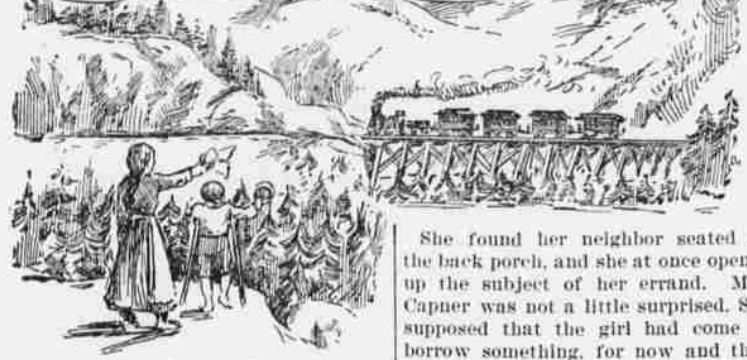


# A MOUNTAIN HEROINE



FROM the Mowrie house one saw a stretch of rugged, wooded country, with a slender looking railroad bridge spanning the gorge between two hills. The tops of the high pine trees, which grew down in the valley below the cliffs, reached nearly to the rails of the bridge, and it was a thrilling sight to see the trains crawl along in the air over the tree-tops, twist about like a serpent, and then thunder down the slope on the left side of the ridge.

But the passing trains had another interest for the young Mowries besides this picturesque one. Now and then a passenger threw a newspaper out of the window, and to Alvira and little lame Hiram such a "find" was always acceptable.

Since her mother's death the household duties and the care of Hiram had devolved on Alvira, preventing her from taking advantage of the short school term. Mr. Mowrie was employed on one of the river boats, and his trips often compelled him to remain away from home for three or four weeks at a time.

The Mowries did not own a farm. Their place was a scrubby half-acre on the top of the cliff, and their house a mere hut of unhewn logs with two little loft chambers above the single downstairs room.

To the newspapers thrown from the passing trains Alvira and Hiram were much indebted for what they knew of the world beyond the cliffs, and the village of Cresswell, about four miles distant. How they enjoyed the stories that occasionally fell into their hands! When these were of the "continued" kind they would amuse themselves imagining the conclusions.

At present the story that interested them most was one about a lame boy, who had seemed to be in a fair way of getting well when the story broke off in the latest number of the paper.

"Say, Viry," Hiram would sometimes ask with a wistful look on his face, "do you s'pose that lame boy ever got well?"

"Yes, I thought it was working round that way, Hiram," Alvira would answer hopefully.

Hiram's lameness was the result of a fall over the rocks at the railroad bridge, and the village doctor had pronounced it incurable. The knee was bent at an angle, and the boy could move about only on crutches.

One summer afternoon, as the sound of the locomotive's whistle echoed in the distance, Alvira came into the house with a single page of a newspaper in her hand. It had evidently held some one's luncheon, but Alvira brushed away the crumbs carefully and smoothed out the wrinkles.

"I guess, Hiram," she said in her motherly way, glancing over the precious bit of paper, "you'll find two or three whole pieces here, and some advertisements."

The boy took the bit of newspaper from his sister's hand, and was soon quietly absorbing its contents. Meanwhile, Alvira labored over a garment that she was trying to cut and fashion without any pattern. She was a tall, strong-looking girl of 17, straight as an arrow, and pretty in spite of her ill-fitting clothes. Presently Hiram broke out with a cry of delight:

"O, Viry! Hurrah!"

"What is it, Hiram?" asked Alvira eagerly, dropping her scissors with a rattling noise, "it isn't the continuation of that story about the lame boy, is it?"

"It's better than that, Viry! Just look! Here's a piece about a real doctor that cured a real boy! O, Viry, if I could only get well!"

With a great hope stirring in her heart, Alvira took the page and proceeded to read the article that Hiram had pointed out. It was entitled "A Triumph of Modern Surgery," and it detailed how a certain Dr. Delmore had performed successfully a difficult and dangerous operation on a lame child.

"Why, this is the best thing I ever heard of, Hiram," she said delightedly, when she had finished reading. "I'm going right away to Mrs. Capner's to ask her about this Dr. Delmore. I guess Mrs. Capner'll know."

And she put away her sewing hastily, and set forth without delay. The Capner house was situated on the other side of the woods, about half way between the Mowrie house and Cresswell. Alvira had great respect for Mrs. Capner and for her opinions. When she was in perplexity about anything it was always to Mrs. Capner that she went.

