REAPING THE WHIRLWIND.

A NOVEL.

BY MARY ELOISE COMBS.

[Application for Copyright forwarded to the Librarian of Congress at Washington, D. C.]

CHAPTER XII.

"Fire! Fire! Fire!"

The startling cry rang out, sharp and clear, on the still night air. It was caught up and echoed from point to point, till it swelled into a roar of tremendous volume.

"Fire! Fire! Fire!"

Hundreds of voices proclaimed the fearful tidings. Trumpets sounded discordantly, and bells pealed out a wild alarm. The crack of falling timbers, the hissing of the water as it fell on the seething, writhing mass of flame, the shricking of the engines, the hoarse shouts of the firemen, mingled with the frenzied cries of men, women and children, who were fleeing half-dressed from the burning buildings-all went to make the mimic hell.

"Fire! Fire! Fire!"

The sound had reached Meg at last. She sprang to her feet and listened a moment. There could be no mistake. Again and again, from every side, from above and below, came that warning cry. She ran to the door, shook it, beat against it, calling for help in tones of madness, and finally of despair. In vain! No one could have heard her voice above that wild tumult. It made no more sound than water dripping into the raging sea.

For the first time Mena's cries were unheeded. The child clung to Meg's skirts, calling her by name and begging for attention; but her voice

fell upon deaf ears. Their delivery from an awful fate came as suddenly and unexpectedly as their peril. The door burst open and their jailer stood before them. The man's face, which an hour before Meg would unhesitatingly have pronounced the most repulsive that her eyes had ever rested upon, now, in the guise of "a friend in need," seemed to be transfigured - absolutely radiant - and his voice was certainly the most melodious she had ever beard when he said:

"Come quick! There is no time to lose."

Snatching Mena in her arms, Meg followed the man out into the street. Blinding clouds of smoke and cinders fell over them. The streets were black with people, and, feeling dazed and lost, Meg struggled to keep near the man, as if he had been a friend; but she was rudely reminded of his unfriendly guidance by a tight, painful grasp on her arm. She turned toward the man flercely.

"Let go my arm! I am free now!" "Are you? Come along with me, and be quiet

or you will suffer for it." 'Never!"

wrench, almost unjointing it; but the man's fingers only tightened like a band of steel. By this time they had reached the outer edge of the crowd. and Meg saw that it was now or never that deliverance must come.

"Let me go, I say! Help! Help!"

At this unexpected cry, several persons, prompted by curiosity, drew near. To them the man explained that his obstreperous charge was a runaway daughter and he was trying to take her home. Perfectly satisfied, the crowd fell back to allow them to pass, and laughed derisively when Meg begged that some one would save her. Turning their attention to the fire, they left her to her fate.

Soon after, a policeman shook Meg roughly by the shoulder, and bade her cease her "infernal howling," or he would "lock her up."

"Will you? Oh! if you would, I might find my friends then !" she cried, in desperation,

"No doubt of it. That's the place for the likes of ye to find their friends."

And, with a coarse laugh, "one of our efficient policemen" turned to an unoffending boy, knocked him down, and kicked him, for "creating a dis-

turbance." Resistance seemed useless, so Meg walked on with her captor in sullen silence. But suddenly a flash of light overhead caused them both to look up. Swift as thought a fire-band came whizzing through the air and fell heavily upon the upturned face of the man. Surely Providence directed the blow. The man loosened his grasp and

staggered. A healthy five-year-old child is never a light weight, and Meg was almost exhausted from hunger, fear, and loss of sleep. But now she forgot weary limbs and tired arms, and started out with

quick steps in the direction she knew led to safety. Perhaps no one in the city knew the different streets better than Meg. Her wandering, vagabond life had taught her crooks and turns that would have baffled many older feet. She knew that herself and charge were not as far from Wyefiffe's as the length of time occupied by their captors in getting to their destination would naturally have led her to suppose. She knew that they had taken a circuitous route, for the double purpose of throwing her off the track and consuming time till darkness would cover their move-

With brave heart and willing feet Meg sped on, till the wished-for goal was in sight. Beautiful and grand rose the stately home before her. Suddenly she became aware that some one was folowing her. A quick glance backward showed

her a man in full pursuit. Nearer and nearer he came. In spite of her most strenuous efforts, he gained rapidly on her flagging footsteps.

"Stop !" hissed a voice. 'Never!" was borne back upon the wind.

