

THE MODEL CHURCH.

Well, wife, I found the model church! I worshipped there to-day!
It made me think of good old times, before my hair was grey;
The meetin' house was fixed up more than they were years ago.
But then I felt when I went in, it wasn't built for show.

The sexton didn't seat me away back by the door;
He knew that I was old and deaf, as well as old and poor;
He must have been a Christian, for he led me through
The long aisle of that crowded church, to find a place and pew.

I wish you'd heard the singin'; it had the old-time ring,
The preacher said with a trumpet voice, "Let all the people sing!"
The tune was Coronation, and the music upward rolled,
Till I thought I heard the angels striking all the harps of gold.

My deafness seemed to melt away; my spirit caught the fire;
I joined my feeble, trembling voice with that melodious choir,
And sang as in my youthful days, "Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of all."

I tell you, wife, it did me good to sing that hymn once more;
I felt like some shipwrecked mariner who gets a glimpse of shore;
I almost wanted to lay down this weather-beaten form,
And anchor in the blessed port, forever from the storm.

The preachin'? Well, I can't just tell all that the preacher said;
I know it wasn't written; I know it wasn't read;
He hadn't time to read it, for the lighten' of his eye.
Went flashing 'long from pew to pew, nor passed a sinner by.

The sermon wasn't flowery; 'twas simple gospel truth;
It fitted poor old men like me; it fitted hopeful youth;
'Twas full of consolation, for weary hearts that bleed;
'Twas full of invitations to Christ, and not to creed.

The preacher made sin hideous, in Gentiles and in Jews;
He shot the golden sentences down in the finest pews,
And—though I can't see very well—I saw the falling tear
That told me hell was someways off, and heaven very near.

How swift the golden moments fled, within that holy place;
How brightly beamed the light of heaven from every happy face;
Again I longed for that sweet time, when friend shall meet with friend,
"Where congregations ne'er break up, and Sabbaths have no end."

I hope to meet that minister—that congregation too—
In the dear home beyond the stars that shine from heaven's blue;
I doubt not I'll remember, beyond life's evening grey,
The happy hour of worship in that model church to-day.

Dear wife, the fight will soon be fought, the victory be won;
The shinin' goal is just ahead; the race is nearly run;
O'er the river we are nearing they are throngin' to the shore,
To shout our safe arrival, where the weary weep no more.

THE FAITHFUL GUEST.

There was something—I forget what—to take grandfather and grandmother away from home one day in October of the year I lived with them in Burn's Hollow. It may have been a funeral or some religious meeting, for they both drove off dressed in their best, in the gig, with old Ajax harnessed to it, and after I had tucked in grandma's iron gray silk skirt and ran back to the house for grandpa's spectacles, and had seen the gig vanish in the distance, I felt lonely; Burn's Hollow was a lonely place at all times; and the handsome rambling mansion, which might have sheltered a regiment, had a ghostly air about it when one walked through the upper rooms alone.

There were but two servants in the kitchen, Hannah Oakes and the Irish lad, Anthony. I heard them laughing merrily together, for though Hannah was an old woman, she was full of fun

and in five minutes the door opened, and Hannah came with the tray.

"Please miss," said she, as she set it down, "may I run over to Mapleton to-night? My sister's daughter had a boy last night they say, and I want to see it nat'rally—it's the first I've ever had of grandniece or nephew?"

"Who brought the news?" I asked.

"Anthony, miss," said Hannah. "He met George—that's my niece's husband—when he was out after the cow, straying as she always is, and told him to tell Hannah 'she's a grand aunt.'"

"You may go," I said, "but don't stay late. Grandpa and grandma may be away all night, and I feel nervous. To be sure there is an Anthony, but I never rely on him. Be certain not to stay late." I repeated this injunction with a sort of fright stealing over me—a presentiment of evil, I might say—and something prompted me to add, "Be back by nine." Why I cannot say; but I felt as if by nine, I should be in some peculiar danger.



