

True Freedom—How to Gain It.

We want no flag, no fluttering flag,
For liberty to fight,
We want no blaze of murderous guns
To struggle for the right.
Our spears and swords are pointed words,
The mind our battle plain,
We've won such victories before,
And so we shall again.

We have no triumphs sprung of force—
They strain her brightest cause,
'Tis not in blood that liberty
Inscribes our civil laws.
She writes them on the peoples hearts,
In language clear and plain,
True thoughts have moved the world be-
fore,
And so they shall again.

We yield to none in earnest love
Of freedom's cause sublime,
We join the cry, "Fraternity"—
We keep the march of time.
And yet we grasp no pike or spear
Our victories to obtain
We've won without their aid before,
And so we shall again.

We want no aid of barricade
To show a front of wrong,
We have a citadel of truth,
More durable and strong.
Calm words, great thoughts, unflinching
faith.
Have never striven in vain,
They've won our battle many a time,
And so they shall again.

Peace, progress, knowledge, brother-
hood—
The ignorant may sneer—
The bad deny—but we rely
To see their triumph near.
No widow's groan shall lead our cause,
No blood of brethren slain,
We've won without such aid before,
And so we shall again.

SELECT STORY.

The Poor-House Girl.

HERE! Van, take this pail and go to the spring after some water. Be spry now! don't let any grass glow under your feet, for I'm in a hurry. Don't wait to look for a sun-bonnet; you won't tan enough to hurt you.

The girl took the pail and started on her errand without a word.

She was a small slender girl of fifteen, no larger than most children of twelve, but with a worn, tired look on her face which made her seem years older.

Her dress was an old, torn calico, short enough to show her thick, cow-hide shoes, above which could be seen a pair of slender, bare ankles. Her hair was of a lovely golden-brown colour, but so rough and untidy that it looked far from attractive. Her features were pretty enough, but the sour, discontented expression, combined with the slatternly attire, made her look absolutely repulsive.

But Van was only Mrs. Richards' bound girl, and nobody thought of noticing whether she was pretty or not.

Her real name was not Van, of course. She had a very grand name of her own—Earnestina Van Dalsein—but it was quite too grand for a poor-house girl; besides, it took too much time to speak it. So Mrs. Richards called her "Van," and the children called her "Van," and it seemed as if that name was called through the house from morning till night.

Mrs. Richards scolded her, and the children bullied her, until she wished she were back in the poor-house again, or dead, she didn't care much which, anywhere out of their way.

Mrs. Richards was a working, scolding woman. From childhood she had been taught that work was the end and aim of life.

Nature had not endowed her with very tender sensibilities, and her training had combined with nature to make her the hard, coarse, grasping woman she was. She viewed everything in a money-making light. No pretty, feminine trifles made her home bright and cheerful; no pictures adorned the walls, and no flowers bloomed in her garden. She would rather see a good hill of potatoes than the handsomest flowers that ever grew.

And as for pictures, said she, you could not eat them, neither could you wear them; so what were they good for?

Mrs. Richards was but a representative of a certain class of farmer's wives. She saw no beauty in the varied landscapes spread out before her.

She knew that one field yielded a sight of hay every year, and another was a awful stony; that the trees were large enough to make excellent timber, and, if a dam was built in the river, it would be a grand place for a saw-mill.

Daisies and buttercups were obnoxious to her, because they spoiled the hay.

It was a sad day for Earnestina Van Dalsein when Mrs. Richards came to the poor-house after a girl.

Mind, said she to the matron, I want a girl who'll earn her victuals. I won't have any lazy folks around me.

Earnestina had just come to the poor-house, and was really the only available girl there.

She looks slim and delicate like, said Mrs. Richards; but you say she knows how to work?

Yes, she knows how to do all kinds of work, and seems very willing and faithful.

Willin' or not she'll have to work if I take her, was the grim response. But you haven't told me nothin' about her folks; I shouldn't like to take anybody into my house whose father had been to prison, or hung, or anything like that, you know.

Of course not, assented the matron. This girl's father was a painter—painted pictures; and her mother was some rich man's daughter, who ran off and married this Van Dalsein without letting her folks know anything about it. They wanted her to marry some great lord, or count, or something; and when they found she'd married this fellow, they told her she'd made her bed, and she must lie in it; they wouldn't do anything more for her. Her husband got the consumption, and was sick for a long while, and she took in sewing, and one thing and another, so as to get enough to eat. Finally, he died, and 'twan't more than two weeks before she died too. Folks say she poisoned herself, but I don't know anything about that. There wasn't any property left, and nobody seemed to want the girl so she was sent here. She seems quite handy about the house, and I really hate to have her go.