The sharp report of a pistol rang out on the air, and the girl sank down on the steps-at home. She had won the victory, but it was dearly bought She had been faithful to her trust, but her heart dripped blood. The bullet had done its fatal work. A gasp, a low, quivering sigh, and Meg's life was

A little later, Wyeliffe came slowly and heavily home from his vain search. As he was ascending the steps, he stumbled over the prostrate figure. He stooped and looked closely.

"Heavens! a woman and a child!"

He rang the bell, and endeavored to lift the motionless form. As he did so, a warm stream of blood gushed over his hands. He recoiled, while great drops of perspiration beaded his brow.

"Great God! There has been foul play here!" The door was opened, and a flood of light poured over a ghastly scene - Wycliffe standing there with a look of horror on his face, and at his feet the body of a woman weltering in blood.

"Here, Winters! Help me carry her in." Together they raised the figure, already stiff in death, and, carrying it into the ball, laid it down carefully. Wyeliffe pushed back the shawl, which completely hid the faces of the woman and child, and cried out, in a voice of agony :

"Dead! Mena, my child! Oh, Meg!" The child opened her eyes to their widest extent and looked up with a smile, murmuring,

sleepily: "Papa, take me up."

'Alive! Alive! God be praised!"

Wycliffe dropped on his knees to take his child. But the dead arms refused to give up the life they had shielded so lovingly. Faithful in death, it seemed impossible to unclasp their hold. Mena tried to rise, and found herself locked in a fast embrace. A half-frightened look came over her face as she said, softly:

"Take me up, papa. What ails Meg?"

"She is asleep," answered Wycliffe, sobs choking his voice and tears blinding his eyes. He rose up to hide his uncontrollable grief from his child, and motioned to Winters to take her from that vice-like grip. Wyeliffe tottered through an open door, and, overcome with joy at Mena's safe return and shocked at Meg's tragic death, reeled for a moment as though drunk, then dropped upon his knees and sunk gradually to the floor in a death-like swoon.

Winters went to the figure upon the floor and soothed Mena's fears by telling her to be careful and not wake Meg. Then with strong hands he forced apart the clinging arms and raised the precious burden from the loving heart that had forever ceased to beat. Winters stood Mena upon him. the floor, and, turning her toward the door throught which Wycliffe had passed a moment before, said, coaxingly:

"Now, go in there to papa."

He left the child as he spoke, and went hastily o summon help to care for Meg. In the excitement and confusion the outside door had not been fastened, and as Winters disappeared the crack slowly widened until a man's figure stood in the opening. Mena had remained where Winters left her, her limbs too tired and cramped to move, and both tiny hands rubbing the sleepy eyes. She looked up and saw the form in the door-way.

"Papa!" and the little arms were raised pleadingly.

In a second more the door was pushed open, and a man raised the bewildered child in his arms. Out into the night, out into the street, never stopping to look back, with feet that seemed to fly rather than walk, the man went on. His face was lighted with a flendish smile of joy, and his breath, which came short and quick, was ladened with curses, intermingled with expressions of triumph. Such a bad, cruel face he had, with a long red sear upon it, the mark of a recent burn.

The man, with Mena in his arms, had scarcely cleared the steps when a white-robed figure glided down the stairs and stopped, transfixed with horror, at the awful sight which met her gaze.

"Meg!" Her voice was a whisper, her hands were tightly locked together, and her teeth chattered till they bit her lips. She moved closer, and kneeling down touched the girl upon the cheek.

"Meg, did you dare to come home without my baby? Give me back my baby, Meg! Oh, give me my baby !"

But the dead face answered only with that strange, fixed smile, that seemed, in the glare of the light, to be mocking the mother's grief. She clasped the cold, stiff fingers, and, in tones that might have aroused the pity of the marble Niobe bending over them, besought the dead lips to speak to her once again and tell the secret of her

awful death. The woman was capable of some feeling, then. No one could have doubted her love for her child. Mother-love roused to frenzy sounded in her voice.

"Meg! Meg! You have left my baby, that I would have given my life to have saved !" "Mrs. Wyeliffe, my lady, Meg brought your

baby back to you." The mother looked up, her pale lips framing the uestion that she dared not ask.

"She is safe, my lady." "Winters, do not deceive me. Is she alive ?"

"Yes. She is in there with Mr. Wycliffe."

found her husband crouched in a heap on the floor. Her cries brought the terrifled servants, who soon restored him to life and reason. But in vain did they question him for Mena. In vain the mother's shrieks and the father's reproaches. Mena was gone.