"I WON'T GO TO BED."

Hannah promised, and after doing all that I required went away, and I heard her heavy shoes on the garden walk, outside.

Early as it was, I had dropped the curtains and lighted the wax candles on the mantle, and I sat long over my tea, finding a certain companionship in it, as women of all ages will.

I sat thus a long time, and was startled from my reverie by a rap at the door—a timid sort of rap—so that I knew at once that it was not a member of the house nor an intimate friend. I waited, expecting Anthony to answer the door, but finding he did not, went to it myself.

It had grown quite dark, and the moon rose late that night. At first I could only make out a crouching figure at the bottom of the porch. But when I spoke it advanced, and by the light of the hall lamp I saw a black man. I had always had a sort of fear of a negro, and instinctively shrunk away, but as I did so, he spoke in a husky whisper: "This is Massa Morton's, isn't it?"

"Yes," I replied, "but grandfather is out."

I retreated as he advanced.

"Please miss," he said, "Judge B. sent me here. He said massa 'ud help me on. Let me stay here a night, miss. I's trabbled five days since I left him. I's awful hungry, 'pears like I'd drop, and ole massa's arter me. For the lub of heaben, miss, let me hide somewhere, and gib me jes' a crust. Massa Morton 'ud help me up. Missus will, I know."

I knew that grandfather had given succor to some of those poor wretches before; but I felt that I might be doing wrong by admitting a stranger in his absence.

Caution and pity struggled within me. At

last I said: "You have a note from the Judge I suppose sir?"

"I had some writtin' on a paper," said the man, "but I's lost it, de night it rained so. Ah I miss, I's telling the truff—Judge sent me, sure as I's a sinner. I's being helped along so far, and 'pears like I must get to Canada. Can't go back noways. Wife's dare, and the young uns. Got clear a year ago. Miss, I'll pray for you ebery day of my life ef you'll just be so good to me. Tank you, miss."

For somehow when he spoke of wife and children, I had stepped back and let him in.

It was the back hall door to which the rap had come, and the kitchen was close at hand. I let him thither. When I saw how worn he was, how wretched, how his eyes glistened, and how under his rough blue shirt his heart beat so that you could count the pulses, I forgot my caution. I brought out cold meat and bread, drew a mug of cider, and spread them on the table. The negro ate, and I left him to find

Anthony, to whom I intended to give directions for his lodging throughout the night.

To my surprise, Anthony was nowhere about the house or garden.

Hannah must have taken him with her across the lonely road to Mapleton.

It was natural, but I felt angry.

Yet I longed for Hannah's return, and listened very anxiously until the clock struck nine. Then instead of her footsteps, I heard the pattering of raindrops and the rumbling thunder, and looking out saw that a heavy storm was coming on.

Now, certainly grandpa and grandma would not come, and Hannah waiting for the storm to pass would not be here for hours. However, my fear of the negro was quite gone, and I felt under these trying circumstances.

Accordingly I went up stairs, found in the attic sundry pillows and bolsters, and carried them kitchenward.

"Here," I said, "make yourself a bed on the settee yonder, and be easy for the night. No one will follow you in such a terrible storm as thi', and, no doubt grandpa will assist you when he returns home. Good night."

"Good night, and God bless you, Miss," still speaking in a very husky whisper. And so I left him.

But I did not go up stairs to my bedroom. I intended for that night to remain dressed, and sit up in grandpa's arm-chair, with candles and a book for company. Therefore I locked the door, took the most comfortable position, and opening a volume, composed myself to read.

Reading, I fell asleep. How long I slept I cannot tell. I was awakened by a low sound like the prying of a chisel.

At first it mixed with my dream so completely that I took no heed of it, but at last I understood that some one was at work upon the lock of the door.

I sat perfectly motionless, the blood curdling in my veins, and still chip, chip, chip, went the terrible little instrument, until at last I knew whence the sound came.