Shiftless sort of folks, I should think, responded Mrs. Richards. And likely enough she'll have high notions; but if that is all I can manage her. I'll come round to-morrow, and have the papers filled out.

So Earnestina was bound out to Mrs. Richards until her eighteenth birthday. Poor girl! she had a hard time of it. She had known poverty all her life, but through it all there had been a kind of refinement that had softened away many of its rough, hard points.

Her parents were refined and educated, and had tenderly watched over their only child.

Their rooms might have been plain, but they were neat clean, and cheerful. Her clothes were faded and patched, but they were neither ragged or dirty. Here it was all different.

She usually had enough to eat, for Mrs. Richards knew she would gain nothing by starving the child; but neatness and even cleanliness were among the things of the past.

From early morn till dewy eve it was work! work! work! unceasingly; and when her work was done for the day, she was too tired to mend her dresses or do anything but creep into bed and rest her tired body.

On the day that our story commences, she was, if possible more tired than usual as she took the heavy pail and started for the spring a dozen rods distant.

A carriage containing a gentleman and lady, came slowly bowling over the country road.

The lady was dainty, high-bred, and dressed in the whitest, crispest lawn and muslin.

Oh, George! exclaimed she, do stop the horse a moment. It is so quiet and lovely here, I half envy those who spend their lives amid the enchantment of scenes like this.

Her companion smiled.

Did you ever read a sketch of Rural life, by Holland? He says that just in proportion as one is able to appreciate the beauty and loveliness of a farmer's life, he loses the ability to content himself with such a life. I believe he is right. Too many even amid enchantments like this, devote themselves to almost unremitting toil, until their minds become, like their bodies coarse and distorted.

Oh, don't brother, cast such a shadow over my enthusiasm. Where can we look for happiness if not amid scenes like this? It is like a glimpse of Paradise. And this must be one of the angelic inhabitants, said he, laughing and looking at Van, who had filled the pail, and was carrying the heavy burden up the steep hill.

Oh, George, exclaimed the lady, what a forlorn-looking creature!

Yes; looks as if it would take some time for her to develop into a fully-fledged angel. Suppose we try to obtain a nearer view. Ho, there, cried he, please tell me if this is the road to Chester.

Van started at the call, and in her embarrassment, dropped the pail, which rolled to the bottom of the hill again.

George Thorne was a kind hearted young man, in spite of his brusque, and half-boyish manner.

Poor girl! said he, I have half-frightened her to death—just like me. Please hold the lines a moment, sis, while I rescue that unfortunate pail.

He sprang from the carriage, tossed the reins into his sister's hands, and ran lightly down the hill.

Excuse me, said he to Van, who stood looking after the receding pail, I did not intend to frighten you; I will run down the hill and get it.

Susie Thorne looked at the forlorn child, and tears rose to her eyes.

Won't you come here a moment, my child? said she, kindly.

Van instinctively felt the friendliness of the voice, and came slowly to the side of the carriage.

She had been accustomed to harsh voices and harsher blows so long that a friendly voice was like healing balm to her wounded spirit.

Do you live in the farm-house, yonder? asked Miss Thorne, kindly.

Yes, ma'am; and she looked half-couriously at the strange lady.

It is a lovely place, and looks very cosy and homelike, nestled in among the trees; and how beautiful the river is, winding down through the valley! and the fields seem fairly covered with flowers. Do you like flowers?

Yes, but I don't have time to pick them, I don't think it's pretty, here either, I wish I couldn't ever see the place again.

You are not happy here, then? said Miss Thorne tenderly.

No; I have not been happy since mother died. I wish I had died, too—I wish I was dead now!

And the girl burst into a paroxysm of tears.

George Thorne came up the hill, bringing the pail, which he had again filled at the spring, but his sister motioned him to stay back a moment.

What is your name, child, and with whom do you live? asked she, when the sobs began to grow less frequent.

I'm nobody but Van, and I live with Mrs. Richards.

That is an odd name, my dear. What is it besides Van?

