A VICTIM TO THE SEAL OF CONFESSION

A TRUE STORY BY THE REV. JOSEPH SPILLMAN, S. J.

CHAPTER III. JOYOUS PLANS AND SAD FOREBODINGS.

Meanwhile Father Montmoulin had installed his mother in the large easy-chair, and submitted to be minutely chair, and submitted questioned by her as to his health and general well being. The result of the interrogatory was on the whole satis-factory: the old lady thought her son rather pale and thin,

wise fairly well. She told him he must take more care of himself, take the greatest care of himself, and not sit up studying at night, and above all not think of fasting. The young priest smiled good humouredly at these motherly injunctions, and quieted her think of fasting. The young priest smiled good humouredly at these motherly injunctions, and quieted her with the assurance that he felt quite well and strong. And in future, he added, she would be able to look after him herself; as soon as she had rested a little, and had a cup of coffee, he wanted her to go and choose the rooms she would like fitted up for her. "Let us go at once," she rejoined;
"I really am not tired, and the chilbe here afterwards, and one can say nothing before them. Of course I should like to be as near as I can to

Montmoulin accordingly showed his mother the two nearest cells in the left wing, which, as we have said, were parted from his own rooms by a narrow passage, for the sake of admitting light to the corridor. The rooms had a pleasant lookout upon the rooms had a pleasant lookout possus.

hills, and were comparatively in good
repair. Yet Mrs. Montmoulin preferred the two on the other side, adjoining her son's bedroom. "We must provide for all needs," she said. "An old woman like myself ought to think seriously of death, if I am here I should only have to knock on the wall if anything unexpected happened. And see what a delightful view there is from these windows, all down the valley!

Just as you please, mother," her replied. "The other, rooms are rather larger and more airy, but we will furnish these up nicely for will furnish these up nicely for you; the ceilings shall be whitewashed and the walls papered afresh. I have got a book of patterns, so you shall select the paper yourself. To-morrow I will see about getting the whitewashers and paperhangers, and about mid-lent it il be ready for you to move in. Then I hope you will have a tranquil, happy after all the storms it has pleas

God that you should pass through,"

"How kind you are Francis," exclaimed the happy mother, wiping a
tear from her eye. "I never doubted tear from her eye. "I never doubted your affection for me. But how will you manage, with your scanty income, to do all this?"

Do not let that trouble you, mother. Mrs. Blanchard, the President of St. Joseph's Guild, a wealthy and charitable widow, somewhere about your age, (who, by the bye, is looking forward much pleasure to make your ac quaintance, and with whom I doubt not you will pass many a pleasant hour, working for the poor) had the excellent idea of presenting me with a good round sidea of presenting me with a good round sum to make my rooms more comfort-able, and add a few books to my small library. So you may be at ease on that point, mother; but come along now, the coffee must be ready; I think I hear

Julia calling us."

They turned into the dark kitchen where the little girl had just made the coffee. "You see how good it will be, Grandmother," she cried triumphantly. "But the table is not laid yet, and there are such a lot of books on it! Charlie has not come back from the baker's. Do please help me!"

The books were soon cleared away, a white cloth laid on the table, and the The books were soon cleared away, a body clear the boy, as he told missing the clear and she could be compared as and sancers set out. "This one with the gold rim is for Uncle." the could be compared away, a body clear the boy, as he told missing the boy as he told missing the boy, as he told missing the boy as he told missing the boy, as he told missing the boy as he boy as he told missing the boy as he child said, as she passed the cups in review; "Grandmother shall have the one with the motto, I will have the pretty one with the flowers, and this cracked one will do quite well for cracked one will do quite I wish the stupid boy would bring the bread !'

bring the bread !"
" Here I am," said Charles, who entered at that moment laden with a bag
of sweet cakes and another containing rolls, "I don't see why you should call me stupid! Here is your change, Uncle, and the baker said a penny was

"Is that to buy sweets, my boy?"
his Uncle rejoined as he gave him back the penny.
"No Uncle, I shall put it into the

box for the heathen, that the poor children may be baptized, when I go as a missioner to the foreign lands you have

"Well done, my boy! you shall have another penny for that," the priest re-

" And please a penny for me too, for making you such nice coffee," Julia You shall have it," replied her " Is that to go into the collect-

