



A MODEL STEP-DAUGHTER.

THE meadow was all pearly over with dew; the August sun was distilling sweetness from Abigail Wray's clove-pinks and sweet williams, and the girl sang gayly at her work, as she put the coffee and hot graham gems on the table, and nodded to her father coming in from the fields, with his black-ribboned straw hat in his hand.

"Well, puss," said the farmer, with a smile, "how did you enjoy yourself last night, listening to this fine new lecturer?"

"Oh, so much, father!" cried Abigail. "The hall was crowded, and I don't know whether we all cried or laughed oftenest. Oh, father," she added, "what a grand thing it must be to be able to move people's hearts like that!"

"Humph!" said Elihu Wray. "In my time women used to stay at home and mind the house and look after their children, instead of going tramping around the country giving lectures."

"But Miss Perceval has neither husband nor children, father," urged Abigail. "And I don't suppose she has any home to look after."

"Miss Perceval? That's her name, is it?"

"Father, I wish you'd go to hear her!" cried eager Abigail. "I'm sure she'd make you laugh and cry, too! You couldn't help it. She isn't pretty, you see, but she has such an expressive face, with bright, sparkling eyes like a bird's."

"I knew a woman once," slowly uttered Wray, "who took to speechifying in public. Nobody would have thought it of her, either—the quietest, shyest little thing in the world. But there is no accounting for women. I never heard her, but I'm told she made a success of it. Her name was Daggett."

"Father, you'll go with me to-night, won't you?" coaxed Abigail. "Do! Just to please me. I do so want you to hear Miss Perceval. John Tracy—he's on the committee, you know—he says they pay her fifty dollars a night. She must have a deal of money laid up. Oh, I wish I had a talent like that!"

"Tut, tut, my little girl!" said the farmer as he sprinkled sugar over his heaping saucer of blueberries. "I don't wish it at all. What should I do if you went lecturing half over the continent and left me here alone?"

"But, father, I must leave you some time," reasoned Abigail. "Every girl does."

"Then you're not going to become a little old maid for my sake, eh, puss?" Abigail laughed, shot a roguish glance at him from beneath the dark curtain of her eyebrows, and shook her head.

"All girls marry, father," she said. "Your Miss Perceval hasn't got married, it seems."

"No, father. She can do better."

"Don't you believe that, my girl," said Mr. Wray. "There is no better fortune in all the world than to marry. If you can marry the person you love."

"Getting sentimental?" Abigail asked, clapping her plump hands.

"It ain't sentiment, child. It's common sense," sturdily maintained Wray.

"Father," abruptly spoke Abigail, "I've often wondered why you did not marry again."

"I?" He looked up in amazement. "Because," added the girl, "mother never was much of a companion for you. She was always sick and complaining, and she didn't care for books, as you did, and she fretted at every little thing, until I used to wonder at your patience with her. Oh, you see, I noticed all these things, child though you thought I was. And she told me once—"

She checked herself abruptly. Wray looked at her with grave surprise.

"Told you what, Abigail?"

"I don't know whether I ought to repeat it, father," said Abigail, coming around to his side and resting her clasped hands lightly on his shoulder. "It was the day before she died; and she told me lots of things, besides, that I did not know. She said she never had any real right to your heart; that you never had cared for her, and that she didn't deserve that you should, and that there was another girl—"

"There, puss, there," said the farmer, with a strange quiver in his stern eyelids. "Mother was slightly toward the last. We'll forget these things."

"But, father, if it's Lucia Lee—as I mistrust it is—and if you'd be any happier married to her, I won't make any trouble," pleaded Abigail. "I'll be the best stepdaughter in the world; I only want you to be happy, father."

"Well, it isn't Lucia Lee," said Mr. Wray, laughing, "and if it was, why you'd be crazy, child, to think of get-

ting me into such a scrape at fifty-odd years old."

"But you're young-looking, father, and handsome," urged Abigail.

"Nonsense! There, give me some more coffee. Those lazy fellows in the ten-acre lot will be sure to dawdle away the time until I get back to them. Let's hear something more about this lecturing old maid of yours," he added.

"Father, hush!"