My mother used to call me Earnestina Van Dalsein; but Mrs. Richards says, bound girls have no business to have such high-sounding names, so I am only Van now. I am a poor-house girl, ma'am.

And the girl's stunted figure seemed to rise to a proper size, while a gleam of pride shone in her eyes.

Susie Thorne looked at the girl with involuntary surprise.

In God's eyes we are all alike, said she, whether we dwell in a hovel or a palace. Do you like to read, Earnestina?

I used. I don't have time now.

And the hopeful, disinterested look again swept over her face.

I must go now, said she, starting suddenly. Mrs. Richards will scold or beat me for staying so long.

Van seized the brimming pail that George Thorne had brought, and started with hurried steps for the house.

Poor child! I am sorry for her. I must tell mamma all about it, for she is so good to plan anything that will make others better and happier.

The carriage with its occupants passed on.

We will not accompany them, but follow Van to the house, where Mrs. Richards awaited her with ire in her heart and angry words at her tongue's end.

A pretty time for you to come with that pail of water! Didn't I tell ye to hurry, ye lazy brat?

But I dropped my pail. I didn't mean—

Yes, yes. I saw it all. Don't ye think I've got my eyes? Throwin' my pails round that way! S'pose you wanted to get that feller in the carriage to look at ye; he must have been love-struck at the sight of such a lookin' critter.

Mrs. Richards! there was plenty of anger and pride in the simple ejaculation.

Ye needn't 'Mrs. Richards' me, ye lazy trollop! Here I've fed and clothed ye nigh on to two years, and ye grow lazier and lazier all the time. No good ever comes of takin' poor-house girls'anyway. Like parent, like child. Your folks was too lazy to earn a livin', and you—

Mrs. Richards, stop! My mother was a lady and my father a gentleman. They were as much above you as heaven is above earth. You shall not insult them.

Mrs. Richards was for a moment too startled to speak.

The insulted, abused spirit was not quite crushed yet.

But she recovered herself in a moment, and her anger knew no bounds.

Ye won't, hey? screamed she, grasping the slight arm of the girl in her strong, bony hand. I'll teach ye not to insult your betters, and seizing a rod in the other hand, she beat the unresisting girl until her strength failed, and Van sank down in a disordered heap on the kitchen floor.

girl; or, more likely, she thought Van would not be able to do any more work that day, at least, and it would be a waste of time to call her.

Next morning Van did not come down as usual to prepare the breakfast, and Mrs. Richards mounted the steep stairs in haste.

Van! Van! cried she; but there was no answer.

Again she raised her voice.

Van! Van! Get up, you lazy minx! She heard no reply, save a feeble moan, as she opened the door, determined to wake her effectually. She began wrathfully—

What do you mean by lyin' abed till this time o'day? Here I've been callin'—Mussy! What ails the child? screamed she, as she came nearer.

Van lay across the bed, dressed as she had been the day before. Her eyes were wide open, but there was no light of reason in the blue orbs. Her cheeks were scarlet, and her lips dry and parched. Wild, incoherent words were uttered, and her head moved restlessly to and fro.

She's got a fever! Likely as not it's ketchin' too. O dear! This comes of takin' poor-house girls. I can't take care of her, goodness knows. And the selfish, calculating woman rushed down the stairs to tell her husband of the difficulty, and see if he could get her back on the town, now that she was sick.

Susie Thorne had interested her mother in the story of poor Van, and together they determined to visit her that morning. Mrs. Richards met them at the door with her sweetest smile, for they were well-dressed ladies, and she always had a "company smile" with which she greeted such as they. But her face darkened on hearing their errand.

Want to see Van? Well, I declare! Then you must be the lady in the carriage that talked to her yesterday. Well, 'twon't be much consolation to ye to see her now, for she's sick with a fever—crazy as a loon. She's a good for nothin', lazy critter at best. She's been a great trial to me ever since I took her from the poor-house; an' now she's been an' got sick just at the beginnin' of hay-tin'.

But we should like to see the sick girl, if you are willing, said Mrs. Thorne.

Why, yes, I s'pose you can see her, if ye want to. But it won't do any good as I told ye, and likely as not it's ketchin'.

Please show us the way, Mrs. Richards. We are not afraid in the least.

So she willing led the way up the steep stairs to Van's room. She was raving.

Oh, don't! don't strike me! cried she. I didn't mean to stay so long! I didn't mean to drop the pail! Oh, don't, don't! And her voice sank into a low, gurgling moan.

