

for her tender, sensitive spirit grieved that her widowed father should be childless through her action. Her life became one of lovely Christian unselfishness, and her husband's love grew more intense as the years passed on. First, the little Hortense gladdened their hearts, then, after two years, the sturdy Oliver (named for her only brother, whose death broke her mother's heart, and saddened her father's life) made his determined onslaught upon their affections. Everything was favorable to a life of perfect happiness, when, in 1844, Margaret was attacked with the disease which sapped her mother's life, and it became a common thing for her to spend days upon the sofa. My grandmother, Mrs. Dash, a little, lively, Highland-Scotch woman, was a fast friend of Mr. and Mrs. Boulton, esteeming her as another daughter, and it became one of the pleasures of Mrs. Boulton's life to have her come in and spend a day or two with her, especially as her skill with the sick was great. In the winter Mrs. Boulton revived and appeared to lose all signs of her disease, and all clouds left the sky of Mr. Boulton's happiness once more.

To be concluded in our next.

OUR FIRST PRIZE STORY. --Concluded.

Two Pictures.

BY RAYSMITH.

CHAPTER II.—A WINTER SUNSET.

HURRAH, boys! Hurrah! Here comes old Jerry, drunk as an owl. Come on! Now for some fun. Yee-ee-e!" And the crowd of boys with mufflers and open overcoats flying, swept down the street. The staggering, old man coming towards them did not at first notice the boys. Then a volley of snow-balls struck him. One crushed down his old cap, another lodged in the faded scrap of handkerchief at his neck. This roused him a little, and he raised his poor, old withered fingers to ward off the flying snow. The boys with gibes and taunts gathered closely about him, pulling at his coat, until he went down heavily on the sidewalk. "Don't boys," he said thickly, as he tried to sit up, and one, more kind than the others, cried: "Oh! let him alone now, boys. Get up, Jerry, get up,"—helping him to his feet. "Here comes a sleigh. Let's catch on and go down to the mill," and away they went without another thought of Jerry. He stood looking after them, and then turned slowly up the street.

There were no people living in the scattered houses on this side, and the house at the end of the row, once used as a shoemaker's shop, had been partly destroyed by fire. On the step of this one he sat down, weakly sighing. Old Jerry was not as drunk as usual to-day. His pockets were empty, and the saloon keeper down street did not sell his grog for nothing; besides, Jerry was no ornament to his place, so he turned the old man out early.

Jerry leaned his head on his hand and thought. A few tears trickled slowly down his wrinkled face, but those restless, knotted fingers wiped them quickly away.

"Once it wasn't this way," he murmured. "Once I wasn't the sport of every one. But who'd respect such a man as I am now."

A sweet, child-voice at his side caused the old man to raise his head.

From the gate across the way a pair of brown eyes had been watching the old man. Then off came a blue-striped mitten to let a chubby hand

undo the catch, and across the road went the little fellow, his sturdy little legs coming to a stand in front of Jerry.

"Hello, Jerry! What you sittin' out here all 'lone for? Pretty cold to-day," he prattled on, "but mamma says I could come out 'cause I'm dressed warm you see, an' I've got on my new overcoat, an' my nice mittens gran'ma give me last Christmas. Say, have you got a nice gran'ma like mine?"

"No, Bobby, she's dead now," Jerry answered. He was always willing to answer Bobby Learter's questions.

"Well, ain't you got any little boy to hang up his stockin's then," Bobby went on.

"Yes, yes, I had, Bobby," burst in a groan from the old man. "But there's your ma calling; she don't want you to talk to me, child."

"Oh, she don't mind, she said she didn't. Good-bye, Jerry," Bobby sang out as he skipped away, obedient to his mother's call.

Twilight fell swiftly, and with it great white feathery flakes of snow came floating down, silently, softly, covering the house-roofs, the fields outside the town, the low mounds in the hill cemetery, and down on the bent head of the old man, still sitting on the door step. So softly they fell he heeded them not, but murmured to himself at intervals of things of long ago, of memories and friends put behind him with that past from which he had fallen. Then the wind arose and blew icy-cutting blasts through the street, finding its keen way through old Jerry's thin coat.

He tottered again to his feet, saying: "I can't go home, no fire, nothing to eat. I don't see where all that last payment of Margaret's went; but I'll go back to Johnson's. It is warm there and maybe they'll let me stay awhile."