She found her neighbor seated on the back porch, and she at once opened up the subject of her errand. Mrs. Capner was not a little surprised. She supposed that the girl had come to borrow something, for now and then Alvira asked for the loan of an "easy pattern," or for the weekly paper that Mrs. Capner subscribed for.

"Have I ever heard of Dr. Delmore?" the woman repeated. "Why, he's that high-toned doctor from the city that the Balmes got to set their Jack's arm when it was broken so bad! But sit down, Alvira, and make yourself at home."

Alvira sat down on the edge of the chair that Mrs. Capner had placed for her. Her cheeks were red from running, and her eyes were brilliant and eager as she continued:

"Mrs. Capner, does Dr. Delmore charge high? You see, I was thinking of getting him to look at Hiram's leg."

"Good gracious, Alvira Mowrie!" cried Mrs. Capner, "you don't know what you are saying! Dr. Delmore—why, you might as well make a tea party and invite Queen Victoria! All the money you could get for your place on the cliff wouldn't begin to pay Dr. Delmore's bill!"

Alvira felt a sudden sinking in her heart. The color left her cheeks as she gazed into her neighbor's eyes in a puzzled, helpless way. Meanwhile the woman thought that the girl either did not believe her, or that she was too stupid and ignorant to understand.

"Why," she went on, trying to make things plainer, "Dr. Delmore charged Mr. Baines \$1,000 for the setting of Jack's arm! Of course he had to come a long distance, and it was a very hard case. The village doctor said the arm would have to be amputated; it was broken in three places, you know. But they say it's as well as the other one now."



ALVIRA AND THE DOCTOR'S RUNAWAY HORSE.

"I'd be willing to live on bread and water all my life if Hiram could only be cured," sighed Alvira, sorrowfully.

Mrs. Capner was not a little touched. "I only wish I knew how to help you. But \$1,000! That's almost a fortune! And I believe Dr. Delmore would not even look at Hiram's leg for less. Why, he travels around with a man-servant all rigged out in brass buttons like a soldier. You'd better not bother about such a swell doctor, girl. Anyhow, Hiram's leg has had its crookedness for two years and more, and I doubt whether even Dr. Delmore could cure him."

Alvira rose to go home.

"Thank you for telling me the truth, Mrs. Capner," she said. "Good-by."

"How shall I tell poor little Hiram this?" she moaned to herself, as she tramped through the woods.

The sun was sinking behind a mountain peak when she reached home. Hiram was sitting on the doorstep.

"Hurrah, Viry!" he called out joyfully, when he caught sight of his sister. "Am I going to walk like other boys?" He held up his crutch, laughing as she came near. "Is it good-by to this, Viry?"

Alvira could not look at the glad little face. She did not speak until she had taken a seat beside her brother on the doorstep. Then she said, very gravely:

"Look here, Hiram. Once you said you wanted to be well so that you could do brave things. Perhaps it's ordered that you'll have to be brave in another way—brave to bear instead of brave to do."

Hiram understood. His sharp little features grew pale in the twilight; but not a complaint, not a cry, not even a sigh escaped his lips.

Alvira and Hiram did not talk any more about Dr. Delmore, but the girl did not cease to think of him. While her busy fingers plucked the wild

blackberries that grew in the woods and the thickets, her brain was busy with devices for reaching the great man. Sometimes one might have seen her computing a "sum" that was not in the arithmetic with a stumpy lead pencil on the margin of a newspaper. She never finished this sum quite to her satisfaction, but she often looked up from her work with a hopeful expression, saying something like this:

"If he'd only wait, I guess I could get the whole thousand paid up in about forty years."

One afternoon when Alvira was picking berries a few rods from the far end of the railroad bridge, on the brow of the hill opposite to their house, she heard the sharp clatter of horse-hoofs on the stony road leading past the bridge.

The sound became more and more distinct, until presently the girl caught sight of a runaway horse dragging a carriage. Evidently the rider had been thrown from his seat, and the occupant of the vehicle was powerless to help himself.

Alvira had had some experience with horses, for she often drove Mrs. Capner to and from Cresswell, and sometimes she assisted Mr. Capner with his farm work. Besides, she was fearless. In a moment she had taken off her big sunbonnet, and was letting out the "drawstring." She stood on the embankment side of the road as the horse came down the grade. A plan had occurred to her, one that she had heard of.

"It's the only thing to be done," she thought, as, a few seconds later, she sprang as close as she dared to the flying horse, and deftly threw the bonnet over his head.