Back of the sitting-room was grandpa's study. There, in a great old fashioned chest, were stored the family silver, grandpa's jewelry, and sundry sums of money and valuable papers. The safe itself stood in a closet recess, and at the closet the thief was now at work.

The thief—ah, without doubt, the negro I had fed and sheltered.

Perhaps the next act would be to murder me if I listened. The storm was still raging; but though the road was lonely, better that than this house with such horrible company. I couldn't save my grandfather's property, but I could save my own life.

I crept across the room and into the hall and to the door. There, softly as I could, I unfastened the bars and bolts, but, alas! one was above my reach. I waited and listened. Then I moved a hall chair to the spot and climbed upon it. In doing so I struck my shoulder against the door frame.

It was a slight noise, but at that moment the chip of the chisel stopped, I heard a gliding foot, and horror of horrors, a man came from the study, sprang towards me, and clutched me with both hands, holding my arms as in a vice, while he hissed in my ear:

"You'd tell, would you? You call help? You might better have slept, you had; for you see you've got to pay for waking. I'd rather have let a chick like you off; but you know me now, and I can't let you live."

I stared in his face with horror, mingled with an awful surprise; for now that it was close to me I saw, not the negro, but our own hired man, Anthony—Anthony, whom I had supposed to be miles away with Hannah. He was little more than a youth, and I had given him many a present, and had always treated him well.

I pleaded with him kindly.

"Anthony, I never did you any harm; I am young; I am a girl. Don't kill me, Anthony. Take the money, don't kill me, for poor grandpa's sake."

"You'll tell on me," said Anthony, doggedly. "Likely I'd be caught. No, I have got to kill you."

As he spoke he took his hands from my shoulders and clutched my throat fiercely.

I had time to utter one suffocating shriek; then I was strangling, dying, with sparks in my eyes, and a sound of roaring waters in my ears, and then—what had sprung upon my assassin, with the swift silence of a leopard? What had clutched me from him, and stood over him with something glittering above his head? The mist cleared away—the blurred mist that had gathered over my eyes; as sight returned I saw the negro with his foot upon Anthony's breast.

The fugitive whom I had housed, and fed had saved my life.

Then ten minutes after—ten minutes in which but for that poor slave's presence I would have been hurried out of life—the rattle of wheels and the tardy feet of old Ajax were heard without, and my grandparents were with me.

It is needless to say that we were not ungrateful to our preserver; needless, also to tell Anthony's punishment.

It came out during his trial that he had long contemplated the robbery; that the absence of my grandparents appearing to afford an opportunity, he had decoyed Hannah away with a lie, and hid in the study. He knew nothing of the negro's presence in the house, and being naturally superstitious, had actually fancied my protector a creature from the outer world, and submitted without a struggle.

Long ago—so we heard—the slave, a slave no longer, met his wife and children beyond danger; and now that the bonds are broken for all in a free land, doubtless his fears are over and he sits beside his humble Canadian hearth when even-tide comes.

The ladies are coming in for some of the good things. Mrs. Carey, sister of Senator Stewart, has been appointed postmistress at her native town in Ohio, with a salary of \$2,200. She presided over the household of Senator Stewart during the absence of his family in Europe, and is a very charming and estimable lady—and widow.

A Western paper gives the history of a young woman who has for several years past successfully cultivated a farm of 120 acres. In 1868 she was attending a young ladies' seminary; but her father died, leaving a farm encumbered with debt, with only her feeble mother to oversee the hired help. The daughter left her school, and with the assistance of her little brother, ten or twelve years old, commenced farming. She dresses in a gymnastic suit, with broad-brimmed hat, gloves, and boots; but she has learned to do most kinds of work, and has been successful in her harvests. She chiefly cultivates corn and wheat, though several acres are devoted to grass, and her young orchard has borne a good deal of fruit, which she herself has taken to market.