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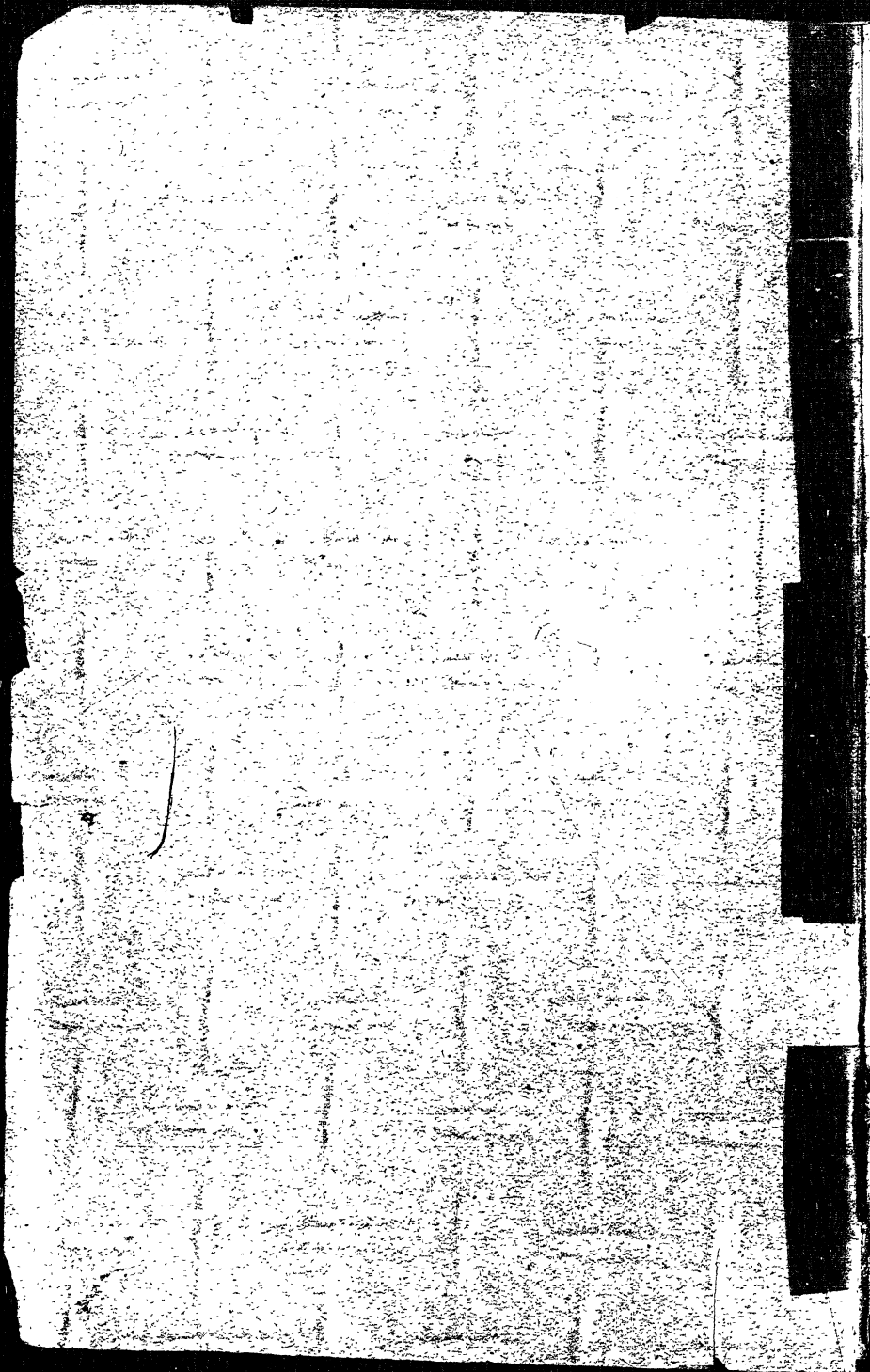
CARRIE J. HARRIS,

Author of "Mr. Perkins, of Nova Scotia," "A Romantic
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WOLFVILLE, N. S.


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A MODERN EVANGELINE.

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May 25, 1929

BY

CARRIE J. HARRIS,

AUTHOR OF

"Mr. Perkins, of Nova Scotia," "A Romantic-Romance," "Cyril Whyman's
Mistake," "Faith and Friends," etc.

WOLFVILLE, N. S.

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A Modern Evangeline.

CHAPTER I.

IN THE LAND OF EVANGELINE.

"G-R-A-N-D P-R-È!" shouted the brakeman on the Dominion Atlantic Railway's evening express. Quickly closing the book I was reading, I gazed with misty eyes through the car window. Was one of my childhood's dreams at last a reality, and was I actually in the "Land of Evangeline," the land made known to fame by the pen of our beloved Longfellow—the battle ground of one of the most cruel struggles ever recorded in history? Can it be possible that those lovely, verdant fields through which we are passing have once been stained red with human gore?

But my reverie was brought to a close by the train coming to a standstill, and gathering up my travelling paraphernalia, I landed upon the platform of a little country station. The train rolled away eastward a few moments after I left it, and I looked

anxiously around in the hope of discovering some means of conveyance to the village perched upon the hillside, apparently about a quarter of a mile away. No noisy hackmen were here heard making the air hideous with their yells, this sultry summer evening. An indescribable peace was reigning over the quiet spot.

In answer to my inquiring looks, I was accosted by a youth of gentlemanly appearance, who approached me, and touching his cap with the air of a marine in the presence of one of his superior officers, asked me if I wished to be driven to the hotel.

On my answering in the affirmative, he relieved me of my gripsack, and with a polite "follow me," he led the way to an open carryall, which the building had before concealed from my view. He entertained me, as we drove over the willow-bordered road, by pointing out the various places of interest in the vicinity likely to be visited by strangers, and after climbing an extremely steep hill, deposited me at the door of a rather pretentious establishment, where I was met by a pleasant-faced landlady, who gave me such a greeting as she might have extended to some favored relative who was about to come under her roof-tree for a short sojourn. This concluded, she conducted me to a comfortably furnished apartment and left me, with the information that supper would be served at six.

Before attempting to divest myself of my travelling suit, I drew a chair before the open window, and seating myself I proceeded to study the beauties of the landscape, of which I had heard so much.

What a picture was presented to my enraptured gaze! The evening sun, still high in the western heavens, was pouring a flood of golden light upon the beautiful valley below. Away to the westward, as far as the eye could reach, stretched mile upon mile of fertile meadows—those very lands once redeemed from Fundy's restless waters by the untiring zeal of the patient Acadian farmers! A broad river wandered through all this verdure, the tiny wavelets upon the surface of its sparkling waters enjoying a merry romp with the summer breeze. The hillsides were decked with smiling orchards, among which nestled cosy cottages, evidently the happy homes of many a prosperous farmer. The noisy click of several mowers drifted to my ears as I drank in the delightful salt sea air, and reflected that I was to spend the next few weeks of my life in this lovely, rural spot.

Tired with my journey, for I was far from strong, I felt no inclination to begin my preparations for the evening meal, but leaning back in my comfortable chair I allowed my truant thoughts to wander whither they would. I gradually drifted away from my peaceful surroundings and back to the

happy past,—those blissful hours which would never again be my portion here in this vale of tears. Once more my beloved Alicia, my angel bride, was standing before me, but when I attempted to reach her side the beautiful spectre of Evangeline would pass between us, while a voice of heavenly sweetness would softly whisper: "Mortal, touch her not, she now belongs to us."

Maddened by my ineffectual attempts again to clasp my darling, I endeavored to push the phantom from my path, when a deep toned bell burst forth: "Come to the chapel. It is time for Vespers," commanded the shadow, and grasping my dear one by the arm, they floated from my presence.

I made a violent effort to follow, as I realized she was leaving me forever, and managed to get upon my feet as the clang of the supper bell resounded through the house. I hurriedly threw aside my dusty garments, with the superstitious feeling that the spirits of departed Frenchmen were hovering around me, and that it was my struggle with the dream maiden which had made me so furiously hungry, but I could not hurry over my toilet. At last, feeling deliciously clean and cool, I descended to the supper room, to find it deserted by everyone except a lively little brunette, who scarcely allowed me to seat myself at the table before she began to ply me with questions.

“Was I not a friend of Raymond Abbott? And was not my name Salter? And what did I think of Grand Prè? And was it my intention to go on any sketching expeditions? If so, she would be happy to guide me to the most picturesque places.”

I hurried through my meal as quickly as possible, feeling anxious to escape from my tormentor, but I soon found she was not to be so easily disposed of. As I rose from the table she volunteered to show me the places from whence I could obtain the best view of Blomidon, and feeling it would be churlish to refuse what was evidently intended as courtesy to a stranger, I followed her to the window of the upper hall, where the noble old giant lay crouching before us, bathed in the rosy light of the setting sun.

What would I not have forfeited to have been permitted to gaze in enraptured silence at the enchanting picture, but my frivolous companion had no intention of allowing me to mope in solitude. Foremost among the attractions he had for her was the possible wealth he might have concealed within his rocky bosom. In addition to the uncounted gold stored there by the famous Captain Kidd, the hoarded wealth of numbers of Acadians was supposed to have been hidden upon the mountain side.

“And there are also millions of beautiful amethysts lying around loose, which anyone can find who will take the trouble to search a little. We are planning

a picnic some day next week, and will pay him a visit. There is the cutest little steamer up in Wolfville! I think she is called the 'Evangeline.' By the way, 'most everything is named Evangeline around here. The place might well be called the 'Land of Evangeline,' There is Evangeline Hall, Evangeline Beach, Evangeline Hotel, and hundreds of other Evangelines too numerous to mention. However, we are talking of engaging this little craft I spoke of to take us to Blomidon. Would you care to become one of our party?"

"I should be delighted to accompany you," I answered, gallantly.

An opportunity to visit Blomidon was not to be despised, even though I should be forced to endure the companionship of this loquacious female *en route*.

"That's right; I am glad you will come. The more the merrier, you know." And she nodded her head sagely.

"But I must show you all the other places marked down in history," she went on. "Blomidon does not enjoy a monopoly, you know. There is the old French graveyard down there. Someone told me the other day they were actually digging up the coffins and selling the pieces to tourists. Did you ever hear of such sacrilege? I bought a lovely little box the other day from a boy who said he made it

from a piece of one. It is too sweet for anything! I shall use it for a jewel case."

The look of disgust I gave her was quite lost, as she rattled on: "The owner of the place (for, will you believe it, the government actually parceled it out to the new-comers like any common bit of land), says he is going to plough it all up next year and plant it with potatoes. He complains that the visitors are always leaving the gates open and letting his cows wander all over the country. He thinks people won't want to go tramping around over a potato field, like they do at present. I should not want to eat the potatoes, would you? I am afraid they would have a musty taste. Everything around here has a history. Even the little children you meet will volunteer to give you lots of information. I do not suppose a great deal of it is very authentic, but some of your informers believe all they tell you, and the rest are not particular, providing you believe what you are told. I have been shown five different places, each one the exact spot, where Evangeline dwelt, and yesterday I received definite information that the story of Evangeline was a fiction. The maiden was an invention of Longfellow—a child of his brain, so to speak. Was there ever anything so disgusting? To think of the bushels of tears which have been wasted over the sufferings of a person who never had any exist-

ence! But the burial ground is an established fact, and so is the pit where the English soldiers are buried. That is the place down there, where those gnarled old apple trees are keeping guard over their sepulchre. I will pilot you down there to-morrow if you wish to sketch the spot. I am sorry I cannot give you any further information this evening, for I promised to ride with a friend of cousin Ray's. Come to think of it, I did not introduce myself, and of course you do not know who I am. I am Maude Abbott, a cousin of your friend, Raymond. There is nothing in my estimation to compare with horse-back exercise. To enjoy a jolly canter by the side of a pleasant companion beats bicycle riding all to pieces. You must try it some day, Mr. Salter, while you are here. But I see the horses are ready and I am not. Good-night," and she disappeared, leaving me with the uncomfortable sensation that some person had suddenly poured a pail of ice-water over my back.

"That chatter-box a cousin of Ray's," I thought; "and I shall be compelled to treat her politely, no matter what I am forced to endure! I fear I would commit suicide were I compelled to pass a month in her society."

Five minutes after she left me I saw her ride past the open casement, from which I was leaning, accompanied by a young man, who smiled contentedly

as he listened to her merry chatter. "I do not envy you your companion, my young gentleman," I muttered, cynically, as I watched them gallop out of sight, with a feeling of thankfulness that I was, at last, alone to feast my eyes upon the grandeur before me. I turned my eyes towards the northeast, where the evening mists were slowly gathering around the hoary head of old Blomidon, and for a short time forgot the existence of Maude Abbott.



CHAPTER II.

A MAIDEN ALL FORLORN.

"OH, BLOMIDON;" I involuntarily murmured, as I watched the foggy curtain dropped before the lovely picture; "what a tale thou couldst tell, couldst thou be endowed with the gift of speech! What pages thou couldst fill with the doings of the red-skinned maidens and their savage lovers in the days before the ships of France had passed thy portals, bearing the brave pioneers, who were seeking home and fortune in the wilderness thou hast guarded for ages. Thou hast watched the struggles of those same brave men as they patiently hewed the rough logs and raised the humble cabins, which furnished shelter for the beloved companions who so nobly followed them into exile. And thou hast also watched the beautiful, smiling fields into which those same brave men have transformed that wilderness, and still thou art mute."

"And will ever remain so, till the end of time," exclaimed a mocking voice at my side, and turning

impatiently towards the intruder I was amazed to see before me Raymond Abbott, my trusted friend, and a fellow-worker in the great publishing house where I was employed.

"You do not appear overjoyed to see me," he remarked, with a careless laugh, as I placed my hand in the one outstretched before me.

I felt rebuked at his words. "I am surprised," I stammered. "I never dreamed of seeing you here. Grand Prè is one of the last places in which I should expect to meet so unromantic an individual as yourself. What happy chance has directed your footsteps in this direction at the present time? I thought you planned to spend your vacation in the vicinity of Niagara."

"Duty, my dear boy," he answered, serenely, as he drew a chair to my side; "you see, I have to keep a fatherly eye over my aunt Edith and cousin Maude. You know it is the fashion now for Americans of note to make a tour of Nova Scotia, and more especially the garden of Nova Scotia—the Annapolis Valley. Aunt Edith and Maude are nothing if not fashionable. They must float with the tide. So here we are, all guests at the 'Bay View House,' and what do you think of it all? The scenery, I mean."

"Charming," I answered, with enthusiasm. "One might search the entire American continent and not

find such an ideal spot in which to spend the heated summer months, not to speak of the historical interest which must ever make the village of Grand Prè a favored retreat of all true lovers of Longfellow."