Uncle.

ing box too ?" Oh, good Heavens, I shall never go out to the Islands where the horrible cannibals live! perhaps I will put a

half-penny in. well," said the priest, " do as you please, only do fetch your wonderful coffee, we are more than

Soon all four were sitting round the table, enjoying the refreshing beverage, with which no fault could be found, and munching the crisp cakes. Charles claimed an extra cake as his guerdon for having fetched them, besides he remarked that his sister had kept the

best cup for herself.
"Very well," said his Uncle, "justice demands that Charles has another biscuit, and Julia another cup of coffee. Now when you have done, children, you may make a tour of inspection of all the empty cells, and select bed all the empty cells, and select bed-rooms for yourselves when you come to spend your holidays with your Grand-

mother and me."
"Hurrah, that will be jolly!" the
boy exclaimed. "Make haste Julia,
finish your coffee."

"If I come you must promise to stay with me, for I should be quite afraid to be left alone in the dark

passages and empty cells," the girl answered. "But I shall not want a room for myself. I may sleep with you, Grandmother, in the holidays, may I not, I should die of fright, if I was alone at night. Don't you know, the last nuns who were here, were all guillotined in one day, twenty two of them, in the courtyard down below. And old Susan says that on moonlight And old Susan says that on morning inghts, they walk in procession up and down the corridors, with their heads in their hands! That is the reason why she persists in sleeping down at the "Olive tree" inn; for nothing in the world would she pass a night here, she

The old woman ought not to fill your Priest rejoined. "The good religious were not executed here, but on the market-place in Aix, and they will do you no harm, for they were martyrs and are now in heaven. They were put to death because they prayed for good King Louis XVI., and he died the death of a Saint."

The children having finished their coffee ran off on a voyage of discovery through the deserted cloisters, leaving the mother and son to have a conversa tion together concerning the prospect of happier times to come after all the

"I do not know how it is," Mrs. Montmoulin presently remarked, "whether it is the gloomy impression made on me by this almost untenanted convent, or the timidity engendered by past misfortunes, that makes me unable to believe that there are tranquil and joyous days in store for me in my old age; on the contrary, I seem to feel as if some new trial threatened to

We are in the hand of God, whatever happens," her son replied, "and if it please Him to send us fresh troubles we must bear them with the help of His grace. But really I see no cause for apprehension at present. I have a good appointment here; the greater part of my parishioners seem fond of me; I have no personal enemies. The party who are hostile to the Church are of course a thorn in my side, but so long as I do my duty, they cannot in jure me. Besides I am very careful to keep clear of mixing in politics. My ecclesiastical superiors are satisfied with me; only yesterday I received a very flattering letter from the Vicar General, expressing his approval of some essays I had published in the Clerical Journal. I tell you this to set your mind at rest. He offered me at the same time a Professorship in the Greater Seminary, to which a very good salary is attached; but I prefer to re-main here and occupy myself with reading and the care of my flock. If I went to the Seminary, I should be compelled to relinquish the pleasure of having you with me, and requiting you in some measure for all the cares and privations my schooling and subsequent training cost you. So keep up your spirits,

mother At this juncture the door bell rang. and Father Montmoulin put his head out of the window to see who was there. It was a boy in the costume of the peasants of that part of the country; he made a sign that he wanted the door opened, which Loser had closed behind him on taking his departure. "A sickhim on taking his departure. "A sick-call, probably," said the priest, with a shade of impatience; "these people always send for me at such inopportune times." Stepping out into the corri-dor, he called Charles, and bade him go down to the door; in a few moments he returned with the messenger, who had in fact been sent to summon the priest to a distant hamlet among the moun-

tains. "Mother said, would your Reverence please come quick, or father would die without the Blessed Sacrament and the holy Oils," said the boy, as he told his a word, only makes a strange noise in his throat, like our farmservant, when he gets drunk. But father had taken nothing but a bowl of But

"I will come, my little man. Your father seems to have had some kind of I hope it will not be so very bad. That sort of thing often passe off. However, I will make haste. see mother, I must bid you good bye at once. Dear me, I have just remembered all that money of Mrs. Blanchard's, it will never do to leave the house unprotected. St. Joseph, give me good counsel! I cannot go a mile out of my way to take it to the Mayor, or get neighbor to come and act as care taker: that would want such a long explanation, and the sick man might before I get to him. And the salvation of a soul, perhaps quivering in the balance, is more important than the safety of this sum of money. I know what might be done. Could you oblige me, mother, by staying here for the night with the children? I have a large sum in my keeping, here in this desk, and you can understand that I do not feel justified in leaving it un guarded in an empty house. You can make yourselves comfortable for the night—you see I must attend to my pastoral duties."