The "blind" acted as Alvira thought it would. The frightened horse leaped to the other side of the road and tried to shake off the unexpected obstruction to his vision.

Alvira had just grasped the bridle when the door of the carriage opened, and a well-dressed man came out and hurried to her relief.

"Thank you very much," he said in a grateful, pleasant voice. "You did a very brave thing, and doubtless saved me from an accident."

"I was afraid the horse would reach the bridge and plunge through," said Alvira as she stood beside the panting animal and stroked its neck. "I guess you may trust me to mind him if you want to hunt up the driver."

"Thank you again," said the man.

The pastor fumbled with the list, coughed, and looked a trifle embarrassed. The organist began to play the air pianissimo, and a broad grin spread over every face. Dr. McPherson looked appealingly upward to the organist, and then turned over the leaves of the hymnbook with desperate eagerness. Mr. McCarrell left his pipes and hurried down to the pastor.

"We must change that response," whispered the pastor.

"Why?" asked the organist, innocently.

"I have been preaching on 'Hell,'" said Dr. McPherson, "and the response you have chosen is 'What Must It Be to Be There?' We cannot have that."

Even the solemn organist grinned as he climbed to the organ and started up "Art Thou Weary?"—Chicago Times-Herald.

**Uses of Fruit.**

I have eaten apples all my life, but never learned how to make the best use of them till last winter, writes a correspondent to American Gardening. Now we eat apples half an hour before breakfast and dinner instead of afterward.

The action of the acid is then admirable in aiding digestion, while if eaten after meals the apple is likely to prove a burden.

We follow the same line in using grapes, pears, cherries and berries. If disturbed by a headache or dyspepsia in summer, I climb a cherry-tree and eat all I can reach and relish.

In order to have cherries all summer, I cover a dozen trees with mosquito-netting to keep off the birds.

Currants and gooseberries I find very wholesome eaten raw from the bushes before going to the dining-table. Nature has prepared a large amount of food already cooked, exactly fitted for all demands of the human system.

I am by no means a vegetarian or a fruitarian, but I am convinced that we have not yet measured the value of fruit as a diet, with milk, eggs and vegetables.

**Japanese Women.**

Everybody smokes in Japan. The pipes hold a little wad of fine cut tobacco as big as a pea. It is fired, and the smoker takes a long whiff, blowing the smoke in a cloud from the mouth and nose. The ladies have pipes with longer stems than the men, and if one of them wishes to show a gentleman a special mark of favor she lights her pipe, takes half a whiff, hands it to him and lets him finish the whiff.

**Horseshoes of Paper.**

It is said that the horses of German cavalry regiments are to be entirely shod with paper shoes, recent experiments as to their durability and lightness having proved very satisfactory.

It is always the man of whom nobody expects such a thing, who drops everything and runs.

with a little cry of delight, and the doctor never forgot the look of gratitude with which she regarded him.

The coachman came down the road presently and resumed charge of the horse and carriage. The doctor was on his way to Cresswell to visit one of his patients. On his return he called at the Mowrie house and saw Hiram. He did not say that the injured leg could be straightened; but he told Alvira to write to her father for permission to have her brother taken to a hospital in the city for treatment.

This Alvira did. Mr. Mowrie's approval came in the next mail, and in a few days Hiram, accompanied by Dr. Delmore, made the journey to the city.

One day Alvira, who was alone in the little house on the cliff, received from her brother the following letter:

My Dear Brave Viry:

Dr. Delmore says I am going to get well; and he says, too, that some society is going to give you a gold medal. It has been in the newspapers that you stopped a runaway horse with a sunbonnet. I have the piece cut out and put away. It is a splendid piece. It calls you a heroine, and that is what you are, Viry.

HIRAM.

**A Suggestive Response.**

Unconscious harmony between sermon and response was too much for the Rev. Simon J. McPherson yesterday morning. He preached on "Hell" in the Second Presbyterian Church, but found the response selected by the innocent organist was altogether too appropriate. The hymn was changed, but not before the air had been played, to an accompaniment of a broad grin on the face of every one present. Dr. McPherson does not consult with the organist, A. F. McCarrell, as to the sermon he intends to preach on Sundays. Mr. McCarrell does not worry the pastor about the hymns he selects for the worshippers to sing. Both trust each other implicitly, but in future Dr. McPherson will look over the list of hymns before he goes into the pulpit. Dr. McPherson preached on "Hell," and pictured in burning words the terrors awaiting the unrepentant wicked in the next world. His sermon made a deep impression on the congregation. At the conclusion of the discourse the pastor usually announces the hymn to be sung as a response. The organist had not known the subject of the sermon when he selected the response, and thought no more about it after he had compiled his list of hymns.