"Bother the historical interest! It is a good enough place to while away a few idle hours. But I must introduce you to my cousin Maude. You will no doubt enjoy hearing her rave over the ancient history of the village." And had I not already met that young lady, and listened to some of her ravings, I might not have understood the comical expression which for an instant crossed his face.

"You may spare yourself the trouble of an introduction," I answered, sarcastically; "I have already had the pleasure of meeting Miss Abbott and listening to some of her ravings, but I cannot truthfully say I feel very much enlightened by her information."

He laughed good-naturedly as he noted the contempt I cherished for his cousin.

"Poor Maude is good as gold at heart," he said, apologetically. "She will no doubt develop into a most charming woman."

"Say rather a most tiresome woman. An hour or two of her society would spoil the most romantic place in the country."

Again that peculiar smile curled his lips. "I must take you in hand myself," he remarked, as if he wished to change the subject, "or our readers will be

treated to column after column of nonsense gleaned during your visit here, and all served up in your most romantic style, and illustrated with sketches from your illustrious pencil. But seriously speaking, you have been over-doing yourself for the past year, and you have no right to waste those hours which were given you for rest, in working for your employers. You must not rob yourself for the benefit of the public. You will spend your time far more profitably if you occupy it in boating, bathing, riding, walking, fishing, and so forth. A couple of miles away across that dyke land you will find Evangeline Beach. The road which leads to it is a perfect bicycle track, and once there, 'tis an ideal lounging place on a sultry afternoon. A dip into its briny water, or a row on its rippling surface, is more invigorating than all the tonics ever concocted. But if you really wish to treat your readers to a dish of Acadian romances, hunt out some of the old residents and obtain the tales they have to tell, which you can repeat for the most part, without alteration. Those stories handed down from generation to generation will bear the stamp of truth upon their face, and will be far more acceptable to the public than anything invented by the modern novelist."

"Many thanks for your kind advice, but a life of idleness, even for a few weeks, would serve to drive

me nearly frantic. Those old tales may be valuable reading, but I should prefer to have them served up in a respectable dress before presenting them to the public."

"As you please. But do not lose sight of the fact that they lose the greater part of their charm when stripped of the simple language in which they are clothed by the native. That is, admitting they possess a charm at the beginning. For my own part, I consider them simply rubbish from start to finish. Of course it is an acknowledged fact that a lot of Frenchmen were cruelly banished from their homes in this valley during the last century, but those heartrending stories upon which we have been regaled from time to time regarding the separation of devoted lovers and their lasses, is utter nonsense. Constancy was probably as rare an article at that date as at the present time, and how many residents of this country to-day, do you imagine, would elect to pass their lives in single blessedness if separated by force from the objects of their hearts' desire? I would give the average female about three months to heal her wounded heart, and seek another lover to become the object of her devotion. This falling in love is as much a fable as the conversation of the wolf with Little Red Riding Hood. Women, I admit, are sometimes pleasant company, but were I about to choose my life companion I would prefer a goodly number from whom to select my mate.

“Much trash has been written about the death of broken-hearted damsels, and sometimes we come across a chronicle recording the destruction of a member of the sterner sex, but even the most romantic among us will be forced to admit that he or she has never yet met a case in real life where death was caused by disappointment of the heart. Until I have proof, conclusive proof, I will always remain a skeptic regarding true love as it is defined by books.”

I remained silent for some time, thinking sadly. Had I not furnished him proof, undisputed proof, of a lover's constancy? True, I had not died of a broken heart when I lost my beloved Alicia. I still lived, and to a certain extent enjoyed my life, but the world would never be the same to me again. The death of my bright, beautiful darling had cast a shadow over my life which time could never remove.

The home upon which I had expended so much care, in order that it might be made a fitting nest for my dainty bird, was empty as my heart. Though there was a possibility I might one day bring another bride within those walls, yet she could never, even partially, take the loved one's place!

A strange voice at length disturbed my sad reverie, and looking across the room I noticed, for the first

time, a sweet-faced old lady, composedly placing her spectacles in the book she had been reading.

“You wish to have woman’s constancy proved from a case in real life,” she was saying to Raymond. “Permit me to relate you a story I heard to-day—a genuine love story of old Acadia. It was told to me by a descendant of one of the actors, and a person upon whose veracity you can rely. You know that when the French were banished from this Province, all who were willing to take the oath of allegiance to the British crown were allowed to remain in peaceable possession of their homes. Among the few who preferred British rule to more hostile measures was one Jules Dulac, a wealthy farmer of Grand Prè. He had but one child, a lovely, graceful girl, of about eighteen summers, at the time the Acadians were expelled, and among the exiles was her betrothed. The almost heart-broken girl parted from her lover on the beach, and before the boat bore him away from her side he vowed to return and claim her, as he would prepare a comfortable home for her in the strange land to which he was forced to journey.

“The vow those fond lovers made at parting was faithfully kept by the maiden, in spite of her father’s opposition, for over five years. The land surrounding her lover’s old home had been bestowed upon an officer in the British army, who wished to found a

home in the valley. He raised a handsome structure over the ashes of the humble cottage where she had one day thought to reign as mistress, and invited her to share his home.

“It was the chief ambition of her father’s life that his daughter should wed the Englishman, and he gave the young man every assistance in his power. Persistent refusals of his suit only served to make the worthy Britisher more ardent in his wooing, and he laughed to scorn the idea of a woman being pledged to one from whom she had had no sign for over five years. He argued that the lover who would keep silence for so long a time must be dead or false, and in either case she was free.

“At length evil times came upon the old Frenchman. His crops failed, and debts accumulated, till he was no longer to be owner of his homestead. This was the opportunity for which the Englishman had been waiting. He came forward, offering to provide for the old couple during their lifetime if Marie would become his wife. To save her parents from destitution in their old age, the noble girl sacrificed her heart, broke her vows, and bestowed her hand upon the foreigner.

“For nearly twenty years she remained true to her marriage vows, and faithfully reared the little ones entrusted to her care.

“One evening as she rested in the doorway of her

father's cottage she saw a stranger wearily climbing the hill. What was there about the appearance of the man that caused her heart to beat so strangely?

"Nearer he came, and in the weary traveller she recognized her long-lost lover. For years the faithful fellow had struggled to procure the home in which he wished to enshrine his idol, never doubting that when he returned to claim her he would still find her watching for his coming. That death might have been before him he had sometimes feared, but that she would be false, his beautiful Marie, oh never!

"Mechanically she listened to his simple tale, and watched how his eyes feasted on the beauty of her still comely face, and at the end she broke his heart by telling him that for long years she had been the wife of another.

"With a heartrending cry he staggered from her side, and a week after, strange though kindly hands placed him beneath the sod in the old burial ground, over which the cattle had been permitted to roam unmolested for over a quarter of a century. He was the last of his race ever laid in that consecrated spot!

"Another year passed, and a long procession followed the mortal remains of his unhappy love, as she was borne over the hills to the English cemetery. Even in death they were divided, for her

stern husband had refused her dying request that she might be laid by her lover's side. His wife and the mother of his children should not rest in an obscure grave. He raised a costly marble monument above her tomb, and in a short-time he had filled her place by one of his own race.

"On her death-bed she warned her daughters to beware how they bestowed their hands, unless their hearts accompanied the gift, and also expressed a fear that her own faithlessness would cause a curse to ever follow her children and their descendants.

"There is a tradition still existing in the family that no daughter of the house has ever made a happy marriage.

"The old lady who told me the story never learned what became of her husband, who deserted her nearly forty years ago.

"Another cousin was jilted by her lover in her youth, and afterwards married an old widower with several grown up daughters, who have always lived at home and made her life a burden. They, with a niece, are the only survivors of the family.

"The niece has also passed through a bitter love experience. Still single, she is probably destined at no distant date to occupy a prominent position in the artistic world, but her earthly hopes of domestic happiness lie trampled in the dust by a family of considerable pretension, living here in Grand Prè,

who parted her from a young scion of their house. The false lover is at present, I am told, wandering in South Africa, while she is devoting all her youth and energies to her advancement along the road to fame and wealth. She has had several fortunes laid at her feet, but she has remained true to her early love, even though the object of her devotion has proved himself so unworthy of her regard. She may still fondly believe he will one day return and make good his youthful vows, or perhaps, who knows, but that it may be her intention to devote her life to some good work, and thus expiate the sin committed by her maternal ancestors, or she may one day sell herself for wealth and position, and thus hand the curse down to future generations."

The old lady arose as she finished her story, and left our presence.

The tale to which I had been listening had deepened the impression that I was surrounded by the spirits of the past.



CHAPTER III.

A LOST IDOL.

"It was the man who was constant in this case," exclaimed Raymond, triumphantly, at last breaking the silence, which lasted for some time after our new friend had taken her departure.

"How do you make that out?" I asked, surprised at his assertion.

"Did not the poor Frenchman return for his betrothed after an absence of twenty-five years, only to find her faithless?"

"Yes, but it is a woman who proves her constancy at the present time."

"I suppose so. I wonder if the devoted fair one is now a resident of Grand Prè. I confess I would like to have the pleasure of knowing such a piece of constancy as she is represented. A woman true to a lover who is false must be either a fool or a saint."

"Then you admit there may be a few saints to be found in the sex," I replied, with a laugh; "I begin

to have hopes of you after all. Your faith in woman-kind cannot be quite dead."

"Yes, I suppose there may be a few saints among them, but, nevertheless, they are of a very earthly kind. And our worthy French descendant has not yet proved to the world that she possesses the right to be enrolled among them. However, I am so charmed with the account of her goodness, that if she is as beautiful as she has been painted, and were she willing to forswear her allegiance to the other fellow, I might be tempted to make her Madame Abbott. I suppose it is about time I was thinking of taking to myself a wife."

It was too dark for him to see the look of contempt with which I favored him, but the darkness could not conceal the scorn in my voice, as I warningly reminded him that the biter might be bitten.

For years he had recklessly roved from flower to flower, content to inhale their fragrance as he passed along. Handsome of person, with charming manners, coupled with a fair amount of wealth, he had been for years a favorite wherever he appeared. And although regarding him as one of my best friends, I could not help wishing he might soon meet with one who would be inclined to teach him that women were not all so easily won as he had hitherto imagined.

And then my heart reproached me for my want

of fidelity to my friend. Why should I wish to see him suffer as I had suffered?

"Take care, my dear Raymond," I said, at last; "some day you may carry your heart's best affections to one who will not appreciate the gift."

"In that case I will be compelled to carry them away again," he answered, lightly, and gaily singing

"If she be not fair for me
What care I how fair she be?"

he sauntered leisurely away.

I felt extremely angry with him for a few moments. Heaven's choicest earthly gifts to man seemed to be regarded by him as the idle playthings of an hour, but as I reflected on his experiences during the last few years, my anger died away.

Scores of females had literally thrown themselves in his arms, till in fact he was compelled to expend much thought upon the best way to frustrate the plans of the wily schemers.

No wonder he had small faith in woman, but he should learn to distinguish between the true and false. I had yet to learn it would be about as easy to master the great problem of life as to discover the real nature of a wily woman.

"I trust he will not have an opportunity of meeting her," I muttered, little thinking that before twenty-four hours should pass I should unwittingly make them known to each other.

The next morning, as I entered the breakfast room, I encountered my cousin, Reginald Smith, a young artist of New York.

"A pleasant surprise," he exclaimed, as our hands met in a close clasp. "What are your plans for the day?"

I confessed to having no definite plans in view.

"Then suppose you accept my programme, which is: A spin across the dyke on our wheels to Evangeline Beach; a dip in the briny, then back to Grand Prè, and finish the morning by a call upon Miss Mortimer."

"And who is Miss Mortimer?" I enquired; "a friend of yours?"

"She is a rising young artist from the 'Hub,'" was his reply; "I fancy you will like to meet her, she is a most charming woman. But keep a firm guard over your heart, for rumor says hers is already disposed of."

I should, in all probability have refused to accompany him to the home of Miss Mortimer, for I was not accustomed to cultivate the acquaintance of young ladies of late, had not the merry voice of Maude Abbott come floating to my ears, and remembering her promise to become my cicerone that morning, I accepted his invitation, and hastened away to prepare for our expedition, in order that

we would be enabled to make our escape while that young lady was occupied with her breakfast.

About eleven o'clock we were ushered into the presence of Miss Mortimer, and when my cousin introduced me she expressed herself delighted to meet with a relative of so kind a friend as Mr. Smith had proved himself.

When we arose to leave, after a pleasant half hour spent in her society, she invited us to join a party composed of herself and a couple of young lady friends, on an excursion up the valley of the Gaspereaux that afternoon. We both cordially accepted her invitation, and promising to join her party promptly at two o'clock, we wheeled back to the hotel, feeling prepared to do ample justice to the midday meal.

I was taken to task by my acquaintance of the previous evening for my morning's neglect, but was told I might redeem my character in her eyes and expatiate my sins by becoming her escort that afternoon.

I pleaded a previous engagement, which would prevent my availing myself of her kind offer, and with a pretty little pout she turned her back upon me and began a flirtation with Smith, who, to my surprise, appeared to appreciate her society immensely.

As we were about to depart on our afternoon ex-

cursion, Abbott appeared with his wheel, and thinking he might be an acquisition to our party, I invited him to accompany us.

As Miss Mortimer was the most important person, Ray, with his customary assurance, monopolized her society, leaving two bread and butter Misses, who gave most of their attention to the care of their wheels, to the companionship of Reginald and myself. Both Miss Mortimer and her companion being expert cyclists, they soon left the rest of us far behind, but nevertheless we managed to spend a fairly pleasant afternoon, and returned to our hotel, I to listen for the rest of the evening to a recital of the superior attractions of Miss Evangeline Mortimer, as compared with the average female.

Not till I heard the name of Evangeline applied to Miss Mortimer did it occur to me that the young lady I had met that morning, and the one whose history I had heard related the previous evening, were the same individual, and I had brought the two together, after wishing they should not meet!

However, it was quite evident Raymond was in a fair way of at last becoming a victim, and I could only hope the course of true love might run smoothly for both.

Day after day the two were constant companions. Did they join any excursion party, they soon managed to distance the rest of us, and spend the hours

by themselves. Smith departed a few days after my arrival, leaving me to the tender mercies of Maude Abbott, who seemed determined to claim me as her escort in spite of my constant efforts to avoid her. She appeared to take no notice of my want of gallantry, but would always welcome me with a charming smile at our next meeting, no matter how churlish I had been with her at the preceding one.

At length I made the acquaintance of several resident families, and in the enjoyment which I found in their society I lost sight of the drama which was being enacted before my eyes.