Bitter indeed were the tidings carried to St. Claire the next morning, and bitter indeed the grief of Bell De Guerry when she stood by the new-made grave of the lonely girl who had lived neglected and died alone-

"By strangers honored and by strangers mourned." The only person who had ever heard of Meg who was glad to hear of her death was Mrs. De Guerry. Her pride would be saved a terrible blow. Death had solved the problem of Meg's future life. And, with a thankfulness too genuine to be easily con-

cealed, Mrs. De Guerry heard from her daughter that John Harmon's child would never claim a place in her heart or home.

Many years afterward, Bell heard from an old schoolmate of her mother's the story of her young life. Ann and Margaret Benson had both loved John Harmon, and when he chose Margaret the eldest sister never forgave him. Instead of loving the man as a brother, she hated the woman as a rival.

A week dragged slowly on after Meg's death, and no tidings were received of the absent Mena. Late one afternoon a strange man came to Wycliffe's house, and demanded to see Mr. Wycliffe on business. Hoping thus to gain some information of his stolen child, however meager, he gave orders that the man should be admitted.

In a few moments Winters brought the stranger into the library and presented him with a contemptuous wave of the hand. He was not accustomed to ushering such guests into that timehonored apartment, and he was disgusted that his master should consent to receive what he would have designated a "vag." And the term would certainly have applied with exact nicety to the slovenly, awkward figure which shambled into the room, carrying in both hands an article which served the purpose of a hat, and by that name the man would doubtless have described it. A perfect mat of red hair covered his head, and his face was half concealed by a heavy beard of the same objectionable hue.

Wycliffe looked up half hopefully as the man entered, but the look died out of his face as he saw the blank countenance of the man before him. "Well, how can I serve you, sir?"

"I want ter know how much yer will give fur

The man had stuffed his hat under his arm when he entered, but he now took it in his hands again, turned it wrong side out, and looked at it as if he did not care to encounter the searching gaze of the gentleman so steadfastly regarding

"I stated through the papers the amount I would give. Do you know where my child is ?" "No. But I want ter look fur it."

Wycliffe arose. Laying a heavy, firm grasp upon the man's shoulder, he said, sternly:

"I believe that you know where my child is." The eyes were raised now, the figure straightened, and a familiar voice said:

"Would to God I did, Wycliffe!" "St. Claire !"

"Yes. My disguise must be good."

"It is perfect. But why don't you go as a woman? You are not large, and, if you would shave, I

think that you would pass without any trouble." "I would not like to risk that. There would be too many questions asked. In that respect, they resemble more cultivated society. Men come and go at their own free will, but women come and go as men allow them."

"Yes, there is truth in that. I suppose you would be safer dressed as a man."

"I would be safer because I would have nothing to fear from the only enemy a woman has in the world-a man."

"St. Claire, what made you a man-hater?" "Would you care to know? I will tell you. Because a man came between me and heaven. I was married once, and a serpent crept into our Eden. A man, in the guise of a friend, robbed me of all that makes life sweet-home and friends."

"A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind," and Wyeliffe's face grew white as he said, softly :

"Yes, I understand why you hate men. I believe that the very hottest corner of the infernal regions are reserved for the men and women who come between husbands and wives in this world; and the time will never come when, if. I could carry a drop of water to quench their burning thirst, I would do it. St. Claire, I pity you. I never dreamed that your past had been so terrible. You look so young, I thought the most you could remember was your boyhood."

"I had no boyhood."

"Ah, I know. A child, then a man. Very heavy is a blow like that."

"You pity me, Wycliffe, and I thank you. But, secure in the treasure of a good woman's love, you can have no just conception of the terrible reality. I tell you this that you may know that there is heavier sorrow than even the loss of a dearly be-

loved child." "I am not so selfish in my grief as you think, St. Claire, and sorrow is never very poignant while there is an undercurrent of hope to soften it."

"May your hope be brought to a blessed frui-

bear away the dead, she hurried into the room and at the time of my greatest need. 'Friend' was always an empty name till I knew you. I hope the time will come when I will have an opportunity of proving my faith in you and my love for vou."

> The time did come, the opportunity was offered. but the trial of his faith and love was too great. Wyeliffe was "weighed in the balance and found wanting."

[To be continued.]

THE CLEAN NEWSPAPERS.