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# FLASHES OF FUN

"I'll not be engaged to any man 'Less a solitaire he will bring." She was 20 then, she's 30 now: She'd accept most any old ring. —Buffalo Times.

Wife (dejectedly)—I'm a perfect fright. Husband (consoling)—No mortal is perfect, dearest.

Mr. Savery—What! Retrimming your last year's hat! You are an angel! Mrs. Savery—An angel, am I? Well, then, give me \$10 to buy wings.

"Have Scribbler, the author, and his wife made up?" "Oh, yes. She now reads what he writes and he eats what she cooks."—Fliegende Blaetter.

"Well, now that you are back you can tell us how much it costs to go to Europe." "All you've got and all you can borrow over there."—Judge.

Dabney—Glibney started on a century run to-day. Babley—Where has he gone? Dabney—After the fellow who stole his wheel.—Roebury Gazette.

"By the way, how did that scheme you went into pan out—the one to get sugar out of bees?" "We got beat out of the sugar."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

The story about a pretty girl kissing a burglar by mistake is all wrong and should be suppressed. It is an incentive to crime.—Chicago Post.

Miss Scraggs—Yes; once, when I was out alone on a dark night, I saw a man, and, oh, my goodness, how I ran! "And did you catch him, Miss Scraggs?"

"When I get into my new house I mean that everything shall go like clockwork." "I see; the same as heretofore; tick, tick."—Boston Transcript.

Truth crushed to earth will rise again. When comes the proper juncture. While error, wounded, writes in pain, And can't repair her puncture. —Indianapolis Journal.

If Eve hadn't tempted Adam with that apple, what would the modern tailors, milliners and dressmakers be doing for a living now?—Somerville Journal.

"And what do you regard as the greatest triumph of modern surgery?" "Collecting the bills," promptly responded the great practitioner.—Chicago Record.

First Tramp—That old feller what wuz givin' me der lecture said he didn't know der taste o' liquor. Second Tramp—Well, dat's some excuse fer him talkin' der way he did.—Puck.

One Matron—Since I have been married I have taught my husband good taste. Another—Really? It is a good thing for you that you did not teach him before you were married.

"Did old Grumpey make much of a kick when you asked him for his daughter?" "Did he make much of a kick? The doctor says I am threatened with curvature of the spine."—Detroit Free Press.

"Hark!" cried the long-haired magazine poet, "how the people cheer—how they recognize genius." "You're mistaken," whispered his wife. "They think you are a foot-ball player."—Atlanta Constitution.

Father—It was strangely quiet in the parlor while that young fellow was calling last evening, Edith. Daughter—Yes; he's one of the U. of M. tacklers and seems to think of nothing else.—Detroit Free Press.

"I'm putting up a prescription for your wife's milliner," said the drug clerk to his employer. "What shall I charge her?" "What is the usual price for what she is getting?" "Fifty cents." "Charge her \$2.75."—Texas Sifter.

"Mrs. Digby has a husband that really thinks something of her." "What has he done?" "Why, instead of betting to win a hat on the election for himself he bet a new bonnet for his wife."—Chicago Record.

"I," he shouted, impassioned from the rostrum, "I shall begin at once in the noble work of crushing tyrants!" Then, after the storm of applause had ceased, he went home and tried to mash the hired girl.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

"How do you like the new leading lady you have, Footlites?" "She won't do at all. She's only been married twice, and hasn't had any diamonds stolen for a year. She's got no energy at all."—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

"Did you know," said the man who was reading an article about the contraction of metals, "that a clock ticks faster in winter than summer?" "No, I never noticed that about a clock. But I know a gas meter does."—Washington Star.

Husband (to wife)—I cannot conceive what is the matter with my watch; I think it must want cleaning. Spoiled Child (breaking in)—Oh, father, I don't think it needs cleaning. Baby and I had it washing in the basin for ever so long this morning.

"I don't think that Benner is a sincere writer," remarked one young man. "You think he doesn't mean what he says?" "Yes." "Well, I know better than that. I saw something that he wrote the other day, and I'm sure he meant every word of it. It was a request for a loan of \$5."—Washington Star.