Among my new friends was a charming young lady, who, I sometimes fancied, might in the far away future, could I be fortunate enough to win her, almost reconcile me to the loss of my darling Alicia. Clare Emmerson was an imposing young woman, apparently about thirty years of age, although she might have passed for a much younger person. Our tastes were similar in many respects, and she had a pleasant way of deferring to me when we did differ, which completely won my heart. She was a lively companion generally, but at times a look of sadness would shadow her fair face, which told me she was not altogether unacquainted with sorrow, and which went far towards making me her devoted admirer.

One sultry evening, returning to the hotel earlier

than usual, and feeling the air in the house would be stifling, I threw myself under some bushes on the grounds and lighted a cigar, but even the exertion of smoking was too much of an effort. The cigar was allowed to go out, and I gave myself up to the pleasant contemplation of my darling Clare, as I called her in my thoughts. I heard voices in the distance, but I paid no attention to what they were saying till I discovered that Clare and myself formed the subject of the conversation.

"Yes," said a voice, which I recognized as that of my landlady: "there is no doubt about Clare being a schemer, but you must remember her plans do not always work. You know how she schemed for over ten years to capture her cousin, and at last to avoid her he has left his native land. True, she has succeeded in parting him from Evangeline Mortimer, and for that I could never forgive her," went on the old lady, with considerable vehemence. "Evangeline is well rid of him. He would have been a clog to her through life."

"Mr. Abbott appears to be regarded with much favor. Do you suppose she will marry him?" said another voice.

"She will never marry anyone except Harry Emerson," was the answer; "but Clare appears in a fair way to capture his friend. But who knows, perhaps both gentlemen are only amusing

themselves by a summer flirtation? How dark it is growing! I believe we are going to have a storm."

The two ladies turned towards the house, actually brushing me with their garments as they passed, but the twilight had deepened so rapidly that I escaped their observation. When they had passed beyond earshot, I arose, shook myself free from the leaves which were clinging to my garments, and followed them.

"So the charming Miss Emmerson proves to be the fiend who has wrecked Miss Mortimer's life," I thought, as I sought the privacy of my own room; "and I have flattered myself I could never be taken in by a false woman. I shall see you once more, my dear young lady, and let you see a Yankee stranger is not so easily captured as you have imagined."

The next day I surprised Miss Abbott by inviting her to join us in a picnic excursion to the "Look-off Mountain."

I fancied a look of anger for an instant darkened Miss Emmerson's face, as the carriage which was to convey us drew up before the hotel, and I carefully assisted my companion to a seat in the vehicle and placed myself by her side.

For some unaccountable reason Miss Maude appeared less repulsive to me than formerly, and I

really enjoyed her lively chatter. If Miss Emerson felt grieved at my desertion, she showed no sign, and the day passed pleasantly for all.

For the next few days I became the devoted attendant of my fellow-boarder; then, suddenly realizing I might be only extricating myself from one maze to fall into another, I fled from Grand Prè. Smile not, dear lady readers, at my egotism. I now know that Miss Maude Abbott would have laughed me to scorn had I committed such a blunder as to offer her my heart and hand, while Miss Clare—but I have no right to betray her secrets.

I had not wasted the precious hours of my vacation in mere pleasure-seeking. A well-filled sketch and note book accompanied me on my departure from the "Land of Evangeline."

I spent the few days of my liberty yet remaining, in visiting other localities of interest to tourists, and returned to my duties, after an absence of ten weeks, in perfect health, but still sad at heart. True, my thoughts did not turn so frequently to my lost bride, lying in her far-off grave, but at times a sad, sweet face would rise before my mental vision, and I would have an uncomfortable feeling that Clare Emerson had not been fairly treated. I had condemned her on the verdict of a couple of gossiping women, who, for all I knew to the contrary, might have been bitter enemies of the poor girl.

A few weeks after my return I was accosted one evening, as I left the office, by Raymond. He looked thinner and more careworn than when I had last seen him.

Had Eve Mortimer refused him, and was this the cause of his downcast looks? A feeling of anger stirred my heart. She had appeared to enjoy his society immensely. If she did not intend to accept him, why had she lured him on in the way she had done? No true woman would have shown herself such a heartless coquette. What if she had been the false one after all, and my sweet Clare the one maligned?

"How did you leave Miss Mortimer?" I asked, after our greeting was over. "And am I to congratulate you?"

I felt cruelly mean, as I asked the question, but I wished to know the truth, which I feared would not be told me unless I questioned him.

He turned on me a look of reproach as he answered:

"Don't, Charlie! I know I deserve it all, but it is too hard from *you*. She refused me, my beautiful Evangeline. You were right, old boy, my time has come, but I would not surrender the memory of those past happy weeks for the privilege of becoming one of the greatest philosophers on earth. From the first moment my eyes beheld her I knew she

was a queen among women. She is not for me; but her friendship is to me more precious than the love of another could ever be."

"Persevere, and you will one day gain her heart," I said, prophetically. I was a firm believer in a true woman's constancy, but even to me it seemed impossible that a woman could be so constant to a false lover as not to be at length won by a true one.

"No, Charlie," he replied, "you mean kindly, but you do not know her as I do. Had you heard her answer the night I asked her to become my wife, you would know there was no hope for me. And to think," he burst out savagely, "she has wasted all her affections on a worthless scoundrel who does not know how to appreciate the treasure he has won, but has ruthlessly tossed aside and trampled upon her love at the bidding of his lady mother; and who, even at her death, when he is free to redeem his vows without opposition, cowardly slinks off to the other side of the world, and leaves her to pass her life alone. What enigmas women are! They waste all their hearts' affection upon some clay idol, then when an honest man appears, who would appreciate the prize, they have nothing left to bestow.

"Does she expect her old lover to one day return and claim her?" I asked, more from the hope of rousing him, than from any interest I felt in the wanderer.

“Heaven only knows what she expects! She once promised to marry him, and she still considers herself bound by that promise, notwithstanding the fact that he has deserted her so shamefully. If she knew for a certainty that he was either dead or married, she might consider herself a free woman; otherwise, there is no hope for me. If he returns twenty, aye, even fifty years hence, he will still find her waiting for his coming, providing death has not forestalled him. Hard work, it is said, is the best panacea for the heartache, so I will go back to my desk and endeavor to forget my brief dream of happiness.”



CHAPTER IV.

THE RIVAL MAIDENS.

TEN YEARS before my story opens, Evangeline Mortimer had watched the casket containing her father's clay carried from her sight, and realized she was left to fight the battle of life alone.

She was told that the cosy home which had sheltered her from infancy would have to be dismantled and handed over to strangers, while the household goods would have to be sold and the proceeds devoted to the payment of her father's debts.

"There will be nothing left for you," remarked the grim old aunt, when she had broken the appalling news to the desolate orphan; "your father lived far beyond his means, and you will be compelled to reap the consequences of his folly. I always told David the course he was taking would end where it has, but he trusted you would be provided for by making a brilliant marriage, long before he would be called away by the grim reaper. His death will put an end to your fine prospects, I am thinking.

Your fine lover's family will never consent to their young hopeful wedding a pauper, and he is too dutiful a son, whatever else he may be, to disobey his mother's wishes. For the present you can have a home with us. You can help with the house-work and sewing, while you look around and find some employment which will support you, but I am sure I do not know what you are fit for."

The poor girl bitterly resented entering her aunt's home under those conditions, but for the present no other asylum was open to her, and she was obliged to take advantage of her relative's offer. She reluctantly packed the few articles she could claim as her own and had them removed to her new abode; but one thought alone sustained her in her hour of bitter trial. Harold, her lover, would not long allow her to remain among such uncongenial surroundings. For in spite of her aunt's predictions, she fondly believed her lover to be the very soul of truth and honor. Had he not told her, in her hour of darkest sorrow, that she was all the world to him?

It was a bitter blow to the proud spirit to know that she, who had always been looked upon as a considerable heiress, would be compelled to go to her new home a dowerless bride, but she believed that her welcome would be none the less warm on that account.

For nearly a year she struggled bravely in the

almost menial position she occupied in her aunt's home, with only an occasional visit from Harold to brighten her desolate life.

As her aunt had predicted, the young man showed no inclination to provide her with another home. His visits became fewer and shorter, till at last he yielded to his mother's pleadings, and deserted the girl who would have preferred death rather than that she should have been compelled to doubt him.

Then it was the wily woman sought to perfect a long cherished plan. By her efforts, her wealthy niece, Clare Emmerson, was constantly thrown into the young man's society, and the delighted mother looked forward to their early wedding day. She did not know of the stolen visits the faithless lover still paid to his betrothed, or she would not have been so confident of the success of her stratagem.

Poor Eve, thinking poverty to be the barrier which prevented their union, and also wishing to escape the torture of witnessing her lover's devoted attentions to his cousin when they appeared in public, resolved to wrest from fate a recognition of the talents with which she felt herself by nature to be endowed, disposed of her scanty possessions and left her native land.

For over a year she toiled daily in a Boston factory, devoting her evenings to study. When she had accumulated sufficient funds to complete her

education she entered an art school, from which, in due time, she graduated with high honors.

Several years passed before she found herself on the high road to success, when she returned to her native land, to find Harold still unmarried, and as devoted, apparently, as ever. His mother still refused to accept her as a daughter, declaring her son to have compromised Clare by his attentions for so many years, and that he was in duty bound to marry his cousin.

Eve, seeing her hopes were vain, returned to Boston, after a short visit to her old home, and continued her work, which was rapidly winning for her both wealth and fame.

Another year passed, and she was informed by her aunt of Mrs. Emmerson's death.

"You will, no doubt, soon return to live among us once more," her aunt had written. And Eve, feeling the obstacle which had parted her from Harold for so long a time, was now removed, patiently waited for tidings from her old lover.

A few months more, and she again heard from her aunt that he had disposed of his property in Grand Prè, and immediately sailed for South Africa, in search of a fortune.

"You know," her aunt informed her, "that they were ruined. The estate did not bring enough to pay the debts. That, I suppose, is one reason his

mother was so anxious for him to marry Clare. She thought the girl's money would be such a help to them. No one here has any sympathy for him. He has treated both you girls most shamefully. He has paid Clare the most devoted attention for years, and kept her from marrying any other man. As for yourself, it should have been enough for you when he left you at the time of your father's death. That was when you should have broken your engagement."

When Eve learned of her lover's misfortunes, she bitterly reproached herself for concealing her hoarded wealth, which would have been more than sufficient for him to redeem his old home. But regrets were useless; he had gone. She could only pray that a merciful Providence would watch over and protect her wanderer, and one day bring him safely back to her.

When summer again came around, she went to Grand Prè to spend her well-earned vacation with a distant cousin. People watched her closely after her arrival among them, but if she grieved for her absent lover she kept her secret well.

It soon began to be noticed that if people wished to enjoy the society of the distinguished Miss Mortimer, they must omit the name of Clare Emmerson from the list of their guests. She evidently considered her in a manner responsible for her misfor-

tunes, and despised her too thoroughly for her treachery, to mingle in the society of which she was a member.

When Raymond Abbott began paying her such devoted attention the delight of her friends was unbounded; but when, a few weeks after, she dismissed him, they ventured to openly remonstrate with her for her folly, which so annoyed the high-spirited girl that she immediately returned to the home of her adoption, and for long years she did not again visit Nova Scotia.



CHAPTER V.

A WORDY WAR.

THE long winter months wore slowly away. Raymond worked at his desk unweariedly, and many choice gems were given to the public, the product of his gifted pen.

But he was no longer the Raymond of yore. The sneering cynic had departed; but this sad and careworn man who had taken his place was no improvement on my old friend — I sometimes feared my friend no longer. The compact of friendship between him and Eve Mortimer had been firmly adhered to through the winter, and I sometimes wondered, when I saw them together, how he, with his heart overflowing with love for her, could be content with the friendship she gave him in return for his love and devotion.

For some reason, to me unaccountable, she seemed to dislike, and do all in her power to avoid me. Nor was any effort made on my part to induce her to alter her opinion regarding myself. I never met

her without my thoughts recurring to my dream the first evening I spent in Grand Prè, and an undefinable presentiment that she would one day exert an evil influence over my happiness was ever with me.

One day I accidentally met Clare Emmerson in the street, and seeing the glad look of welcome in her eyes, I accompanied her to her destination.

We had not proceeded far before we came face to face with Miss Mortimer, and the look of scorn with which she favored us explained the cause of her dislike for me. She hated her rival, Clare, with all a woman's unreasonable bitterness, looking upon her as the cause of her ruined happiness; and, as I now discovered, even the girl's friends were not to be exempt from her contempt.

I glanced uneasily at my companion, as the haughty woman swept by us, and the pallor which for an instant overspread her face almost frightened me.

She made an effort to compose herself, when she found I was observing her, but the trembling of her lips told me how she was suffering.

"You have not yet answered my questions," I remarked, as I smiled upon her. I would show her Miss Mortimer's conduct had not the power to influence me in the least.

"Let me see, what was it you asked? I am

almost afraid I have forgotten," and the pitiful effort she made to smile, made my heart ache for her. Her enemies might tell me what they pleased, I could not believe she was the traitor she had been represented to me.

"I asked you how long you had been in Boston, where you were visiting, and if I might have the pleasure of calling upon you?"

"I have been here all winter. I am training for a nurse at the General Hospital; I see but few visitors, and I—pardon me, Mr. Salter, my conduct may appear inexplicable to you—but I think I would rather you did not call."

I was deeply offended at her refusal. What possible reason could she have for her objection to receive me among her acquaintances? Was it because I occasionally called upon Eve Mortimer, in company with Raymond?

She must be as unreasonable as Eve. I walked by her side in silence for some minutes, then abruptly bidding her good evening, I raised my hat with exaggerated politeness and left her. The trembling of her lips as she simply said good-night, gave me an uncomfortable sensation as I stalked away, but I was inwardly fuming at the rebuff I had received.

Was I to be carelessly dropped by each of the girls simply because I wished to treat the other politely? Truly, there was no accounting for a

woman's whims. I muttered an angry imprecation as I barely escaped a collision, and looking up, I saw Raymond Abbott standing before me.

"What's the row, old fellow?" he inquired, in a cheery voice, which belied his looks, for his face reminded me of a thunder-cloud about to pour its vials of wrath upon the earth. Then, without waiting for an answer, he turned, linked his arm in mine, and as we moved away, burst out impetuously:

"Oh, Charlie! she is going to Europe."

"Who?" I asked; "your cousin Maude?"

"My cousin Maude!" he repeated, indignantly; "as if I cared where she went! Evangeline Mortimer, of course. Charlie, how shall I ever exist in Boston, after she has left?"