"Yes, I will stay, if there is no

"Yes, I will stay, if there is no other alternative," said the old lady, a little flustered. "But would it not be little flustered. "But would it not be better to put the money into your bedroom, and then we can lock ourselves in, and it will be much safer than in the

sitting room."
"True: do whatever you think right. Here is the key—no, where have I put it? I had it in my hand when you arrived. Never mind, there is not time to hunt for it now. We will move desk and all into the bedroom, it is not heavy." Then a sudden suspicion passed through the priest's Then a sudden mind-was it possible that Loser had We must first ascertain," he said, that it is really here. Quick Charles,

fetch me the key of my wardrobe, it fits this desk." The few moments that elapsed before the child returned were moments of painful suspense for the priest; at length the desk was unlocked, and to his great relief, the handkerchief in which he had wrapped the money lay there just as he had left it. "Again I was wrong in my suspicions," he said

to himself. " Now we will not lose moment. Come Benny, you go with me to the sacristy, and I will get the holy oils, and to the church, that I may sake the Blessed Sacrament, and you must carry the lantern. And you Charles, take the keys of the church—you will find them on the kitchen table, and lock the door of the church after us; I have the key of the housedoor in my pocket. Now mother, make whatever arrangement you like." Then turning

arrangement you like. Then turning to the boy, he asked how far it was to the hamlet where he lived?

"I can go in about an hour, Father."

"Well yes," the priest replied, "but you run over the hills like a chamois, and along paths that are too steep for me, especially at night. I may not be back before midnight, or even before morning. S) you settle yourselves comfortably for the night; leave this rug here for me in case I return; I have often slept in an armenair. Now good-night and God bless you! May His holy Angels watch over us all!" So saying, Father Montmoulin, ac-companied by the two boys hurried

along the corridors, through which they could hardly see their way, to the church. From a tribune at the end of the corridor, whence a view of the choir and chancel with the ever burn ing lamp could be obtained, a winding staircase led down to the sacristy.
There the priest took the holy oils, and all that was necessary for administering the sick, and put them into a bag which he placed round his neck. to the altar, he opened the taberacle and took from Host, Which he adored, and placed in the small silver-gilt pyx upon his breast. He then left the church in solemn silence, bearing his God and future Judge hidden under the sacramental veil, preceded by the boy with the lighted lantern. Charles followed reverently to the church door, which closed carefully, as soon as the pries

he closed carefully, as soon as the priest with his little companion had disap-peared in the fast falling twilight. Passing through the church, lighted only by the flickering rays of the lamp suspended before the tabernacle, the boy reentered the sacristy. In the his knee before the altar, he said to himself, "our Blessed Lord is there." But in the sacristy a nameless terror took possession of him, he could not summon up courage to mount the dark winding stair to the tribune, and traverse the gloomy corridor to the priest's apartments without a light. He remembered that there was a taper on the altar by the Missal; this he took, and lighting it at the lamp, he began, not with considerable trepidation, to as-cend the stairs, shielding the light with his hand. About half way a door which he had not About half way up he passed his way down, and taking it for the doo of the tribune, he pushed it open and went through. It led into a small went through. It led into a small room, a kind of outer sacristy, in which all manner of church furniture, frames for holding candlesticks or lanterns, processional crosses, candelabra, trestles, and all the various things sed from time to time for the service of the church were stored. But the first object that caught the eye of the trembling boy was the pall, upon which a large skull and cross bones were painted. With a shriek of terror he et the taper fall, turned and rushed up the stairs into the tribune, whence

fied along the corridor until he gained his uncle's rooms.

