

The way was rough and trying, still I did not go out of my course, and I met no one. As you said, it was very desolate to be alone there, not a track, not a house."

"How could I tell you would find your way so admirably? How did I know there would be no mist? How could I foresee no tramp would accost you? You have done a brave deed."

"I really should not have thought you were a nervous man."

"I certainly am not. As a general rule I always think people can take care of themselves. But it makes a wonderful difference when it is a— a friend who is in danger."

There was perhaps more meaning in his tone than he was aware of.

"Had we not better enter on business?" she said hastily.

"Perhaps so. I have a proposition to make to you. I cannot bear the idea of your becoming a mill-hand, my paid servant, and it is not necessary that you should."

"But it is necessary, and I am thankful to be your paid servant," she replied with the humility of pride.

"Let me assure you that it is not necessary. I have been speaking to my mother. Of course I did not say one word about you until I had consulted you, but I asked her if she would not like a young lady for a companion, and she said she would. My mother is both a kind and a good considerate woman, though she is not very clever. Your duties would be to sit with her and pay her the small attentions of a daughter; you would be treated entirely as one of the family. participating in every recreation and amusement, (for my father is one of the kindest men in the world, and very fond of young ladies,) and you would receive one hundred a year. Surely you will consent to come."

"Mr. Westlake," said Mary with a smile of amusement, "you are not a good a man of business as I have been led to believe. Your offer is most kind and generous, but what are you thinking about? Do you know my real name?"

"Unfortunately I do not!"

"Do you know anything of my family?"

"No."

"Do you know anything of my character?"

"Yes, I do," said Ronald with determination.

"YOU imagine you do. How can you prove that I am not a thief? That I might not steal your mother's money or her jewels?"

"I am willing to risk it."

"Exactly so, to risk it. I don't think I am a thief, but you don't know that I might not be. What do you know of my temper, my health, my capabilities, my education; you know nothing. Mr. Westlake, you are proposing to make me an intimate member of your household, and you are taking far less precaution than you would take in purchasing a horse. I thank you warmly, but I cannot accept your offer."

She had cross-examined him pitilessly; as a business man he would have been the first to blame another man for acting as he had done, but he replied:

"Nothing you have said has any effect on me. I am quite sure that in asking you to enter my mother's house in the capacity of a trusted friend, I am doing right."

Her face softened, tears shone in her eyes.

"How good you are to trust me, after all the suspicious circumstances connected with me. If I came as your mother's companion I would endeavour to repay you by being good to her; if, instead of being kind and considerate, she were exacting and capricious I would bear with her and study her in every way, but I cannot come."

"Surely you do not prefer factory life to a life of ease and comfort, where you would consort as an equal (I would see to that, or they should never enter my father's door again) with cultivated people who would admire your beauty and talent."

"I dread factory life very much: I dread the society of mill-hands; I appreciate to the full the comfort and luxury you have mentioned, but again

I cannot accept your offer. What account would you give of me to your mother?"

"She is perfectly satisfied with everything I do."

"And your father?"

"He does not interfere. He would soon love you as a daughter."

"And your friends?"

"I would not own a friend who objected to you: she could go away."

He thought of Miss Ormonde as he spoke; he was aware that she would object most strongly.

"But you must not sacrifice any friend for me. The scheme is impossible. How could—my future husband work at sorting rags and then visit me at your house? You must see that it is impossible."

It was strange that he had again entirely forgotten the existence of this man; he now remembered 'the tailor fellow,' with sudden fury, although he was usually a man of most even temper.

"I do see that it is impossible," he said. "I think perhaps we have continued the conversation long enough, for I have work to do, and I must put you in the way of yours."

He opened the door and led the way towards the large factory with its busy whirring wheels and machinery. At the entrance he stopped and said:

"Do you know how I feel towards you at this moment? I feel that I should like to punish you for your absurd pride and throwing away the best chance it was in my power to offer you, though if I could have done more I would. I feel that I shall speak to you far more roughly and harshly than to any of the mill-hands, and that if you fail in your work I shall not excuse you."

But she, with a woman's instinct, understood the cause of the rage he was feeling. She made him the curtsy of a charity school girl, and said with a mocking gleam in her blue eyes:

"Certainly, Sir; you will no doubt be very harsh to me, sir; thank you, sir."

"Don't drive me too far," he said fiercely, then catching sight of the foreman he said in rough tones: "Take this young woman over the factory and show her the entire working. Then set her to work amongst so and so— naming some women, —"afterwards come to me and tell me if she is likely to be able to do the work."

He turned away as he spoke but not before he had heard in the same mocking tones: "Thank you, sir,"

(To be Continued.)

THE BRITISH BOY.

A DECK boy, giving evidence at the Falaba inquiry, said that since the sinking of that ship he had been to sea in a Harrison liner, which also was torpedoed. He was going to sea again.

Cheers for the British lad
Whose spirit none can tame,
Who, twice torpedoed, still is glad
His purpose to acclaim
Of doing still,
In good or ill,
His duty just the same.

Hail, father to the man
In coming days to be,
Our country's future if we scan
With faith, 'tis thanks to thee,
And those whom naught
By foemen wrought,
Can banish from the sea.

So beats the British heart
In every bosom true,
And each is resolute his part,
Whatever threats, to do,
All joined as one
The task begun
Unmoved to carry through.
A. W. B.

TAKE A HOLIDAY.

NOW that the holiday season is on, perhaps Kaiser Wilhelm would like to go somewhere. Unfortunately the Allies don't seem disposed to let him. There is only one place to which we can conscientiously recommend the Kaiser to go, but there are no return tickets, and the name of the place isn't used in polite conversation.

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