Abigail had gone back to her seat behind the tray, where she faced the wide, open door. She could see a figure standing hesitatingly on the threshold; her father was quite oblivious to its presence.

"It's Miss Perceval herself!" cried Abigail, jumping up. "Please walk in, Miss Perceval, I'm so glad to see you. You don't know it, perhaps, but I was one of your listeners last night, and I kept thinking how proud I should be if ever I had a chance to speak to you! Our name is Wray, and I am Abigail. Father, this is Miss Perceval!"

Mr. Wray, who had risen from his seat and now stood facing the unexpected guest, bowed courteously. Few city votaries of fashion could have displayed more exquisite courtesy and hospitality than this country lass, in the blue cambric frock with the simple white ruffling at her neck, as she welcomed the stranger.

"Will you have some of our fresh blueberries?" said Abigail. "I picked them myself, while the dew was on them. And the coffee is quite hot!"

Miss Perceval was a tall, middle-aged woman, with brown hair, slightly



I'LL BE THE BEST STEP-DAUGHTER IN THE WORLD.

threaded with silver; bright, dark eyes and color that varied in her cheek, as she looked from Abigail to her father.

"I—I have lost my way," she hesitated. "I oughtn't to have attempted to ramble about alone; but I used to know something about this part of the country, and—"

Once more her eyes fell beneath Elihu Wray's searching glance; she laughed uneasily.

"So you are the lecturing woman?" said he, quietly.

"The lecturing old maid," you called me, Elihu," retorted Miss Perceval, recovering her composure with marvelous quickness. "Have I grown so very old?"

"But—Miss Perceval?"

"That's my nom de publique," said she. "One must shelter one's self behind something. How do you suppose 'Huldah Daggett' would look on the bulletin boards? Can't a woman change her name except by matrimony?"

"Father," cried Abigail, "are you acquainted with Miss Perceval? Why didn't you tell me so before?"

"Because I didn't know it myself, child. How was I to know that Miss Perceval, the famous lecturer who makes people laugh or cry, according to her will, was little Huldah Daggett, who used to hunt hazelnuts with me and build snow forts beyond the school-house forty years ago?"

"I feel exactly like a ghost come back to this earth," said Miss Perceval, shivering. "Everything is so changed, and yet the same. And I have dreamed so many, many times about returning to dear old Millville. And so Janet is dead, and this tall girl leaning on your shoulder is her daughter! But you are not changed, Elihu; at least, not outwardly."

"I am changed in nothing, Huldah," said he. "Nor have I ever changed in any respect."

"Not when you married Janet? Oh, Elihu, it was then that I felt forced to plunge into some all-absorbing occupation, to keep myself from heart-break. I never should have had a career if it had not been for that."

"Janet told me you had confided to her that you were engaged to a rich banker in New York."

"It was not true!" exclaimed Miss Perceval. "She told me that you were in love with her; that you were heartily sick of your old bargain with me. And I wrote you a last appeal, which you never noticed by word or line—an appeal that I sent you by Janet. After that what could I think?"

Abigail had flown upstairs, and now returned with a time-yellowed note in her hand.

"Father, I believe I can explain this," said she. "Poor mother yielded to temptation and kept back the letter. Here it is. I found it between the leaves of one of her books, and, until now, I never understood what it meant. I see it all, father! Miss Perceval! Father! Father! Remember what I said ten minutes ago. Dear Miss Perceval, he is so good, so true, and I'm ready to make such a model stepdaughter!"

And then she ran out of the room to rescue her pet terrier from the fangs of the butcher's big dog, coming down the road, and when she returned Miss Perceval sat smiling in the deep window-seat, a daisy in her hand, a blush on her cheek.

"Would you really like a stepmother, child?" said she.

"I would like father to be happy!" eagerly answered Abigail.

"Then," said Miss Perceval, "I suppose you must have your way!"

And the world at large wondered at this brilliant lecturer marrying a quiet country farmer, and secluding herself in the wilderness. But the world at large did not know how happy she was. New York Ledger.

POLITENESS

Of Women to Women as to Seats in Street Cars.