I felt like shaking him.

"Raymond Abbott!" I said, throwing all the scorn of which I was master into my words; "it is time she was going, if it is as bad as this with you. Why waste a single thought on a woman who will have none of you? You have bestowed the greatest honor it is in a man's power to give upon a woman who, after selfishly accepting your heart, gives you in return a cold regard she is pleased to call friendship. The best thing you can do is to forget her as speedily as possible. She is not worth a single heart throb. There are scores of true women in the world who would scorn to lead a man on, for the mere

pleasure of making a conquest, as she has done. Bestow your affections upon one of these, and let her go. No doubt it is very gratifying to her vanity to have you always at her beck and call, but allow yourself no longer to be looked upon as her slave."

"Charlie!" and the look he gave me as he spoke my name should have crushed me to the earth.

"I seem to be losing my friends at a rapid rate," I muttered, as I watched him disappear, and wondering what would be the outcome of his infatuation, I slowly wended my own way homeward.

That evening I carefully dressed myself in the regulation costume, and attended a reception given by a coterie of Boston talent.

Scarcely had I entered the handsomely decorated rooms when I came face to face with Evangeline Mortimer, leaning on Raymond's arm, and smiling sweetly into his face as they promenaded.

My anger against the woman was rising to a white heat. She glanced disdainfully at me as I passed, while Raymond scarcely deigned to acknowledge my salutation. Instead of being utterly crushed by their treatment, it only served to furnish me considerable amusement, and I resolved to seek an opportunity, before the evening ended, of giving Miss Mortimer a piece of my mind regarding her wicked flirtation with my friend.

For some time I endeavored to reach her side, without avail. She would swiftly glide away from any group whenever I drew near, but opposition only made me the more determined to secure the coveted interview. Towards the close of the evening, as I was almost in despair of attaining my object, she came suddenly upon me, and in the most charming manner possible began a conversation.

Quickly recovering from the astonishment I felt at her sudden change of tactics, I entered the contest, for such I felt it to be, with a zeal almost equalling that of my opponent. For some time our warfare was carried on with the skill of experienced veterans, oblivious to the crowd of listeners which had gathered around us, many of whom, no doubt, considered we were displaying more wit than politeness. Shaft after shaft was sent at each other. I recklessly launched what I considered a telling stroke at my enemy, who visibly paled beneath the torrent of sarcasm hurled at her. Her agitation reminded me of my want of courtesy, and apologizing for my rudeness to a lady, I humbly offered my arm, which she graciously accepted, and together we quitted the crowded room.

"Pray do not let me keep you from your friends," she said, with considerable asperity, when I had seated her in a secluded corner of the balcony. "I permitted you to accompany me here for the sake

of appearances. We both forgot ourselves. There was no occasion for our showing the public what a feeling of hatred we have for each other. It was not good form, to put it mildly."

"I cannot understand why you should cherish a feeling of animosity towards me," I burst out, impetuously; "I am sure I have done nothing deserving your hatred."

'Can you not?' was her smiling reply. "Then you are more dense than I have given you the credit of being. A friend of Clare Emerson's can never be regarded by myself in any other light than that of an enemy."

"You are unjust. You must not expect the world to look at Miss Emerson with your eyes. Besides, I can hardly claim the right to call myself her friend."

"Nevertheless, I presume my unworthy self has formed the subject of many a delightful conversation between you. Clare never allows her acquaintances to remain long in ignorance regarding my past life."

The very way she pronounced Clare's name betrayed a deadly hatred of the girl, which was almost appalling, but her accusing eyes were upon me, and I felt my silence would only increase her unjust suspicions.

"Miss Emerson has never yet mentioned your name in my presence," I said, with some emphasis.

"Do you expect me to believe your statement?"

"You can act your pleasure about it," I answered, indifferently. "I am not accustomed to have my word doubted."

"It is impossible for me to believe any person would be long in Clare's society without being treated to a history of my shortcomings."

"Perhaps not; but, in the first place, I have seen very little of Miss Emerson's society. The few times I met her in Grand Prè, and to-day in Boston, are about the extent of my acquaintance with the young lady you evidently dislike so bitterly."

"*Dislike* is a weak word when speaking of the feeling I entertain for that female fiend," she almost shrieked, half rising from her chair. "She has wronged me so foully, that I sometimes feel forgiveness would be impossible even in heaven."

"And you are looked upon by the world as a Christian woman," I said, reproachfully. "Do you imagine you are following the footsteps of your Saviour, when you allow yourself to cherish such wrongful feelings towards a fellow-creature?"

"You are no judge of a woman's feelings," she said, savagely; "there are some things a woman has been called upon to endure more bitter than death itself."

I was dumbfounded as I listened to her vindictive remarks.

"What a vicious woman," I thought, "she must be at heart. How useless for me to plead for Clare's forgiveness to such as she. Besides, what right had I to plead for justice for one who had only a few short hours before denied me the right to enroll myself among her acquaintances. It was for my friend Raymond's sake I had sought this interview, and here I was recklessly wasting the precious moments in discussing one who was nothing, who never would be anything, to me."

"Miss Mortimer," I began, standing before her with a strong determination to do what I could for my friend, no matter what the effort might cost me; "I brought you here for the purpose of beseeching you to spare my friend, not to discuss Miss Emerson and her shortcomings. Do you not see how you are recklessly ruining his life? Surely, a woman who has done such noble work as yourself can find no pleasure in such a doubtful triumph! I cannot believe you are deliberately flirting with him for the sake of conquest."

"Mr. Salter," and the way she spoke my name told me her bitter, revengeful feelings had departed; "you know not, you will never know, how I prize the friendship of Raymond Abbott, but I am going to surrender it all. It is because I can never be

more than a friend to him, that I am going to leave America for a time. Perhaps he will forget me during my absence, and transfer his affections to some good woman who will make him happy. That is what I pray for, and men can easily forget."

Language would fail to describe the bitterness of her last words.

"But why, Miss Mortimer, can you not give him the boon he craves? He would be content with such a small corner of your heart. To have you by his side would make him the happiest of men. Why should you leave America at all?"

"You know not what you are saying," she answered, rising. "Somewhere, a wanderer on the face of this earth, is the man to whom I pledged my heart, with my beloved father's consent, in my early womanhood, and, for better or for worse, I must keep my vows till he shall set me free. Did you know a fraction of the misery which has been the result in our family from the breaking of one woman's vows, you could never counsel me to follow in her footsteps. Come weal or woe, I shall remain true to my own heart, true to my lover and my friend. Please take me back to the drawing-room, and she placed her hand upon my arm, and we again mingled with the gay throng.

I looked upon her with different eyes. I could no longer doubt her. A woman who was so true to

a doubtful lover, so true to her own heart, must be the very essence of truth itself.

What a traitor Clare Emmerson must have been ! "A very fiend in human form," as Eve had called her, when she assisted her aunt in parting Harold from his betrothed. How grateful I felt towards her for refusing me permission to call, for well I knew were I frequently permitted to gaze into the misty depths of those glorious eyes, I should soon become her slave, even though I knew her to be as false as Satan himself.



CHAPTER VI.

A YOUNG PHILOSOPHER.

THE following week Evangeline joined a party of friends who were planning to spend the summer in Europe. Raymond accompanied them as far as New York, and saw them comfortably installed in the German steamship which was to convey them to Rome.

He returned to his desk and made a pretense of working, but I feared most of his manuscript found its way eventually into the waste basket.

"I know how you felt when you lost Alicia," he said one evening, as we walked homeward.

"When the steamer left the dock with Eve on board, I felt I was looking my last upon the face of my love. And oh, Charlie, how am I to pass the long years which are to come without her?"

"Nonsense, man! Brace up, and bear your trouble bravely. When Alicia died, I felt life was at an end for me; but, you see, I have lived down my trouble,

and still manage to extract considerable sunshine as I journey along life's road."

"Yes; but your case is different. When this life is ended for you, there is a prospect of your reunion in the other world, but there is no such hope for me. Even beyond the sky, Eve's thoughts and smiles will all be given to another."

"We know not what awaits us beyond the sky, but Eve may yet be yours during your sojourn in this mundane sphere."

He shook his head, with a pitiful smile, and I longed to tell him my angel bride no longer wholly occupied my heart. That a pair of earthly orbs were continually haunting me; eyes of heavenly blue, from which, when I had looked upon them last, shone pity almost divine, as their owner bent above the tiny cot where lay the crushed form of a little street arab. Those eyes had completely won my heart, in spite of the proof I had received of their owner's treachery to *Evangeline Mortimer*, the cherished idol of my friend. Yes, I had witnessed *Clare's* tenderness to the poor little fellow I had seen almost crushed out of all semblance to a human form beneath the wheels of a passing car, while attempting to reach me with my morning paper. I had daily visited this atom of suffering humanity with the intention of bringing some comfort to the darkened life, now so swiftly ebbing away, and there

I had been brought into contact with Clare, as she attended to her hospital duties. The interest I had ever taken in her swiftly ripened into love, and in her sweet companionship I spent many a delightful hour.

On one of my visits to the hospital I met Maude Abbott, who immediately took possession of me in her old imperious manner, and walked me from ward to ward, finally informing me that it was my duty to escort her home. I submitted with as good a grace as possible, under the circumstances, and we had scarcely reached the street before she began :

“Really, Mr. Salter, I think you are improving rapidly. I used to think you the most unbearable bear in existence. Now I find you are almost nice.”

“And pray, may I ask, what has induced you to change your opinions regarding my unworthy self ?” I inquired, highly amused at her rather doubtful compliment.

“Oh, lots of things,” she replied, saucily shaking her dainty little head ; “but chief among them is, that you are so good to Clare.”

“Then you like Clare ? I was not aware you could be such a devoted friend as to extend your favor to one you despised, because they happened to admire someone you fancied.”

“Like Clare ? Of course I do. Could anyone help loving such an angel of goodness ? Or, at least, any

person who possessed the slightest discrimination. Evangeline Mortimer hates her, and, of course, Raymond is bound to hate her also, on that account, but they don't know her as I do. I despise such un-reasonable people. When I meet a person I like, catch me changing my opinions because someone else thinks they are not nice! Ray is an idiot. Clare is worth a dozen of Eve. But that is always the way with you men. None of you are capable of seeing below the surface. I should like to know the truth of that story about Harold Emerson, but Clare won't talk. I asked her about him once. She did not say anything, but the look in her eyes warned me never to return to the subject. At any rate, no one will ever make me believe she behaved treacherously to Eve."

"And yet we cannot doubt Miss Mortimer. She could not feel so bitterly towards Clare had she not cause for her hatred."

"No, you cannot doubt her when you are in her presence, but when she is not there, the very mention of her name gives you a creepy feeling; or, at least, that is the way it affects me. I feel, I know, Clare is innocent. I may not possess the wisdom of a man, but I have the instinct of a woman, and when a woman follows her instincts, she never gets very far astray in her judgments."

The young lady's reasoning coincided so completely

with my own opinions, that my respect for her rose immeasurably, and we got along famously after this, till she one day accidentally addressed me as Mr. Bear. Instead of being covered with confusion when I asked her for her reason for addressing me by such a name, she burst into a merry laugh, and explained, that was the sobriquet she had bestowed upon me the previous summer, while we were at Grand Prè.

"And for what purpose was it bestowed?" I asked, ruefully. "Was I so extremely bearish as to merit such a name?"

"To me, yes. We rarely met that you did not emit a growl. Then, you see, I had another cause to detest you. You caused me quite a loss financially."

"Are you crazy? How in the name of wonder could I cause you financial loss?"

"You stare at me as if you thought I had taken leave of my senses. I am telling you the exact truth. You see, it was in this way: I made a wager with cousin Ray that I would bring you to my feet, literally, of course, before the season ended. And when you failed to fall a captive before my bow and sphere, I was compelled to pay up, consequently you perceive I have not much reason to love you," and the saucy minx gave me such an artful look that my fingers itched to box her ears.

"I trust your loss did not render you a bankrupt,"

I remarked, stiffly. Had Raymond Abbott been a true friend he would never have exposed me to the ridicule of his childish relative."

"Only a box of cigars," she answered, ignoring the last half of my remark; "and don't I hope he enjoyed smoking them! They cost me just fifty cents," and she indulged in a peal of rippling laughter which told me she enjoyed her joke, hugely.

"Say, did he offer to share his treat with you?" she at last inquired, with tears of merriment still dancing in her eyes.

I smiled grimly, as I remarked Ray handing me a cigar one evening, soon after his return from Nova Scotia, which, after an ineffectual attempt to smoke, I had lain down with considerable contempt. Upon this he had produced a box of the same kind, a monument, he called them, of the average woman's honesty. They had been won, he told me, in a bet with his cousin, but I had not dreamed I was the subject of that bet.

"I wonder what he did with them—the cigars, I mean? I will bet any money he did not smoke them; Ray is too fastidious for that," she mused.

"Presented them to the aspiring literati who continually haunt our offices in search of employment. Probably your cousin is a firm believer in the proverb which says, 'waste not, want not.' He would manage to utilize even your box of cigars."

"I pity the poor literati who were compelled to smoke them, but, Mr. Salter, would you mind accepting an invitation on such short notice? I have a progressive whist party this evening, and Ray has disappointed me at the last moment, and upset all my arrangements. Clare will be there, and I will have no one to escort her home."

This, I could see, was intended as a bribe, but I could not resist the temptation of accepting under those circumstances. To be permitted to see Miss Clare home was a prospect I could not relinquish, even though my invitation came at the eleventh hour.

"I knew you would come when I told you she was to be there," she said, demurely. "Clare comes down to see us every Wednesday evening. It is her night off duty, you know. We would be pleased to have you drop in often, my mother and I."

I felt like hugging the witch. How in the world did she discover my sentiments regarding Clare? Her next remark was still a greater puzzle.

"Clare will not permit you to call upon her, but she enjoys your society all the same."

"Has Miss Emmerson been making you her confidant?"

"Not she. Clare is not that kind of an individual. But no matter how I made my discovery, that is my secret. But come and see us occasionally. It will

be really charitable in you. We do not see much of Ray lately, and when he does honor us with a visit he generally mopes behind a paper the greater part of the time. To tell you the truth, he is not fit for much of anything since Eve Mortimer went to Europe. I wish she would start out to hunt up Hal Emmerson, and get lost in the bottom of the Red Sea."

"Miss Abbott!" I exclaimed, sternly.

"Well, I do, so there, now! Ray used to be a splendid fellow before he knew her. Now he is a perfect numbskull."



CHAPTER VII.

A SEARCH FOR THE WANDERER.

"WHERE do you intend to spend your vacation, old man?" Raymond asked me one evening towards the close of June.