The old grandmother had no little The old gradulated had so difficulty in soothing the child, who burst into the room pale and trembling in every limb, as if he had seen a ghost. His sister too was so frightened by what he told her, that she begged her grandnother to let them go home. Montmoulin, on whom the deserted Convent made anything but a pleasant impression, would gladly have acceded to the children's wishes, had she not promised her son to take care of the house and the sum of money for which he was responsible. She decided however to send the children down to place where they were to meet Mr. Lenoir, and to remain in the house her self for the night. "Quick, children," she said, "run as fast as you can down the hill to the 'Four Ways' we got down. You cannot miss your road, and Mr. Lenoir will not have gone; ask him very politely to be so kind as to take you with him. Tell him I am obliged to stay here to take care of the house, but mind you do not say a

word about the money."

Thereupon she put the rest of the biscuits that were standing on the table into the children's pockets, tied a scarf round their necks, and took them down the wide flight of stairs to the door. Then she kissed them both, and stood looking wistfully after them, as hand in hand they raced down the hill, till the village street hid them from sight. Then she fastened the door, and with a heavy heart wended her way

back to her son's apartments.
"I am almost as much of a coward as my little boy," she said to herself as she began to clear the table. Then she opened the desk and took out the handkerchief containing the money.

What a weight it is!" she ejaculated, and unable to refrain from looking at the contents, she unknotted the hand-kerchief. The good old woman had never in her life seen so large a sum, gold, silver, and a whole packet of banknotes. She felt quite alarmed, and glanced involuntarily at the door, to whether it was properly closed; then wrapping it up again, she carried the treasure into the next room, and concealed it in her son's bed. "I hope all will turn out well," she soliloquized. "If some unprincipled man knew that I was all alone in this lonely house, with all this money in my charge—well, I had better not think too much about

what might happen i''
Slowly pacing up and down the sitting room, the old lady recited the rosary for the holy souls, whilst the shades of twilight deepened into night. She did not light a candle, but laid down without undressing on the bed, thinking she would keep awake until her son returned. The door of communication between the two rooms she carefully

For a long time she lay there ing. For a long time she lay there without closing her eyes; at length however, she fell into a doze. A sharp gust of wind, rattling the window, startled her into wakefulness; she sprang up. Was some one trying to get in through the window? No, the weather had suddenly changed; the mistral, the biting north east wind which in the valley of the Rhone often breaks in months. breaks in upon the early spring of Provence with icy breath and heavy showers, had banished the soft breezes of the Mediterranean and covered the

heavens with dark rain-clouds. Al-ready the first large drops beat upon the panes. "My poor Francis! I the panes. "My poor Francis! I only hope he will not contract some illness in this terrible weather!" sighed the anxious mother. She struck a the anxious mother. She struck a light; it wanted an hour to midnight. She lay down again, and soon fell into an uneasy slumber. Before long she again started up, aroused this time by a peculiar sound, as if some one in the next room were trying the door. "Is that you, Francis," she exclaimed

aloud. aloud.

The sound ceased immediately, and all was again quiet. The old lady listened for a few moments, then she laid to be all head on the nillow. "I must her head back on the pillow. have been dreaming," she said, and fell this time into a deep sleep, from which she did not awake until the norning.
TO BE CONTINUED.

HER DELIVERANCE,

When Gillian came into the old family lawyer's office that soft June morn-ing, that astute gentleman discerned at once that something unusual was the The beautiful young face was quite white and there was a gleam in the blue eyes that was not good to see. " My dear child," exclaimed the

senior member of Benedict & Carroll, rising to grasp her hand, " what is

Gillian took a seat opposite. "Mater enough," she replied in a hard tone.
Mr. Benedict, I've come to tell you that it is all of no use. Stephen and I will have to separate. Why should we will have to separate. Why should we try to pull together?" she added. "He cares no longer for me, I am convinced.