Merry shoppers hurried to and fro, sleigh bells rang musically up and down the wide white streets of this little Canadian town. Lights shone brightly from rooms where happy children were prattling over the events of the day, so trifling, yet of such importance to them, and lisping evening prayers.

At last the streets cleared, the shops were nearly all closed. The choir of the church, at the end of this long winding street, came out from their Friday evening practice, and two, leaving the merry group, walked down the snowy sidewalk chatting brightly.

Suddenly a door ahead of them, the door of Johnson's saloon, opened and something heavy rolled upon the sidewalk, followed by oaths and coarse laughs.

When they reached the now closed door, poor old Jerry was sitting there, the tears—oh! pitiful sight—flowing freely over his face. The fair girl stooped and put his ragged cap upon his straggling white locks, unconsciously smoothing them as she did so.

"Poor Jerry," she said, "this is too shameful. I'd like to say something to Johnson about this," turning to her companion.

"I didn't use to mind them so much," sobbed the old broken man at their feet, "but to-night it seems—it hurts me so."

"It's a shame that they should throw you out, of course it would hurt you," said the girl, misunderstanding him.

The young man, her escort, seeing her mistake, said kindly: "Let me help you up, Jerry, and see if you can walk home."

"Yes, thank you, thank you," said Jerry, "I can get home all right, Dr. Reynolds. Good night to you," and he turned trembling away.

"I must see after old Jerry, I think" said Dr

Reynolds, as he crossed the street to leave Miss Allison at her door. "I somehow feel uneasy about him, and you know I've always had an interest in the poor old fellow ever since he came here. It is such a pity that drink has so ruined him. I feel sure he has been a fine man in his younger days. Good night, Miss Allison."

The Doctor raised his hat and walked away intending to follow old Jerry's tardy footsteps after a look in at the office, but some patients required attendance and Jerry was forgotten for a time.

Meanwhile the old man tottered away up the street, past the doorstep where he sat in the early evening, past the vacant lot next, and so to his own door, the poor little weather beaten cottage where he lived. Once inside and the door closed, he felt along the wall to reach his hard bed, where he lay down all wet with snow, and shivering as he was, drawing the dirty old coverings over himself. He breathed heavily for a while, then rested quietly. The air grew colder and colder; the old man awoke shivering, and reaching out those poor thin hands, tried to wrap himself more closely in the covers.

An hour more passed and he was in a burning fever, tossing, with parched lips and aching head, from side to side, all the while moaning and talking. Now it was repeating the taunts of boys or the cruel jests of the fellows in Johnson's saloon, then screaming "Amy! Amy! save me, oh, save me. Ah, no, she is so far away—so far away," then moaning low, rising like the shriek of the north wind: "Fred, don't touch it, don't touch it, death—death," sinking into the plaintive cry of "Amy, my Amy, lost, lost," and so the night wore away.

Dr. Reynolds, riding home in the early morning from the bedside of a patient, suddenly remembered Jerry as he passed the cottage, so getting out of his sleigh and tying his horse to the fence, he went to the door. No response came to his knocking, but after listening intently, he heard the mutterings of the sick man within. Hardly knowing what to make of them, he opened the lockless door and walked in. His professional eyes took in the situation at once. Jerry very ill, no fire and the room miserably dirty. The case called for decisive action, so, throwing his warm fur coat over the old man he hastened away, and in half an hour had returned with medicine and food, and with Jemmy, his man of all work, with preparations for a fire.

The warmth caused the old man to fall asleep and about the middle of the afternoon he awoke and looked around wonderingly. Jemmy, sitting in the now orderly room patiently waiting for Dr. Reynolds' return, explained it all as best he could, but the old man was too weak to do more than slightly smile in token of his gratitude.

After the doctor's return he grew restless again, and seemed very anxious to have Jemmy go away, and he repeatedly said: "Don't tell any one that I am ill, will you, doctor? Promise me not to."

The doctor promised, and stayed with the old man as long as he could be spared from his office.

That night the old man seemed stronger and very much better. He had lain for some time watching the doctor's face from under his half closed lids, then reaching out his hand to gain attention, he said: "Doctor, I am going to die, am I not?"

"I hope not, Jerry," he answered.

"I am certain of it," replied Jerry, in a tone which caused the doctor to start in surprise.

"Yes," Jerry went on, answering his look with a slight smile, "and there is something I must say to you now, while I am able to speak."

He paused as if doubtful of his first words, and