"I have not thought much about the matter as yet," I replied. "Where do you propose to go?"

"I am thinking of starting for Africa, soon."

"To Africa!" I repeated. "What in the world is sending you there? Got a mania for shooting lions, or are you thinking of trying to outdo Haggard in writing up African fiction, and consider it necessary to first learn something about the country where you propose to lay your plot?"

"Neither. I am going to search for Harold Emerson. I know that until the mystery regarding his fate is solved, I can never hope for happiness in this world. Nothing has ever been heard of him since he sailed from Halifax, nearly two years ago."

"Then you have not yet given up the hope of one day marrying Eve Mortimer?"

"I shall never entirely yield to despair while I live and she is free. I feel certain were he removed from my path I should have a fair chance of success in winning her heart, and why should our youth be sacrificed in this way? I am going to find out where he is and what he is doing, if possible, and I trust, for Eve's sake, as well as my own, I shall find him, either dead or married."

"You have no easy task before you."

"But one I shall accomplish. Wish me success in my undertaking, Charlie, old friend. I ask no greater gift from fate than to return to Boston with Eve Mortimer my wife. I shall start on my journey next week, and go direct to Johannesburg."

His words set me thinking, on my way homeward. Where should I go to spend my vacation? I had no object in visiting South Africa, but I should much like to spend the next few months in travel. If Clare, my sweet, beautiful Clare, would consent, I would take a year's rest, and accompany my friend to Johannesburg. I was fairly rich, and could well afford the journey. My heart beat high with hope as I wended my way down town, to call upon the beautiful woman I almost worshipped. Last night I had asked her to be my wife, and she had promised my answer this evening. Occasionally a doubt would

steal into my heart that she might refuse me, but I would quickly banish the thought. Clare was no wicked coquette, who would put forth her best efforts to win my affections for the sake of conquest. If ever truth was to be read in a woman's eyes, hers had said she loved me when we parted last evening.

But a bitter disappointment was awaiting me. On inquiring for Miss Emerson, I was told she had left the institution.

"Where has she gone? Did she leave no address?" I asked of the porter.

"I do not know, but will inquire," he answered, as he gave me a seat in the hall and left me. He soon returned and informed me she had that morning sailed for England. I was speechless, and stared at the man helplessly, and he, probably thinking I had not heard, repeated his information in a louder key.

I mechanically thanked him and turned disconsolately away. What had taken Clare Emerson to England? And why had she left me without a word of explanation? In answer to my unspoken question a door of the building which I was passing swung open, and Maude Abbott pronounced my name.

"You look as if you were about to assist at your own funeral," she exclaimed, carelessly, and then, in a more serious manner, asked:—

"Charlie, what does this mean? Why has Clare gone to Africa?"

I was startled. If Clare had gone to Africa, she could have but one object in view, which was to seek for tidings of her cousin. If such were the case, she could never be anything to me. She must be as cruel as Eve had pictured her, for had she not almost confessed her love for me the previous evening. But I would not condemn her without further proof. Perhaps Maude had been misinformed about her destination.

"Are you sure she has gone to Africa? They told me at the hospital she had gone to England."

"I received a few lines from her this morning, telling me she would sail before I read them, and enclosing this for you," and she handed me a tiny note, which I clutched eagerly. She had not forgotten me after all, in her hurried departure.

"I hope your letter will be more satisfactory than mine has been," she said, seeing the eagerness with which I pocketed the epistle. "She only wrote a few words explaining where she was going, and asking me to deliver the enclosed to you."

"Does Raymond know she has gone," I asked the girl, as I watched her impatiently beating a tattoo upon the pavement with her dainty foot.

"How should I know; but I should say not. What has he to do with Clare? You know he

hates her because Eve does. What is taking him there ?

"To shoot lions, probably. But Clare cannot have gone for such a purpose."

"No, of course not. Nor do I believe Ray has, either. They must both be searching for Harold Emmerson, and I thought Clare liked you. Oh, what a tangle it is. Shall we try to unravel it? I wonder if Eve has gone also? Clare will probably find her cousin and marry him. And I believed in him so. Then Eve will marry poor Ray, and you, what will you do? You will just have to stay at home and put up with poor me."

"All right," I answered, gravely; "when we hear of the double wedding in the far East, I will appear with priest and ring and hold you to your compact."

"You know I did not mean that. How could you misunderstand me so? I am always making such dreadful blunders. Ray always said my tongue would get me into trouble some day, but I never thought I could be misunderstood like that."

I looked at her as she stood there, the picture of consternation, and something in her appearance soothed my aching heart. Clare was probably lost to me, forever. Why should I not marry the woman before me? I cared for her as much as I would ever care for any woman now; and if she

would consent to become my wife, I would do all in my power to make her happy."

"You will tell me what Clare said about going away, if it is not a secret, will you not?" she asked, as she turned to leave me.

"If Clare has not asked me not to reveal what she has written, you shall see the letter," I told her, as I drew her hand through my arm and walked towards home with her.

I left her at her mother's door with a feeling of contentment which surprised me. My love for Clare Emmerson had died a violent death when I learned of her journey to Africa. Maude, now that I knew what a true little darling she was, I felt assured, would make me a suitable wife, and I was almost happy. Not till some time during the next day did I remember Clare's letter, which I had received. Remembering my promise to Maude to acquaint her with the contents, I attempted to remove it from the pocket where I had placed it. To my surprise and consternation, it was missing, nor did the most minute search bring it to light.

That evening I started for the home of Maude to acquaint her with my loss, when whom should I meet on the way but my cousin Reginald."

"Thought you were in Europe for the summer," I ejaculated, giving his hand a hearty squeeze. "What sent you back so early?"

"Business," he answered, laconically. "How have you been since I left?"

"Stunning! How did you leave your friends? Has Miss Mortimer turned the heads of royalty with her pictures yet?"

"Miss Mortimer developed a streak of idleness when she struck the other continent. She has taken a vacation and gone on an expedition to Africa."

"W-h-e-w! What next will we hear? Another African picnic organized! There will be joyous greetings when they all meet at Johannesburg!" and I told him of Ray's contemplated journey, as well as Clare's departure.

"Well, I hope they will at last get their love affairs straightened out in a satisfactory manner," was his charitable comment. "You had better not say anything to Ray about Eve's trip. It will only upset him. Who would ever imagine old Ray would take the fever so badly?"

"I agreed to this proposition, and after a few more words, I hastened to the home of my little betrothed, as I now considered her.

She was much disappointed when I told her of the loss of my letter. Unlike me, she still had faith in her old friend, and she fancied the letter would have explained the mystery surrounding Clare's sudden journey.

When I asked her to become my wife, she demurred at first, then consented, conditionally. I must first prove Clare false before she would agree to usurp her place in my affections.

I respected her more for her decision, but I had not her faith in Clare, and felt positive I would not have to wait long for my bride. She begged me to say nothing of our conditional engagement to Raymond before he sailed.

"Let them shape their own destinies, regardless of us," she had said. "But is it not just too good for anything that Eve is going too? If they should happen to marry out there, what a surprise it will be to those devotees of Cupid, when they arrive in America, to receive cards of invitation to the wedding reception of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Salter!" and she enthusiastically clapped her hands as she fancied the astonishment of her friends.



CHAPTER VIII.

AFRICA HO!

WHEN Eve Mortimer watched the docks fading from her sight, as the great Atlantic liner steamed rapidly out to sea, she felt that she had committed a foolish act in refusing to become the wife of Raymond Abbott. She saw the shores of America growing smaller, and realized she was going forth into an unknown world, where she would probably pass many a lonely hour. By her own exertions she had made a place for herself in the world of art, but would art always prove sufficient to satisfy the cravings of her woman's heart? She saw the long years stretching away into the future, and shuddered at the thought that she must pass them in the companionship of those who cared naught for her. The adulation she had received in the past few years had been like sweet incense to the desolate orphan, but the time she new must shortly come when she would no longer be the acknowledged heroine of the hour. She had already passed the first mile-

stone of her youth. In a few more years her beauty would begin to fade, her admirers would seek other and fresher charms, and she would find herself deserted; or, worse still, only courted for the sake of the gold of which she was the possessor. Raymond, she knew, loved her truly. She would ever occupy the chief place in his great, noble heart. Another might seek the hand which should have been the reward of his fidelity, but no other would ever care for her as he had done. She had seen his sorrowful face, as he stood upon the pier and watched her as she was borne from his side, and her heart ached for the grief she would have given years of her life to assuage, and she had placed an unsurmountable barrier between them, for what? Because of her infatuation for a heartless villain, who had cruelly trampled upon her heart's best gift, and held her up to the scorn of an unsympathizing world. She had been a fool; she could see it now, when it was too late for her to undo her folly, and with streaming eyes she sought her room, as thoroughly homesick and heartsick as any exile who ever sailed from the shores of America.

Could Raymond, as he sadly journeyed back to Boston, only have known of the unavailing tears which bedewed the sleepless pillow of the woman he loved with such devotion, how it would have cheered the lonely hours which followed their sepa-

ration! How he would have flown to her side as fast as steam could take him, and brought her back in triumph to his home, the happiest man of whom the American continent could boast. It was so little he had asked of her in return for his overwhelming love, and that little had been denied him!

But he could not know, and the weary months dragged themselves slowly away, the man eating his heart out in America for the companionship of his darling, the woman, restless and unhappy in Europe because so many weary miles separated her from her dearly-prized friend.

The party of friends who had crossed the ocean in her company, remained a few weeks in Rome, sight seeing, and then passed along to visit other scenes, leaving her behind to spend some months in study. Such had been the programme mapped out before they left Boston, and Eve, sorely against her inclinations, adhered to her original plans.

But she could neither settle herself to study nor become interested in her brush or pencil. Day after day, she wandered around the ancient ruins with her sketch book, but the hours were passed in idleness. Then, when she made an effort to copy some of the old pictures, the treasures in which Rome abounded, she became disgusted with the daubs which disfigured her canvas, and invariably drew her brush across the surface as the completion of

her daily work. An undefined fear that her hand had lost its cunning was continually haunting her, and she hailed with joy a communication from her friends who had made their way into England and invited her to join them there.

Hastily packing her effects, she turned her back upon Rome and its picturesque ruins, and followed them to the home dominions of her sovereign, to find on her arrival they had again changed their plans and were on the eve of sailing for Cape Town.

"I will go with you," she said, when they informed her of their destination, and seeing the looks of surprise exchanged between the ladies, added—

"I find I have been working entirely too hard of late and require a long rest, and complete change of scene. Africa is out of the beaten track of tourists. I fancy I shall enjoy the voyage very much."

And the girl honestly tried to deceive herself that this was the reason she wished to visit Africa. Although, deep down in her heart she knew her chief object in going was the faint hope that while a resident of the dark continent, she might learn some tidings of her lost lover, Harold Emmerson.

She had no intention of seeking him with the hope that he would redeem his youthful vow. She would scorn to follow him over the world for such a purpose, but apart from her desire to look once more upon the love of her early youth, there would

be a melancholy sweetness in visiting the lands his feet had trod e'en though they might not meet.

The steamer for Cape Town bore them away from the coast of "Merrie Old England," and down through the tropics on the surface of a glassy sea. The dreary monotony of the voyage was only broken by the occasional glimpse of a passing sail, till at last Table Mountain appeared in the distance, to their longing eyes, and a few hours afterwards they were landed upon the shores of Africa.

A few days' rest in Cape Town, after their tiresome journey, and the migratory spirit again seized them, and active preparations were pressed forward for their departure from Johannesburg. Then it dawned upon Eve that the voyage south had not been undertaken solely for pleasure. The real object was to do a little speculating in the gold fields of the Transvaal.

The tables of their private sitting room were covered with maps of the mining districts, and the names of Cecil Rhodes, Barney Barnato, and others, aristocrats of the mining town, were repeated so frequently as almost to disgust Eve with the expedition. But Harold was probably a resident of Johannesburg or the vicinity, and the prospect of a possible meeting with him was a loadstone sufficiently powerful to keep her from turning her back upon her friends and returning to Europe.

It was with a light heart she watched the city of Cape Town fade in the distance, and folding herself in her travelling cloak, (for although the month of July, it was midwinter in that southern latitude) she indulged in a day dream, regarding her success in her search. That any results might follow their meeting, were she fortunate enough to find him, she would not acknowledge to herself, but to look once more into those dear eyes, and see the tender glances which had held her heart so completely in thrall in days gone by, would be a happiness for which she would be willing to barter a large amount of her worldly possessions.

A thoroughly wearied party at length arrived in Johannesburg, and attempted to make their way to the hotel which had been engaged in advance for them, in the teeth of a raging winter's wind, which had been tearing over the country for several hours. "A regular Johannesburg blow," the official had remarked when he collected their passes at the end of the journey, and our friends, peering through the dust-begrimed car windows at the wild showers of dust and gravel stones without, ardently wished themselves safely back to the Cape once more. Everything in the car which they occupied, was covered with a fine white dust, that appeared to their excited eyes to be drifting through the wooden sides of the carriage, and which affected the atmos-

phere to such an extent as to render breathing difficult.

But their journey over, and finding themselves comfortably housed in an elegant hotel, built with the object of excluding those periodical sand storms, they doffed their dust-laden garments, picked the gravel stones from their anatomy, and settled down in their new abode to await future developments.



CHAPTER IX.

A WILD GOOSE CHASE.

RAYMOND ABBOTT, having business to transact for his firm in England, crossed to London before making the voyage to Africa. All New York was arrayed in holiday attire on that sunny, July day, when the ship sailed out of her dock with our worthy Bostonian on board. The booming of cannon, mingled with strains of patriotic music, followed the good ship as she steamed rapidly towards the open sea. She was decorated from stem to stern with bunting, in honor of the great national festival. The golden ball suspended in the sky above their heads was pouring her brightest beams upon the citizens of the American Republic, in a manner which seemed to proclaim to the world that even Old Sol rejoiced to see her children occupying a foremost place among the nations of the earth.

But the city is soon dropped far astern; no longer the joyous strains of music are borne to the listening ears of the voyagers; the distant roaring of the guns

have ceased. Old Sol, as if wearied with the extra exertion he has been compelled to make in order to sufficiently illuminate the joyous scene, has dipped his head below the horizon for the purpose of taking a well-earned repose; the pilot, hailing a boat near the entrance of the harbor, has departed shoreward, and darkness has settled over the water, broken only by the glimmering of the light-ship. The steamer, bravely breasting the Atlantic billows, heads eastward, and the search of Raymond Abbott for Eve's fickle lover has begun. Will he be successful in his quest, is a question the future alone can solve.