There is a growing feeling in every healthy community against the journals who make it their special object to minister to perverted taste by seeking out and serving up in a seductive form disgusting scandals and licentious revelations. There is good reason to believe that the clean newspaper is more highly prized to-day than it was four or five years ago. It is also safe to pre-dict that, as people in all ranks of life who wish to protect their own at least from contamination become more conscious of the pernicious influence of a'e rtain class of journa's, called "enterprising" because they are ambitious to serve up dirty scandals, they will be careful to see that the journals they permit to be read in the family cir-cle are of the class that never forget the proprieties of life. Already, men and women of refinement and healthy morals have had their attention called to the pernicious influence of bad literature, and have made commendable efforts to counteract the same by causing the sound litera-ture to be published and sold at popular prices. These efforts are working a silent but sure revolution. The best authors are more generally read to-day than at any previous time. The sickly sentimental store paper, and wild ranger and pirate story book, are slowly yielding the field to worthier claimants. To the praise of the decent newspaper it may be said, that where it has a place in the family, and has been read for years by young and old, it has developed such a healthy tone and such a discriminating taste that the literature of the slums has no admirers. Fortunatey, the number of such families is increasing in the land, and as they increase the journal that derotes itself to sickening revelations of immorality will be compelled to find its supporters solely among those classes that practice vice and crime, or are ambitious to learn to follow such ways.— Boston Herald.

A sanguinary tumult is reported as having taken place lately in the parish church of Sarno, near Salerno, Italy. It appears that the curé of San Francesco had caused a mechanical figure of the Saviour, the head and limbs of which were movable in obedience to springs, to be con-structed with a view to its employment during the Passion Week services. The figure, when exhibited for the first time to the congregation, caused such excitement among them that they crowded round the altar, eager to examine the startling novelty from the nearest available point of view. One of the assistant priests, a man of great stature and physical strength, ascended the pulpit and vehemently exhorted them to resume their places. As they paid no attention to him, he forced his way to the altar, and, seizing the figure in his arms, proceeded to deal out indiscrimi-nate blows with it upon the disorderly parishioners. During the struggle that ensued, he broke the effigy to pieces over the heads of his flock; a snie arose, and, in the attempt to escape from this infuriated ecclesiastic through the narrow church door, a block was caused, resulting in more or less dangerous injuries to between sixty and seventy persons of both sexes. Another co-adjutor of the cure, in endeavoring to intervene between his colleague and the fugitives, received a blow from the former which fractured his jaw-

Probably no man has more thoroughly explored or more carefully studied the ancient caves of Great Britain and their contents than Prof. W. Boyd Dawkins, F. R. S., who recently lectured in London upon the early inhabitants whose traces are found in these caverns. Among the interesting results of his investigations, he mentioned that the horse was used for food by these primitive people, and probably also the dog. The dog of those times appears to have been a much larger animal than the average dog of the present day. Fire was obtained by striking a light from the familiar mineral, iron pyrites. The potter's wheel does not seem to have been known, but pottery was made by hand. The cave implements show that the prehistoric inhabitants ground corn, and engaged to some extent in mining operations.

WHAT A BLIND WOMAN HAS DONE, -A notable old lady is Mrs. Lawrence, of Craftsbury. 71 years old, and for six years past has been totally blind. During the past two years, nevertheless, she has spun, doubled, twisted, and knit 1400 knots of yarn, making everything from a man's cap to a syrup strainer. One of these years she has taken care of the butter of 10 cows, with the assistance of a girl 10 years old, and also assisted about the cooking and general housework. She has never but once during these years made a misstep, at that fime falling from the piazza into the road, breaking one wrist and spraining one ankle, from which injury she has never fully recovered.—Rutland (Vt.) Herald.

American news in France: The Congress of the United States has been possession of taken by Monsieur Mahony, a general officer of belonging to Readjuster in the State Virginia in the Old Dominion. He the members had locked up dead mort), and will permit the General Conquerlin not to them remove. The President has for Monsleur Ruddlebeggar dispatched, to Monsieur Mahony force away. Monsieur Mahony speaks he will to the termination scrid out contain. Admiral Benhill is to the Capital but the march of one day, with the Confederate entire army.

A widow, whose husband's artistic perceptions had caused his house to be elegently furnished, married his brother. When her visitors, after her second marriage, complimented her upon the beauty of her house-furnishing, she answered: "Oh, yes, my dear brother-in-law had such ex-quisite taste!"

An exchange says that Mr. Gladstone's clothes are ill-fitting. Inasmuch as everybody knows that Mr. Gladstone is an Englishman, the super-St. Claire, I think that you came into my life | fluity of this statement cannot be over