If he does, his actions run counter to it. If it isn't his club, it's an appoint nent after dinner. He is never at home, and I—I can't eat my heart out longer in such loneliness. I wouldn't say a word, but it used to be so different." Oh, the heautiful exer were fell Oh, the beautiful eyes were full s. "Why do men lead us to be of tears. of tears. Why do men lead us to be lieve that the honeymoon will only fade into deeper joys. It's so cruel to us. No," she went on, "we rarely spend a moment together nowadays. If I plan an especially nice dinner, he never comes to it. At breakfast he is deep in his paper. His evenings are spent his paper.

away from home.
"Mr. Benedict," the rich young voice faltered. "I grew up in your household. You've always stood to me nousehold. You've always stood to me in the place my own dear father would have occupied had he lived. I come to you first in my unhappiness. I tell you frankly, if this is what married life neans I will have none of it.
"It has come to this, I cannot longer

bear Stephen's indifference and neglect Help me to get away from him and-

The old lawyer rose and paced the floor. His fatherly, kind face had upon

it a look of pain.
"Oh these poor rich people," he ex claimed. He stopped to lay a hand on Gillian's shoulders. "My dear child," he added, "I would help you if I could but don't you see that even if you should be free the old life can never be restored? Stephen may neglect you; I suppose he does, yet you are his wife, Gillian," he went on, "if Stephen and you had both been poor, it would have been a thousand times better for each of you. Money gives you license to go your separate ways that poverty to go your separate renders impossible. The young mechanic who comes home Saturday night and lays his weekly earnings in his wife's lap is, after all, a man to envied. His chance of happiness is far better than that of the man whose future, so far as finances go, is assured. is no talk of 'affinity' there. When he has a half holiday he spends when he has a half holday he spends it with his family on the porch or on a trolley. His Sunday is his paradise—his wife his good angel—his home his heaven. Well, well, perhaps Providence, in the divine order of things, had decreed it. At any rate the divorce areas of the second decree, the second decree it. court doesn't pass in judgment upon the poor as it does upon those of the

higher class.
"Gillian," he asked suddenly, "what are you planning for the summer

"The Rossiters want me to join them at Old Point Comfort," returned Gil-lian listlessly, "but I haven't really promised.

"And Stephen?"
"Oh Stephen," said Gillian with "Oh Stephen," said Gillian with a bitter smile, "informed me yesterday that he had planned to go for a two months' hunting trip up to Wigwam Gulch. This is the 1st of June. If I go with the Rossiters I dare say we will not meet until the last of September."

The old lawyer regarded the pretty, unhappy young face with all a father' "Wigwam Gulch! Isn't that the

place Stephen bought a year ago?' asked suddenly. " No doubt there's good fishing and

"The best; that is why Stephen The best; that is why stephen keeps it. When he first bought the place he did ask me to go over with him and spend a month, but I was engaged to the Atwoods, who were at White Sulphur Springs, so I could

"That is just where you young wives make the first fatal error," went on the senior partner earnestly. My dear, do you know the only recipe I give to young wives to preserve the peace in the family? It is this: Make your large indigenesable to your highered. selves indispensable to your husbands. Never let anything interfere or take you from your husband's side. If do, the rift widens imperceptibly husband's side. If you do, the rift widens imperceptibly at first, but afterward it becomes an impassable gulf. Gillian, will you do as I ask in just one respect?"

"A hundred if you say so," returned

Gillian, springing up. "Dear Mr. Benedict, can I ever forget what you

Benedict, can I ever forget what you have been to me?"
"And I want to be more," was the "And I want to be more," was the almost solemn reply. "I want to save you from future misery if I can. I am convinced, too, of one thing. Perhaps you do not realize it yourself, but, Gillian, you still love Stephen; therefore, my child, if I could arrange a separation it would only make you more unhappy. No, my dear, your lot is cast with his. Bear with him until it is dissolved by the only tribunal that can sever it. I'm a poor alvocate of divorces, Gillian. In nine cases out of ten the evil can be remedied, but young people are apt to demand much, to give little, to grow restive and consequently as the day must follow the night the as the day must follow the night the relations between them become strained.

"No, my dear, I can see no deliver No, my dear, I can see in every sequest, I want you to ask Stephen to night if he will take you with him on this hunting trip over to Wigwam Gulch."