Reginald Smith, who had returned from England the week preceding Raymond's departure from Boston, having transacted the trivial business which served as an excuse to bring him back to America on a forlorn hope, set out with Raymond for the shores of Africa. When I learned of his intention to accompany my friend, I expressed my surprise in such a forcible manner that the poor fellow had at once made a clean breast of his troubles. It was the remembrance of Maude Abbott's bright eyes which had served as a loadstone to draw him across the Atlantic, but finding her beyond his reach on his arrival, he had manfully swallowed his disappointment, and resolved to spend a year or two in travel, as a cure for his heartache. He volunteered

to assist Ray in his search for the missing Nova Scotian, an offer eagerly accepted by my friend, and I marvelled at the high spirits displayed by the two as they set out upon their arduous undertaking.

As most of my leisure time was spent in Maude's society about this date, we frequently amused ourselves in speculating upon the future of our four friends, always deciding that Eve must eventually marry Raymond, but would Smith or her cousin be the one who would one day be rewarded by the hand of Clare, was a problem we at last concluded must be left for the future to unravel. Having decided it would take months to learn anything regarding their matrimonial prospects, I spent the interval in falling desperately in love with the charming little woman, who had done me such an honor in consenting to become my bride.

The travellers quickly transacted their business in England, and began their voyage South, impatiently counting the days as they sailed over the same course which, unknown to them, Eve had journeyed a few short weeks before.

Arriving at Cape Town, their first act after establishing themselves on shore was to search the registers of the numerous hotels, of which the city boasted.

"An endless job," groans Smith, as they wander from house to house; "unless we are lucky enough to light on the fellow at the start. Seems to me

every other place is a house of entertainment. Then when we have found his name, if we do, what good is it going to do us? He may be in India before this."

"We may be able to trace him if we can once get on his track," answers Raymond, hopefully, as they turn their back upon the better parts of the city.

At last a clue was gained. In a low, drinking den, a man bearing the name of Harold Emmerson had stopped for a few days—about the time Harold would have landed in Africa.

"Does this resemble him?" asked Raymond, handing a picture to the proprietor.

"That's the chap," answered the man, holding it closely before his bleared eyes. I remembers him well."

"Where did he go when he left here? Do you think he is still in the city?"

"Hard to tell. He talked of going to the gold fields. If he is living, he is likely up north somewhere. Weren't the chap to turn sailor, and wouldn't be likely to raise the wind to leave this country in any other way. Seemed all broke up when he left. Like a ship at sea without a compass. Going to be pretty hard to find him, though. What's he done, forgery or murder?"

"Neither," answers Raymond, haughtily. "As far as we know, we are not seeking to strike the trail of a criminal."

"Then, perhaps, it's a fortune that's come to him? Come to think of it, he looked like that sort of a chap."

"Nor is there a fortune in the case. Here is something for your trouble," and Raymond laid a bank-note upon the dirty counter, as he politely bade his informant good day.

"I hopes you will find him, but I has my doubts about it," croaked the man, as his visitors left his presence.

"I am afraid he is about right," remarks Smith, as they leave the house. "Our chances of finding him are about one in a hundred, if we do go north. Don't you think we had better give it up?"

"You may, I shall not," returns Raymond, decidedly. "I have not come so many thousand miles to seek him and then turn back at the very door, simply because I did not meet him in the street the first time I walked abroad after landing. If he is living, I shall find him before I leave this country. The gold fields were the goal he had in view when he left home. I shall follow him into the interior, after spending a day or two more around here. That the fellow still bore his right name after he came here, is one thing in our favor."

"You will find it won't help us much when we reach the mining camps. The gentry among which he has probably fraternized are usually known by

some such cognomen as Dandy Jack, Plucky Joe, Fiery Dick, and so on. However, you have his photo. He cannot have changed so very much in his appearance in two or three years, that he cannot be recognized by that. You may possibly discover him by means of the picture. And if you are fortunate enough to find him, what do you propose to do with him?"

"Compel him to release Eve Mortimer from her engagement to him. A man who would take up his abode in the den where we found he had been residing while in this city, is a pretty object, is he not, to be the betrothed of such a woman as she."

"Oh, as to that, the young man's money may have given out. He might have been compelled by poverty to seek a shelter in such a place. I would not act too hastily were I in your place. If he was really sincere in his efforts to redeem his past, he may have in a measure succeeded. His mother, it is said, exerted an evil influence over his life; her example removed, he may have become a different person. Under those circumstances Eve would in all probability refuse to accept the freedom which you would bring her, but would still cling to her old lover. That he has refused to marry his cousin, and save himself from ruin by gaining possession of her fortune, is proof in my eyes that he is not wholly bad. Weak he must have been, and to a certain

extent wicked also, but he must have possessed some redeeming qualities. What do you propose to do next?"

"I shall spend a few days longer in searching this city, and then go north, probably to Johannesburg. That, I believe, is the principal place in the interior, and I have hopes of getting tidings of him there. I have letters of introduction to several Americans who occupy prominent positions in the mines near there, some of whom, no doubt, will be able to lend me assistance in my search."

"Possibly they may; but if you will be guided by my advice, you will relinquish your object. Thinking over the matter calmly, I fail to see what good you can possibly hope to accomplish by unearthing the fellow."

"I have already told you I would willingly spend years of my life could I add one iota to the happiness of my poor darling Eve. She has, as you are already aware, been tied to this fellow for years, and in all probability, if someone does not intervene, she will consider herself bound to him the rest of her life. She has no relatives to interest themselves in her welfare. I have promised to be her friend, and act a brother's part towards her. If I find Harold Emmerson, either dead or married, she is free. If unworthy of her, he shall release her from her promise. If, as you assert, he may have become an

honorable man, and still wishes to claim Eve as his wife, I shall do all in my power to aid him in his object, and find my reward in knowing I have been instrumental in promoting her happiness."

Smith was effectually silenced. Raymond Abbott had always been considered a prince of good fellows, but who among even his most intimate friends had dreamed he possessed such a great, noble, unselfish heart? His companion decided, whatever came of it, to follow him to the end, and for the next few days they had explored every foot of Cape Town, in their quest for the missing man.

At last, convinced that further search in that city was useless, they made their arrangements for departing to Johannesburg, and called upon the chief of the detective force, whose aid they had sought when they first arrived in Africa, for the purpose of acquainting him with their intended departure.

"I have at last obtained a clue, Mr. Abbott," that functionary remarked, when the two young men were ushered into his presence. "Of course, I carefully kept my eye on every possible channel of information, but this morning, by merest chance, one of my men spotted an individual who had just arrived from the interior, and when I learned of the circumstance, I ordered him sent up to my room. He had been engaged in mining operations near Johannesburg, and professed to know most of the

miners in the vicinity by sight. He had recently made a small stake, upon which he had struck camp, and is now about to depart for his native land."

Raymond gave a gesture of impatience as he listened to this prologue. He wondered what possible interest this fussy official thought he would have in the success of the unknown miner or his final destination. It was the clue as to Emerson's whereabouts of which he wished to hear.

"I produced the photograph which you left with me," the chief went on, leisurely, nowise disconcerted by Ray's impatient manner. "And as soon as the fellow set eyes on it, he declared it be the likeness of a man known by the sobriquet of 'Dirty Dick' among the miners. According to his description, he is a disreputable fellow, who hangs around Johannesburg, bumming his existence from those compelled to work for their daily bread." Of course, there is the possibility of his being mistaken in the man's identity, but he seemed very positive this Dick was the man we were looking for. For your sake, I trust there is a mistake, especially if this Harold Emerson is a relative of yours."

"He is no relative of mine," was the haughty answer.

"Then there's probably a fortune in the case?"—this in an interrogative tone not to be mistaken.

"Your curiosity is evidently getting the better of

your prudence," answered Raymond, coldly. "I am seeking Emmerson for private reasons, which I do not consider it necessary to explain. Thanks for the clue you have given me, and now to settle my indebtedness to you."

"Shall I give you a letter of introduction to the staff up there?" asked the chief, waving his hand towards the north.

"No, thanks, I do not require it, having friends in Johannesburg who will probably be able to aid me much better than the police can do."

"Then I wish you a pleasant journey, and success in your undertaking," and the polite official bowed his visitors out, feeling excessively annoyed that they had not taken him into their confidence regarding their search.

"Thank goodness, we will now be able to shake the dust of Cape Town from our feet," said Raymond, as they proceeded to their hotel, for the purpose of ordering their luggage sent to the depot.

"According to all accounts, the dust of Johannesburg will be a much more serious matter," remarked his friend.

"Perhaps; but if we discover what we have come so far to seek, we will be recompensed for all the annoyances we may be compelled to face."

An hour afterwards, and the two, firmly clutching their grips, boarded the northern express, and were

soon flying over the same road upon which Evangeline Mortimer and her friends had encountered such a disagreeable journey.

Arriving in Johannesburg, Raymond's first act after getting himself and his friend installed in a comfortable hotel, was to sally out in search of those Americans for whom he possessed letters of introduction, but in every case he found the gentlemen and their families absent from the city. It was the time of year when the wealthy citizens sought a more congenial place of abode.

He was returning to his hotel in rather a disconsolate frame of mind, when he perceived a familiar figure standing in the roadway, confronting a dirty tramp. Had he taken leave of his senses, or was it really Eve Mortimer in the flesh whom he saw before him? He called her name, first softly, then in a louder key, but she heeded him not, her whole attention being given to the disreputable-looking object before her, and upon whom she was gazing with a look which reminded her friend of the fascination a cat exercises over a mouse it has managed to secure.

While he was debating with himself whether he had better go to her aid, he heard a suppressed shriek from the pavement behind him, and looking down the street, he was almost paralyzed to behold a pair of runaway horses, attached to a heavy carriage

dashing towards the woman he adored, and who was perfectly unconscious of the fearful peril to which she was exposed. With a wild cry of agony he rushed frantically forward, and by almost super-human exertions rescued her, just as she would have been thrown among the rapidly revolving wheels.



CHAPTER X.

FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE.

CLARE EMMERSON'S youth had been principally spent in the home of her aunt, the mother of Harold. The child had been left an orphan at an early age, and this astute woman, hoping to obtain control of the fortune belonging to the little heiress, had volunteered to become her guardian. The child's maternal relatives were shrewd enough to perceive the wily woman's object, and promptly foiled her by persuading Mr. Emmerson, before his death, to so tie up his daughter's wealth that his sister-in-law would be unable to squander any portion of it. As the greater part of his fortune had come to him through his wife, he could not refuse to listen to their advice. A handsome allowance was set apart for the child's maintenance and education, a sum her aunt could by no means despise, although bitterly disappointed when she learned the contents of her brother-in-law's will.

Clare became an inmate of her aunt's home, and

the worldly woman spent much of her time in endeavoring to train her ward in a manner which she considered would do credit to her teaching. The little lady had not been long a resident beneath her aunt's roof before she learned that everything must give way to appearances. What her world would think, was the ruling principle of Mrs. Emmerson's life. To wear more fashionable clothes, to drive in a better carriage, to possess more handsome furniture, and in all things to be considered in a better position than her neighbors, was, to the shallow woman, bliss unspeakable. It mattered not how meagre the fare upon her breakfast table, providing she could display a sumptuous dinner, if any of her fashionable friends were seated at her board. Young as she was, Clare had frequently to exercise considerable control over herself, to prevent the disgust she felt from becoming apparent to her relatives, when she saw the numerous make-shifts so carefully concealed from the public eye. The noble principles which had been so carefully instilled into her youthful mind by her parents were soon completely routed by the teachings of her aunt. The woman possessed the power of fascinating all with whom she came into contact, whenever she considered it worth while to exercise her charms, a question which must be decided in every case by the number of figures which represented their bank account. It was the dream

of her life that, when Clare had grown to womanhood, her son Harold should marry the young heiress, and the boy, who felt a sort of brotherly fondness for his cousin, promised to comply with his mother's wishes, which she was rash enough to express before him in his early youth. With this end in view, she carefully trained her niece to be one day the nominal mistress of her present home, always with the intention of wielding the sceptre during her life. She used frequently to point out to the child the improvements she could make in the place did she possess the means to carry out her designs, always ending with the remark: "When you have become Harold's wife, Clare, and I am lying beneath the green turf on yonder hill, you must remember how I planned all this, and have my ideas properly carried out."

And the young girl, blushing rosily, would shyly answer: "You will be mistress here for many, many years, my darling auntie; but when I am twenty-one, and can do as I please with my money, I will supply you with the means to improve your home, as you long to see it done."

"No, my dear daughter, it would not be right for me to take your money and spend it on my own pleasure. When you become Harold's wife you will be mistress here. Perhaps, if I am then alive, you will let me occupy a tiny corner of the dear old

home. I know it would break my heart to leave it and my darling son and daughter,"—and with misty eyes, she would draw the girl lovingly into her arms and imprint a fervent kiss upon the rosy lips, then dismiss her.

In this way the years glided away. At eighteen Clare was duly presented to society, and soon became a reigning belle. Then it was that Mrs. Emerson's trials were fairly begun. Suitors gathered around, attracted by the girl's fresh, young beauty, as well as her ample fortune, but her aunt's watchful eye was always upon her, and she was prompt to nip any flirtation in the bud.

It was evident to all no one would be permitted to snatch the golden prize from her adored son, if the devoted mother could prevent it. The young gentleman was, himself, extremely indifferent to the treasure his parent was guarding so carefully. Perhaps had he foreseen more difficulty in winning his cousin, he might have been more eager to possess her, but he knew full well that, thanks to the careful preparations of his mother, he had only to ask the girl to become his wife to find himself accepted as her future husband.

In spite of all her efforts, the ambitious woman could not induce her son to make a formal proposal for the hand of her ward. Whenever she mentioned the matter to him, which was pretty often, he al-

ways put her off with the remark, that there was time enough. In this way she spent an anxious year, and then he electrified her by the announcement that he was the accepted lover of Evangeline Mortimer. In vain his angry parent stormed. Her son, who had always been so yielding in most matters, was hard as adamant. He would marry Eve, and no other woman. Clare was a nice girl enough, but she wasn't Eve. And the woman, at last finding remonstrance and threats alike useless, reluctantly gave her consent to the engagement.

After all, she told herself, it might have been much worse. The Mortimers were a fine old family, and Eve would, in all probability, inherit a fortune which would equal, if not exceed, Clare's. True, Doctor Mortimer was a hale old man, who might live many years, but Eve was his only child, and he would, no doubt, bestow upon her a handsome dower when she became the bride of Harold. Yes, matters might have been worse. He might have insisted upon bringing home a penniless wife. That Clare was bitterly disappointed was something which troubled her but little. If she was so foolish as to bestow her affections upon one who cared nothing for her, she had no one to blame except herself, and she must reap the consequences of such an unmaidenly act. She had done what she could for her niece's happiness, when she saw the girl's fondness

for Harold, but he had not been guided by his mother's advice, and she exonerated herself from all blame in the matter.

