you never heard, Jack? When the firm failed I came up here to teach school—but since yesterday I have been acting in the capacity of a trained nurse, and—Jack, why Jack!"

His strong arms closed around her. "Oh, Constance, is it true? Can I claim you at last? I have dreamed of you so often, dear—at night, by the camp fire, and now—"

She raised her face to his. The rose-light of the dawn had cast over it a lovely radiance; her eyes were dark with joy. Away in the east the clouds kindled into crimson flames.

"See, Jack!" she cried, "the sunrise! And there, right through that cloud—"

His eyes followed the motion of her hand. Low in the horizon he saw the piled drift of a mass of soft, purplish pink clouds, cleft through the heart by one broad band of burnished gold, like a rare flaw in some splendid jewel.

"It is the 'path of gold,' Jack," the girl exclaimed.

"The path of gold," he repeated, "up in the new north, Constance, and for both of us to follow. Perhaps, it, too, leads to the 'world of men,'"

## TO KIPLING

In reply to "The Female of the Species," a poem by Mr. Kipling, which appeared in THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL for November, 1911.

When the Soul of Man awakened, when the Woman that God gave,  
Stood revealed his wife and sweetheart, not his chattel or his slave,  
Then he formed his own conception of what Woman ought to be,  
And he made a Plaster Image, and he told her it was She.

For the Woman as God made her wasn't good enough for Man;  
He invented large improvements upon Nature's cruder plan;  
And he made that image nice and white, and put it on the shelf,  
Where he kept assorted virtues that he did not want himself.

Man might govern, fight, and reason, to his perfect satisfaction;  
Woman's work it was to cheer him when his mind was out of action;

Woman, good and kind, and clinging, timid, soft, anaemic, pale,  
For the female of the species was an adjunct to the male.

But the Woman as Man made her scarcely suits our modern notions,  
With her nicely guarded instincts and her primitive emotions;  
We have dropped the weaker vessel and the tame domestic pet,  
And our taste finds something wanting in that saint-like statuette.

So our literary gentlemen have touched it up afresh,  
And have changed the plaster image to a Demon of the Flesh,  
Half Mother-Fiend, half Maenad: lest the generations fail,  
"Armed and engined," fanged and poisoned, for the hunting of the male;

With the morals of the hen-coop, with the Jungle's code of law,  
As described by Rudyard Kipling after (some way after) Shaw.  
'Tis no doubt a graceful fancy; but the Woman Time has made  
Doesn't recognize the likeness so ingeniously portrayed.

And Man knows it, Mr. Poet! Knows your singular ideal  
Does not bear the least resemblance to the Woman that is real;  
Knows that Woman is not fiend, nor saint, nor mixture of the two,  
But an average human being—"most remarkable like you."

—Sydney Low, in *The London Standard*.