"He would refuse," replied Gillian

th bitterness. "Never mind, ask him again," was the old lawyer's reply.
"And it's ten miles from the post office, and there are absolutely no privi

leges," protested Gillian.
"So much the better. You have been surfeited with privileges, Gillian. Too much money again. It Stephen were a poor man and you were obliged to safely nd on what he could earn for you, you'd be living in accord this mor

"You always were a housewifely little soul, Gillian. Don't you remember the little cakes you used to make me when you were a little girl, and the cup custards, too, whenever I was sick?" Gillian's eyes filled with quick tears. I remember it all," she answered, and I would love to do things for Staphen now if it were necessary. you know, I often long to go into the kitchen and mess around just as I used

to years ago."
"You can turn the talent to account on this trip, then," smiled the old with Stephen on this trip, and if you find, after a month's trial, that you are really of the same mind, I'll agree to

help you.' Gillian rose slowly. "Agreed," she Gillan rose slowly. Agreed, she said. "For your sake, Mr. Benedict, I'll humble my pride and ask Stephen to take me with him. If he refuses—"
"Let us pray he will not," returned the old lawyer solemnly. "Now if you the old lawyer solemnly. "Now if yo must go, good bye, and God bless you.

Mr. Stephen Brandon looked at his wife that evening with unusua interest. She were an evening dress of some soft white material, but she had taken off her jewels. Save her wedding ring, the beautiful hands were devoid of ornament. She looked singularly sweet

'I suppose you're slated for the Ros

siters," he asked carelessly.

Gillian flushed. Now was her time.

"No," she said, "I had planned to go with them, but I've changed my mind. I think—if you will agree to it, Stephen—I'll go with you on that trip to Wigwam Gulch. You asked me once you know? (With a pitiful little smile. Stephen Brandon looked at her. did ask you," he answered coolly, "bu that was before you had learned to dis

pense so easily with my society."

Gillian flushed hotty. "There are two sides to that, Stephen," she replied. "You threw me on my own resources, leaving me alone as you have, but we won't go back of things, only

this once don't refuse me."

"On your own head be it then," re turned he, turning to his coffee. suppose you are aware we go by wagon, camping out five nights on the road, and that the house is only a two-roomed cabin? You will have to take a cook." "I'll take no one," returned Gillian decisively. "I'll do the cooking my

self. "Whew!" whistled Stephen, looking at her again. "Well, the as generous as you leave my man. But don't don't take too leave my man. But don't take too much plunder; it's a mountain road,

and luggage counts."
"I'll remember," said Gillian; " and may I really go, Stephen?" rising and standing wistfully by his chair. "If you must, but know this Gillian,

whatever comes of it, it is your own planning."
"I'll not forget," she replied, as Stephen rose and left her.

"I guess this is as good a place as any to camp for the night," remarked Stephen as he drew the horses to a halt. It was a few days later, and this was their first night out on their way to Wigwam Gulch. "Hold these lines while I reconnoitre a little. "Yes," after a few moments' survey, "this will do finely. Sit down and I'll have

fire going."

Gillian, clad in a blue percale dres and white linen hat, watched the tall athletic figure until a clump of trees hid it from sight. A little feeling of pride stirred in her heart. "How pride stirred in her heart. "How handsome he is," she thought involunt-arily, "and after all he is mine, mine." He came back in a moment laden He came back in a moment laden with some wood. A brisk fire was soon burning.

"What shall we have for supper?" he asked.
"Cold beans, rolls, ham, preserves.

honey, and I'll make coffee," rejoined Gillian interestedly.
"Good," was the answer. "Come, "Good," was the answer. "Come, my girl." He lifted her lightly from the seat and the impromptu feast was

said Gillian with a sigh of content, siping hers from her china cup.

"It's the air," Stephen answered.

"Do you know I've always rather envied old Abraham, living in tents the way he did. If I had my own way

Did ever coffee taste like this ?'

to make. I believe I'd be a cattle man, changing my tents to suit the pas "I wish you did." thought Gillian almost involuntarily and with a sigh."
"What's the matter?" demanded

her husband, regarding her with a keen eye. "Sighing for the thought of them," she replied. "Here, Stephen, let me give you some more coffee."

A few minutes later darkness began to close them in. The fire died down

to a bed of white ashes. Gillian gave to a bed of white asses. Offinan gave a tired sigh. "I really believe firstleepy." she said, smiling a little. "It's strange, too, I'm used to late hours. If you don't mind, I'll creep into the wagon."

"The air again," rejoined her hus-and "and don't mind me in the band 'least."