She issued her invitations for a large ball, dragging the woman who so bravely tried to hide her aching heart under a mask of indifference, into the festivities, and drawing on her purse for the greater part of the expense incurred.

"The engagement must be announced to our friends," she declared; "and as Eve has no near relatives except her father, and he won't take the trouble to let people know about it, we must show some interest in the dear girl."

Harold was delighted at this proof of his mother's kindness of heart. At the best, he had expected only a reluctant consent to his espousal of Eve, and she was endeavoring to do all in her power to honor the choice of her idolized son.

The preparations for their nuptials were rapidly hurried forward, but before the eventful day arrived, Doctor Mortimer was stricken down with a mortal illness. For weeks he lingered, faithfully watched over by his devoted daughter, who was sustained in her hour of bitter trial by the affections of her betrothed, and then the end came. At his death, it was found that his financial affairs were in a fearfully involved state, and that Evangeline, instead of being a wealthy heiress, would come to her new home a penniless bride.

Mrs. Emmerson's opposition to the match was now renewed. She was not going to give up her position in the Emmerson household to the pauper daughter of the defunct bankrupt. Harold must marry his cousin Clare without delay.

The young man, after vacillating between Eve and Clare for several months, finally consented to yield to his mother's wishes. In public he became Clare's shadow, while privately he still paid the most devoted attention to Eve.

He borrowed large sums of money from his cousin, which he squandered in reckless speculations, hoping by this means to repair his shattered fortunes, thus rendering him independent of his mother, so that he would still be able to wed the woman he professed to love.

In this way a year passed, and Clare's patience becoming exhausted, she refused to advance more money, unless he made her his wife. Creditors were becoming clamorous, and ruin was staring him in the face. Unless he consented to her wishes, he must give up the beautiful home his mother prized so highly, and where he had hoped to one day bring his darling Eve. If he married Clare she would be lost to him forever. How could he give her up? The only way out of his dilemma was a secret marriage. He could still enjoy the companionship of Eve occasionally, and he would also obtain complete control of his cousin's fortune.

The infatuated girl readily clutched at any straw which would bind her to her cousin, agreed to his proposal, and not even her aunt was permitted to share their secret.

A few weeks after her marriage, Clare was much relieved to learn that Eve had left her native land. She felt Harold could present her to the world as his wife, now that the girl could no longer exert what she considered an evil influence over her husband's life.

But year after year passed, and he still insisted upon their marriage being kept a secret, till at last her love was turned to the most bitter contempt. She wrote a long letter to Eve, explaining all, on the girl's first visit to Nova Scotia, but Eve, recognizing the writing, returned the epistle unopened, accompanied by a curt note, declining any further communication from Miss Emmerson.

A year or two sped swiftly by, and one morning as Clare was about to enter the private sitting-room of her aunt, she heard the lady's voice raised in angry expostulation, causing her to pause before the door.

"Your conduct is reprehensible," Mrs. Emmerson was saying to her son. "For years you have danced attendance upon Clare. You have received large sums of money from her from time to time, on the strength of your engagement. Eve Mortimer, no

doubt, has benefited by her generosity, but this state of affairs shall exist no longer—you shall marry your cousin at once.”

“Not so fast, *ma mere*,” exclaimed the young man, with provoking coolness. “You are unjust to poor Eve. She is not the sort of a girl who would accept presents from a lover. But I cannot now marry your paragon, because I married her years ago, much against my will, and if the bonds of matrimony have been one-half as galling to her as to her husband, she has not enjoyed very much happiness in the conjugal state.”

“Are you crazy? What do you mean?” exclaimed his mother, sharply. “Do you expect me to believe such nonsense? That you have been married to Clare for years. Preposterous!”

“True as gospel; worse luck. For years I have been anxiously watching for some symptoms of decline in my beloved wife, but she remains provokingly healthy. There is not the least sign of her occupying an untimely grave. I have begun to fear of late that it is poor Eve’s fate to live a life of single blessedness.”

“Wretched boy, can this be true,” groaned the unhappy woman, and a smothered shriek broke from her as the door flew open, and, like a tornado, her niece burst into the apartment.

“You have heard all, Clare?” she asked, piteously,

as she saw the wronged wife standing above her with the look of a demon.

"I have heard all," was the scornful reply; "and I sincerely trust—"

But the sentence was never finished, a white foam-flecked the livid lips of her aunt, and she fell fainting upon the floor.

An hour after, and her spirit had fled from its mortal shell.

They laid her to rest with her kindred dust, and her son, still scorned by his wife, surrendered his ancestral home to his creditors, and immediately departed for South Africa.

The angry woman, as she listened to the scream of the locomotive which bore him from his native village, dropped her wedding ring among the glowing coals in the grate, and smilingly faced the world, vowing that none should ever learn her secret.

Soon after, she met Charlie Salter, and his attentions aroused her dormant affections, and caused her to bitterly deplore the galling bonds by which she was bound.

Grand Prè became intolerable to her after his departure, and feeling that work was the only panacea for her wretchedness, she entered a training school for nurses in the city of Boston, where, after a few months, she again met the man she loved.

When he asked her to become his wife she deter-

mined to break her fetters, and writing an explanatory letter to her lover, she immediately started for Africa in search of her truant husband, resolving, if she found him still living, to lose no time in applying for a divorce.

The letter, which would have unraveled the dreadful tangle, we have already seen was not destined to fulfil its mission, but remained for months hidden in her lover's desk, not to be unearthed until the writer's hand had long mingled with the dust of her erring husband in a foreign grave, and Eve Mortimer had long since learned to bless the name of the noble woman, towards whom for years she had cherished such a bitter hatred.



CHAPTER XI.

CLARE'S REDEMPTION.

WHEN Raymond Abbott rescued Eve from her perilous position, he bore her apparently inanimate form to his hotel, which was fortunately only a short distance away. He laid her down, and hung almost distracted above her couch, in spite of the assurance of the attendant physician that she had received no injuries except a slight shock to her nerves, and that she would soon recover her consciousness. In spite of his prediction, her fainting fit was a long one, and it was only after using the most powerful restoratives that she at last opened her eyes, and called in piteous accents for Harold.

She became so excited in her anxiety to learn the fate of her old lover, that at last Raymond reluctantly quitted her side to seek tidings of the drunken reprobate, who had, by stopping her path, so nearly sent her to her death.

A weary search at last revealed the once debonnaire

Harold Emmerson, a crushed and bleeding mass, from which the spark of life had fled.

Several torn letters bearing his name had been discovered among his filthy garments, and also a tiny locket, containing the pictured face of Eve in her early womanhood, thus establishing his identity beyond the shadow of a doubt. The golden trinket had been preserved by him in all his wanderings, thus proving that Eve had been loved by him in his selfish way, in spite of the shameful manner in which she had been treated.

"Let it be placed in his grave," said Abbott, handing it back to the official; and knowing that Eve would never forgive him if he allowed the man she had loved to occupy the grave of a pauper, he gave orders that the mangled remains were to be placed in an elegant casket, and promising to have arrangements made later in the day regarding the funeral, and also to bear all the expenses incurred, he retraced his steps to the hotel, to bear the news of Harold's death to Eve.

On the following day, leaning on Raymond's arm, she followed her false lover to the tomb, and after giving orders to have the grave enclosed and a suitable monument raised above him, she returned home, and prepared for her immediate return to America.

On the evening before her departure from Johan-

nesburg, she wandered to the cemetery to place a last floral offering above Harold's lowly bed. As she drew near, she was surprised to see a woman bending over the grave, and the hot, indignant blood coursed angrily through her veins as she recognized her old rival, Clare Emmerson, kneeling before her.

"What brings *you* here?" she almost hissed, stepping back a pace to avoid touching the bowed form before her. "Have you not worked sufficient evil to Harold during his lifetime, but you must needs come here to disturb the slumbers of the dead?"

"It should not disturb the dead man's rest to know, if it is possible for him to know, that his wife drops a few tears upon his clay," answered Clare, humbly.

"His wife! Do you expect me to believe such rubbish as that?" retorted Eve, scornfully. "In spite of your wicked scheming, Harold Emmerson never could be induced to do you such an honor. Even your gold was powerless to bribe him."

"Nevertheless, he did do me the honor to make me his wife. Most people, however, would call it a rather doubtful honor," answered Clare, angrily. "If you require proof of my assertion, here it is," and she extended a sheet of paper towards her companion.

Reluctantly, Eve took the document in the extreme

tips of her dainty fingers, and rapidly ran her eyes over what was written thereon.

"Deceived! Betrayed!" she shrieked. "To think that all those years the husband of another woman, the villain who lies there, has dared to insult me with his protestations of affection! Clare Emerson, enjoy your doubtful triumph! Your dastardly husband has richly merited the fearful punishment he has received. Beware, that retribution does not follow as swiftly after your footsteps. There is the proof of your treachery," and she contemptuously hurled the certificate she had been holding, at the other's feet, as she swept majestically from the spot.

Raymond had secretly followed her when he saw her quit the hotel alone. Instinct told him she was about to pay a farewell visit to the grave of her early love, and not caring to have her wandering around the city alone at that hour, he had followed, for the purpose of escorting her back to the hotel when she left the cemetery. While he waited anxiously for her appearance near the entrance, she suddenly passed him like a whirlwind, the look of scorn with which she favored him as she swept by almost annihilating the young man. "What," he asked himself, "can be the meaning of her strange conduct?"

He thrust his hands deeply into his pockets and

began to whistle a melancholy air, as he sauntered leisurely along in the direction she had taken.

Her conduct was inexplicable to him. She had received his attentions so gratefully during the past few days, that he had fondly cherished the hope of one day, after the keen edge of her grief had been worn off, being rewarded for his faithfulness by the gift of her priceless love.

"Truly, there is no accounting for the whims of a woman," he muttered, then suddenly started, as a light seemed to be thrown on the mystery.

"By Jove! I don't believe those fellows I employed to fix up that grave have been doing their duty. I must see about this at once," and turning, he retraced his steps. He had not taken a dozen steps before he came face to face with Clare Emmerson. A smothered imprecation burst from him. Was there no spot on this earth to which he could carry his darling Eve, that her evil genius would not follow? To this wretched woman he was indebted for the contemptuous manner with which Eve had just treated him. He would learn what had passed between them.

"Good evening, Miss Emmerson," he began, as he courteously raised his hat. "What happy chance has brought you to this part of the world? Have you seen Miss Mortimer since your arrival?"

"I have just parted with Miss Mortimer," she answered, sadly, "at the grave of my husband."

Raymond started violently.

"Your husband!" he repeated, incredulously. "Your husband was—"

"Harold Emmerson."

"Does Eve know this?"

"She learned to-night for the first time that the man who lies yonder, and who has deceived us both so shamefully, was my husband for ten long years."

"Does it not strike you, Mrs. Emmerson, that you are equally guilty with your husband to have permitted such a deception?"

"Perhaps! A woman in love is not always accountable for her actions. I was forbidden by Harold to make our marriage public, and he had sufficient influence over me to ensure my obedience. But I am not wholly to blame. I did endeavor to warn Miss Mortimer, but she returned my letter unopened. I felt certain Harold loved her, but had I not come between them, he would never have married her while she remained in poverty. He was too selfish for that, and his mother possessed too much influence over him. Had he been free when she accumulated her wealth, things probably would have been different, for I believe Eve cared enough for him to forgive him everything."

"And you did not?"

"No, when I learned how the man had deceived me for the purpose of obtaining my fortune to squander on his own selfish pleasures, my love died a violent death."

"Then why have you come so far to seek him?"

"I wished to know his fate. I wished to be free, in order that I might wed the man I loved."

"And that man is—"

"Charlie Salter."

A cold shiver crept over Raymond.

"Your freedom has come too late," he said, slowly. "Charlie is probably, by this time, the husband of my cousin Maude."

A wild scream broke from her, and she fell senseless at his feet.

"Confound a woman!" he muttered. "Tell them something disagreeable, and off they go into a dead faint. The farther away from a habitation, the better they are pleased. What in the world am I to do with her?"

He looked helplessly around. There was no one within call, the nearest house was some distance off, and not a drop of water to be had. He leant over the prostrate girl, impatiently chafing her nerveless hands, but her eyes remained obstinately closed.

"There is no help for it, I suppose I must carry her into the city," and he raised her into his strong arms, and staggered along under his burden, wonder-

ing what he was to do with her when he reached the end of his journey. He could not take her to the hotel, for Eve hated her so bitterly, she would not remain under the same roof which sheltered her for an hour. Nor did he feel heartless enough to leave the stricken girl among strangers in this strange land.

A sound of wheels broke the stillness, coming in his direction, and laying his burden gently down by the roadside, he hailed a passing cab as she languidly opened her eyes and faintly asked for water.

With the assistance of the cabman she was lifted into the vehicle, and, giving the name of her hotel, she was whirled rapidly towards it.

Raymond sank back among the cushions with a sigh of relief. He would place her in the care of the proprietor and send Smith to look after her.

The following morning while Raymond waited impatiently for Eve's appearance, word was brought that she was too ill to leave her room. A doctor was sent for, and, to the consternation of her friends, informed them the young lady was attacked with the small pox.

The landlord raged like a madman, vowing she should not remain in his house an hour. She must go to the hospital at once.

"What kind of attention will she receive there?" asked her lover anxiously.

Doctor Morton shrugged his shoulders by way of answer.

"She shall not be sent there," said the young man, decidedly.

"Can you suggest anything better? She will not be permitted to remain here."

"Can we not rent a small cottage somewhere and remove her? The cost will not be considered, provided we can make her comfortable."

"Who is to nurse her? Will any of her friends undertake the task?"

But when appealed to, those who had accompanied Eve to Africa, drew back, affrighted at such a proposal.

"I will care for her myself," said Raymond, when he informed the medical man of his failure.

"You can hardly undertake such a task alone. She would be as well off in the hospital."

"Is there no professional nurse you could engage to assist me?"

"I know of no one I should care to recommend in this case," said the physician thoughtfully.

"Then Heaven help the poor girl," moaned the young man.

"I will assist you in your task," said a voice behind them, and the two, turning, beheld Clare Emmerson.

"Have you had any experience in nursing?" asked the doctor of the new comer.

"I spent a year in the General Hospital in Boston," was her reply.

"Ever attended small pox patients?"

"No."

"Ever had the disease?"

"No."

"Been vaccinated?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"Last winter."

"Are you aware of the risk you run in volunteering for this case?"

"Perfectly. But what is my life as compared to hers?"

"I suppose you are aware you will both be quarantined?"