Mrs. Richards, said Mrs. Thorne, this girl ought not to be left alone in such a small, close room. We will help you to move her into some more commodious apartment. And she should have a physician immediately. Have you sent for one?

Well, I don't hardly know. I told 'Lisha I wished he would see the town authorities, and see if he can get her back on the town. Mebbe he'll call a doctor, if the select men agree to pay the bill. I hain't got any other place to put her, except the spare chamber, and I don't want to put her there; she's nothing but a poor-house girl anyhow.

I will pay the physician's bill myself said Mrs. Thorne, rather than see her suffer like this. Susie, my dear, please go out to the carriage and tell John to ride immediately to the city after Dr. Harris.

I will do so, mamma, said she leaving the room.

I will do what I can for the poor girl's comfort until he arrives. You can certainly have no objection, Mrs. Richards?

Oh, no. If you want to take care of her, I'm sure I shan't hinder you; though what you can see in this dirty poor-house girl, to take such a notion to, is more than I can tell. But I want you to remember that I didn't send for no doctor, and shan't pay none of his bills.

Do not trouble yourself, Mrs. Richards; no bills shall be presented to you for settlement, answered Mrs. Thorne.

Mrs. Richards left the room, muttering something about city folks having such queer notions; but if they wanted to throw away their money 'twas nothing to her, of course.

Mrs. Thorne proceeded to make Van as comfortable as possible.

She procured a basin of water and bathed her head.

But any attempt to move the sick girl seemed to cause such exquisite pain that she was forced to desist.

In attempting to remove a portion of her clothing, Mrs. Thorne discovered the cause of a part of her sufferings.

Her back and shoulders were covered with the marks of the cruel beating she

had received from her infuriated mistress.

For many days poor Van's life trembled in the balance, while the burning fever raged in her veins.

But at length the crisis passed, and she lived.

Mrs. Thorne hired a competent nurse to care for her, while both she and her daughter were almost unremitting in their attentions.

Then came the question—what shall we do with her?

They could not think of leaving her with Mrs. Richards after what had passed, although she was loth to give up her services, now that she was likely to recover.

Mrs. Thorne laid the case fairly before her.

If, said she, you will relinquish whatever claim you may have to her services I will pay all the expenses of her sickness, and take her under my own care. If you do not choose to agree to this, we will see if there is any law in the land that will permit a poor orphan girl to be abused as you have abused her.

Frightened, as ignorant people usually are, as the idea of law, Mrs. Richards gave up her claim, and, to her great delight, Van was permitted to go with Mrs. Thorne.

Five years passed away.

Van had been carefully educated at one of our best institutions of learning, and was now a fully-fledged young lady.

You would never recognize, in the handsome, stately Miss Van Dalsein, the Van of five years before.

She developed her father's passion for painting and music, and, if they would have accepted it, could easily have paid her kind friends the expense of her education.

George Thorne was an artist, and one day he showed her a sketch of a girl, rough and untidy, bending beneath the weight of a heavy pail.

Miss Van Dalsein looked at it with a smile, then tears rose in her eyes.

Those two years are like a terrible dream to me, said she.

George Thorne drew her to the long mirror, and held the sketch before her.

Can you see any resemblance between the two pictures?

None, answered she. But I owe it all to your mother, your sister, and yourself. How can I ever repay you?

Shall I tell you how, my darling? His strong arms were about her, while her steady head bent low to conceal the blush which mantled her cheek.

Shall I tell you what he said?

It was the old, old story! which, though old, is ever fresh and joyous to young and loving hearts.

Six months later there was a quiet wedding in the Thorne mansion, where in the presence of a few tried and true friends, Earnestina Van Dalsein became Earnestina Thorne, and very quietly and happily they dwelt in their pleasant city home.

Ten years passed away.

Two pairs of tiny feet pattered through the halls, and the music of children's voices made their home bright and cheerful.

Sorrow had visited them, too. The sweetest cup of life contains some drops of bitterness.

One little voice, that had made music in these hearts, was stilled for ever.

One pair of tiny, restless hands had been folded for the last time over the still, white breast, and the sweet blue eyes, that looked so lovingly into theirs, were closed for ever.

But their mutual sorrow had bound the hearts of husband and wife still closer together, and forged another link in the chain which was drawing them nearer to that heavenly home of which the happiest earthly home is but a fore-taste.

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