She hesitated a little as she stood heside him. Somehow the great world of nature living about them drew her towards him. "Kiss me good night, Stephen," she said shyly as she stood there, and Stephen, drawing her to him, pressed his lips to hers. "I shall sit here for a while and

write.' When he, too, came into the wagon a half hour later her regular breathing showed him that she stood in need of an

early rest. The lantern was burning dimly suspended from aloft. By its undimly suspended from a lott. By 168 uncertain flickering glow he could see the beauty of the perfect features. A forgotten wave of tenderness swept over him as he stood over her. "I wonder what put it into her heart to come with me?" he mused. "And I have thought should did not care." always thought she did not care."

"Well," said Stephen a few days later, as Gillian surveyed the cabin at Wigwam Gulch, "what do you think of

Gillian laughed. "It's fine, Stephen," she answered, "and just look at that view. Did you ever see anything grander ?

Stephen came over to her side, There before them rose the mountains, veiled in purple mists. The plains, green as emerald, stretched in boundless waves and billows at their base. "It is grand, isn't it?" he said gravely. "Somehow one's life seems small and petty beside such grandeur. Well, little wife, where shall we put

things?"
Gillian's heart bounded. "Little wife!" She had not heard the dear title since the first season of her married life, three years before. It was "Gillian" now. Was it possible that the old blissful times might come

She arranged the little cabin herself with more painstaking care than she bestowed on the management of her great house in the city—singing, too. she went about her humble tasks of dishwashing, bed-making, and sweep ing. Stephen heard her clear voice above the strokes of the broom :

"John Anderson, my Joe, John, We climbed the hill together."

And his keen face softened as he listened. They had brought only the necessary things, the few dishes, furniture and cooking utensils that would make them comfortable, but she had taken care to bring Stephen's big chair and her own little low one. The two chairs occupied different terri-tories at home. Stephen's chair stood in the library, hers in her own particular sanctum upstairs, but now they stood socially side by side.

A vase of sunflowers graced the ude mantle, a rich Oriental rug covered the floor, the table linen was ex-

quisite.
She had an appetizing supper when Stephen came home that first night, tired and hungry. Her dress was simple and worn with the grace that marked everything she put on,

Stephen started when he saw the homelike room. "This is a metamor-phosis, Gillian," he cried. "You're not going to wash these dishes alone," remarked Stephen as they rose from the table.

"But you're tired," protested Gil-"No more than you are. Here, give

me that dish towel."

They grew very merry over the little clearing up. When it was over, they went out of doors. "Sit by me," said Stephen, lightning his pipe. And again there was in his voice that new tenderness.

Together they watched the moon rise over the pine trees. In the days that followed Stephen grew to watch, at the end of the day's sport, for the slight girlish figure in the plain dress.

After a while she came out to meet im. "Did you have good sport?" she would ask "Fine, but it's good to get home,

Gillian. And then would come the supper hour and the stillness of the night as it crept over the mountains. As they lived longer the simple life at Wigwam Gulch the coldness and restraint, the bitterness that had risen like a wall between them these last years, melted

"Our time is up to morrow, Gillian," said her husband one evening. They were sitting on the step, as was their fashion. "Aren't you glad?" "Glad? No." into nothingness.

Gilian's voice trembled. Reaching out in the friendly twilight she found her husband's hand. It closed upon

her's reassuringly.

"Have you really enjoyed it?" asked Stephen, incredulously.

"It's been heavenly. I've—I've had you all to myself."

"Gillian!" Stephen Brandon put his hand beneath his wife's raising the exquisite face until the eyes were on a level with his own. "Gillian, do you mean, really mean that under all your coldness you care for me ?"

Care," Gillian's voice broke; "too much. I thought you had ceased to love me, Stephen, and so I grew hard and bitter."

Stephen Brandon's face darkened with pain. "Child, child," he cried, with pain. with pain. "Child, child," he cried, "we nearly brought our married life to shipwreek by our obstinacy and assumed indifference. Assumed, because both of us have cared through it all. Gillian, tell me to night, and I'll never doubt you again, do you really love me?"

really love me?"

Gillian crept closer in the darkness."
Better than my life," she said, in solemn tones. "Oh, Stephen, we may fight against the fact all we may—I have, but it's all of no use. Neither. of us can be independent of the other.

I did not know it fully until Wigwam

Gulch revealed it to me."

"Blessings be upon Wigwam Gulch, then," returned Stophen, pressing her