Both expressed their willingness to submit to this, and after considerable search a small cottage was secured at an exorbitant rent, and hastily fitted up, regardless of expense. Eve was promptly removed to this asylum, and the two began a bitter fight with the grim monster who struggled so hard for his prey.

Day after day of ceaseless watching and at last the good doctor held out a faint hope of the sick woman's recovery.

But her faithful nurse, whose untiring care had saved Eve's life, was stricken with the fearful disease, and before a week passed, Raymond stood above the grave of Harold Emmerson, and saw his wronged wife laid by his side.

"She has given her life to save that of her once bitter rival," thought the solitary mourner; "and if ever woman has atoned for a wrong done to another, Clare Emmerson is certainly that woman."



CHAPTER XII.

EVE'S FLIGHT.

AS SOON as possible after Clare's death, the good doctor obtained permission from the authorities for Eve to leave her prison.

He advised the destruction of all furniture which the sick rooms contained, and ordered the entire house to be fumigated.

The girl had frequently wondered during her convalescence why Raymond and the doctor regarded her with such looks of pity. Her room had been fitted up so hastily that a mirror had not been included among the furnishings. The nurse who had taken Clare's place had carefully attended to her toilet, and she had not noticed the omission, till one afternoon, being left alone, it suddenly occurred to her that smallpox patients were disfigured for life. She looked anxiously around for some means of examining her face, but there was no mirror to be found. She feverishly examined the contents of

her hand-bag, and a tiny photo frame, quicksilvered at the bottom, was brought to light. Over this impromptu mirror she bent, and cried aloud in her agony as a portion of her poor, scarred face was revealed to her. She now understood why Raymond spent so little of his time at her side. It was the *beautiful* Evangeline Mortimer he had loved, not this frightful apparition who had usurped her place. His eyes never should be offended by a sight of her again. She would leave Johannesburg at once, to-night, and bury herself in some place where he could never find her, even should he endeavor to do so. She wrote him a long letter of farewell, and lying down upon her couch, turned her face towards the wall, and remained in that position till darkness fell upon the city. She sent her attendant away upon a pretended errand, and quickly arraying herself in her travelling dress, and filling a travelling bag with a few necessary articles, she crept softly away from the house. She walked quickly to the depot, and procuring a ticket, booked her luggage, which had been waiting there since the first day of her illness, entered the train, which was on the point of starting, and when morning dawned she was far away from the city where she had buried her love, youth and happiness.

* * * * *

When the nurse returned, after performing the

trivial errand she was sent out to do, she was dismayed to find the house empty and her patient gone. An anxious search revealed the letter which had been left for Raymond, and hearing his footsteps, she hastened to deliver it to him.

Full of anxiety, he broke the seal, and a groan escaped him as he mastered the contents. Forgetting the disfigured woman he had been compelled to look upon for the past few days, he only remembered the beautiful Eve he had learned to love was wandering unprotected in this strange land. He followed her to the depot, to find, as he expected, the train gone, and that she had gone also was plainly evident. She had booked her luggage direct to Cape Town. Trusting he might reach the coast before she could sail, he followed on the next train, only to find he had entered the city twelve hours too late. The steamer had sailed that morning, and Eve had sailed in her for England.

There was nothing to be done except wait for the next boat, and then followed one of the most trying months Raymond Abbott had ever experienced.

But the weary waiting at last ended, and the young man reached England, to find all trace of Eve was lost after she landed from the steamer.

"She has probably crossed at once to America," said Reginald Smith, who still accompanied his friend, and Raymond, considering this probable, did

not waste time in useless search in England, but sailed directly for home.

Arriving in Boston, his first act was to visit Eve's bankers, who were fortunately known to the young man, to find Eve had indeed returned to America and withdrawn all her deposits from the bank. The manager either could not, or would not, give his visitor any information regarding her present whereabouts, and Raymond at last left his presence, feeling completely baffled. He next visited Grand Prè, with no better success, and returned to Boston, where he spent the next few months.

But the demon of unrest had assumed complete control of him, and after a few months, he turned his face towards the west.

For some time I heard from him regularly, after his departure, then his letters suddenly ceased. I had not, however, much time to worry about my friend. My dear wife, who had contracted a severe cold soon after the birth of our son, had for some time been almost a helpless cripple. She was ordered by her medical attendant to spend the winter in a warm climate, so accordingly we decamped for Southern California.

She did not derive as much benefit from the change as we had anticipated, and as the spring drew near, I began to fear she would never recover complete use of her limbs.

"Why do you not try the Banff Hot Springs?" one day asked an acquaintance, to whom I was re-tailing my woes. "They are considered a sure cure for rheumatic patients."

"Where are they?" I eagerly asked.

He looked at me as if he could not comprehend such ignorance. Then with a half contemptuous shrug of his shoulders, replied: "Somewhere among the Rocky mountains on the Canadian Pacific."

"How do you reach there?"

Again a look of surprise, as he advised me to take the steamer to Vancouver, then inland for a few hundred miles.

I would have gone to the moon had there been the faintest hope of the trip being of benefit to Maude. I returned to our lodgings full of my plan, and the dear little woman, seeing my heart set upon it, readily consented, and ordered the nurse to pack.

I pass over the delightful journey northward. We settled ourselves in delightful apartments at the magnificent C. P. R. hotel, and before a week had passed I had the joy of seeing my wife glide around her room without the aid of the cane which had been her inseparable companion for the past year. A few weeks spent among the hot sulphur baths completely restored my darling, and with a feeling of thankfulness we prepared for our departure eastward.

Going out to take a final stroll around the lovely mountain resort, for we were to leave on the following morning, I encountered Raymond Abbott, accompanied by a stranger, a short distance from the hotel.

"What brings you here?" was the simultaneous exclamation of both, as our hands met in a hearty clasp.

I explained that my wife had been ordered here for her health.

"And I," said Ray, "have been looking after some mining property over there," (pointing to the west); "I caught cold, got a severe dose of rheumatism, and came down here for a swim in these medicinal waters. How long do you stay?"

I explained that it was our intention to leave the following morning, but now that I had met him, if Maude did not object, we would postpone our departure for a day or two.

"Great place, this?" said Ray enthusiastically. What a man Van Horne must be to have developed so much in so short a time! By the way, he is here now. His private car was side tracked down there this afternoon. Let us have a look at her," and accompanied by the stranger whom Raymond introduced as Mr. Madison, we sauntered leisurely down the track. A warning cry startled us and we sprang to one side, as a hand-car, propelled by a

white man and a couple of Chinamen, rolled by. Seated on the front of the car were a couple of women, clad in the black vestments of the Sisters of Charity.

"A motley crowd!" I remarked, with a light laugh. "Are the Chinamen trying to abduct the good sisters, do you think?"

"They are probably out on a collecting tour for some of their institutions," said Madison. "The foreman is a Roman Catholic, and he has invited them home to dinner. He has nice bachelor quarters over there," (and he pointed in the direction the car was going), "and he is not a little proud of his home."

"A queer place for a couple of nuns, at a bachelor's board," I exclaimed. "I am surprised at them going to such a place."

"You shall be fined for that," laughed Madison; "march right in here and hand over a V without demur." And he stepped from the track, passed up a rude flight of steps, and knocked briskly at the door of a comfortable looking shanty. The clatter of dishes was heard within as we waited. The door was thrown open and an appetizing odor greeted us.

"Good evening, Fred," said our companion. "We wish to give the good sisters a trifle towards their hospital."

The elder woman came forward to receive the donation, while the younger scarcely raised her eyes from the book she held in her hand.

"EVE!" cried Raymond, pushing me aside as I was in the act of placing a bank note in the outstretched hand of the sister. Quickly grasping the money, she stepped before the younger woman as if to shield her from harm, but she was not quick enough to prevent me from recognizing, in the pale, frightened face, the once beautiful features of Evangeline Mortimer.

To Ray's agonized entreaties that she would speak to him once more, she paid not the slightest attention, and I, seeing how they both were suffering, grasped him by the arm, and led him from the building.

"Oh, Charlie, I must see her once more," he moaned, when we reached the open air; "I must learn her reason for hiding from me as she has done."

"Nonsense, man," I answered sternly. "Another meeting can give you no pleasure. She is as effectually lost to you now as if the grave had closed over her, and perhaps it is better so. Did you not observe how terribly plain she is. She looked almost hideous in the garb she was wearing."

"Charlie, don't. Did my darling think I should love her less because she lost her beauty? Is that

the reason, do you suppose, that she has hidden herself so far from home and friends?"

"I have no doubt that is the explanation. But whatever her reason, you will probably never learn it now. Do not torture the poor girl, by trying to obtain an interview, for, rest assured, you will not succeed."

"I shall wait here till she leaves that place; and then I will confront her, though she were guarded by fifty demons," he answered doggedly; and I, seeing how useless was further argument, impatiently waited by his side.

In about an hour the door slowly opened, and the two came forth, accompanied by the young foreman.

"Eve, my darling, speak to me once more," moaned Raymond, rushing to her side. But if she heard, she did not betray herself, and the only reward he received for his weary waiting was a withering glance from her companion.

Raymond stood with his arms folded across his breast and his eyes fixed upon the retreating forms, till they vanished in the distance, then drawing a long sigh, he slipped his arm through mine, and we returned to the hotel.

Not a word was spoken about Eve by either of us, during our stay at Banff, and it was not till we were well on our way eastward that I informed Maude of our encounter.

A few weeks after our return to Boston, while looking over some old letters, I came across one unopened, and wondering how it came there, I hastily broke the seal.

I started, as my eye rested upon the signature, and turning it over, I read the confession of Clare Emmerson, written the night before she left Boston.

Sadly thinking how much misery might have been saved had I only known its contents before, I tore up the epistle and tossed the scraps in my waste basket. My little wife should never know how her friend had loved my unworthy self.

Of Raymond Abbott I heard nothing more till the following spring. One afternoon I was seated in my office, working at some knotty problem, when I heard a well known step upon the stairs, a joyous burst of song in the passage, then the door flew open, and a hearty slap upon the back caused me to raise my head impatiently, and Ray grasped me by both hands, exclaiming :

“Just arrived in the city an hour ago, my wife and I. Came at once to look you up.”

“Did you manage to rescue Eve, after all?” I inquired.

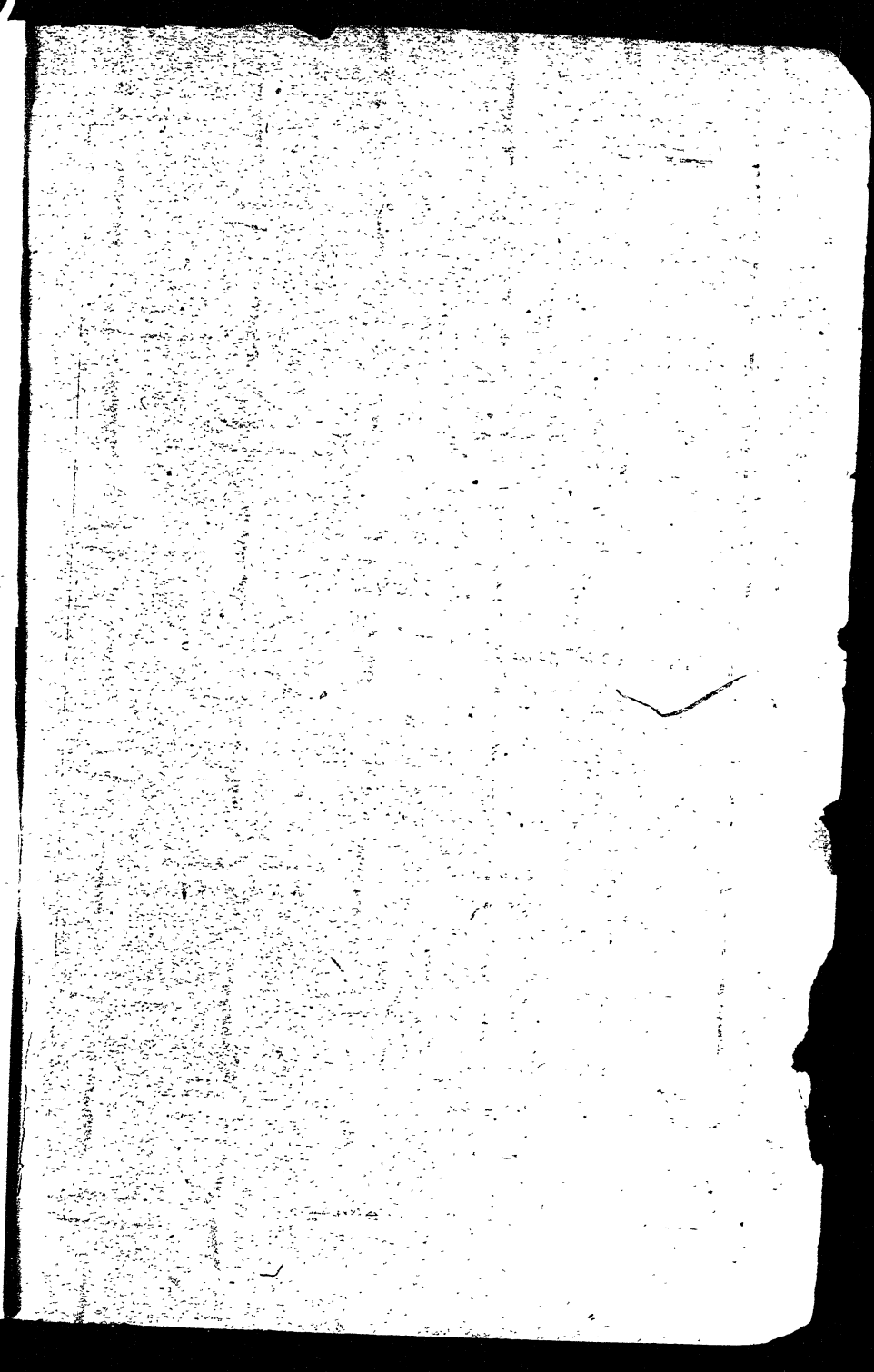
For an instant a look of sadness flitted across his face, then the brightness returned.

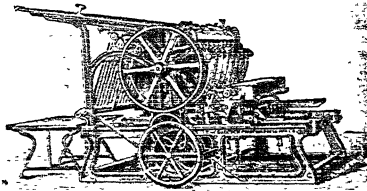
“Eve is buried in a Western convent, you know, while Reg and I have married two lovely twin

sisters we met in the golden State. Oh, Charlie, they are just the sweetest—”

“Yes, I know,” I interrupted, hastily. “They are just the sweetest angels who were ever attired in earthly draperies, and you want me to come at once and be introduced, and I (flinging down my pen and rising from my seat) am at your service.”







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