If anything riles a woman, it is to have some younger woman get up and offer her a seat in a street car. This misplaced civility infers that the elder woman is to be considered on account of her age, when, in fact, there is little difference in years between the two. I witnessed a droll bit of comedy the other day in a Brookline electric that makes me smile every time I think of it. The car was full, with several passengers standing, when in bounced a stout, well-preserved person, with white hair beautifully pompadoured. She was dressed in deep mourning, but a bunch of violet in the front of the coat gave a touch of "mitigation" to her grief, which was quite borne out by the merriment lurking in her mouth and eyes. The lady grasped a strap and looked out of the window. Then suddenly a young person sitting near, observing, perhaps, that no man in the car intended to offer his seat, rose and leaning forward touched the other on the arm, saying:

"Won't you have my seat?" "Are you going to get out?" asked the staid one.

"No, ma'am," replied this tactless creature, "but you are older than I, and—" But the sentence was never finished. If a glance could slay, that young person would have fallen on the floor dead.

"Thank you. When I am too old to stand up, I shall not enter a public conveyance."

That was all. The junior woman slunk back into the seat, and some of the passengers tittered.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Quaint Prayer.

A small farmer, an Englishman, old and devout, had a dozen cattle, two or three of which he lost by the cattle-disease then prevailing. A clergyman expressed his sympathy, and the aged man replied, "The Bible tells us that the cattle on a thousand hills are His, so when He wants any, He knows where to find 'em."

Evidently the good farmer took pride in his small herd, and felt complimented by the death of two or three of them. The Rev. Newman Hall, from whose "Autobiography" we have taken this quaint bit of piety, reports as quaint a prayer, uttered by an old, decrepit workman, whom he visited in an almshouse.

"We prayed together, and at my request, leaning back in his easy chair, he prayed for me in terms I have never forgotten: 'God bless him! Make him like the candlestick—beaten gold! Help him to say as the sailor when he rounds a dangerous point, 'All is well!' If Thou make him useful Thou wilt give him trials; but it's grand cross-bearing when it's tied on w' love!'"

During our civil war there was a great dearth of cotton in the English manufacturing towns, and a quantity of inferior short fiber was imported from Surat in India. A mill-hand, praying at a prayer-meeting, said, "O Lord, send us cotton! send us cotton! but no Surat, Lord!"

Holst with His Own Petard. Greedy grocer to farmer's wife, who is supplying him with butter: "This pun' o' butter is ower licht, gudewife." Gudewife: "Blame yersel', then; I weighed it w' the pun' o' sugar I gat frae ye yestreen."—Tit-Bits.

Eating thirty quail in thirty days can't be much of a feat; many a man has eaten beefsteak every day for fifty days.

If a girl is really fond of music, her own piano playing will make her sick.

PATHOS AND TRAGEDY

THE SORROWFUL LIFE OF A CHICAGO GIRL.

She Shot Her Deceptive Friend and Took Her Own Life—The Unsatisfied Yearning of a Poetic Soul that Was Ever in Sorrow.

The news reports recently told how a Chicago girl named Burke had shot her deceptive friend, while he sat at the piano singing a love song, and then killed herself. She loved him, and when the terrible truth came to her that he was already married, she made the effort to end his existence and her own. She sleeps to-day in a little Michigan graveyard.

The story of Mabel Burke's life is unlike most of those which end so tragically. Few even of the heroines of fiction had endured more of sorrow and of trouble than this girl. Thrown from babyhood upon the mercies of the world, she experienced only sorrow and hardships and illness, until, driven desperate by the last wrong, she ended all. Hers was a life of pathos linked with



MABEL BURKE.

romance and tragedy. Her friends say that her life was as pure as that of the children and the flowers she loved so well.

Mabel Burke came into this world with the misfortune of having a sister but eleven months older than herself and a mother who had no love for children. The mother's love was never aroused by the prattling Mabel, and while yet too young to understand its import the baby was given away. The child's grandmother took her finally, and it was at her home that Mabel spent her girlhood. The elderly woman was poor, and when it became time for her charge to start to school the little girl was compelled to work and earn the money with which to buy her books and pay other expenses. Thus she passed through the various grades of the country school, and having finally finished its course she went to a college town and found employment. There her musical talents were developed and, gaining the sympathy of one of her professors, she was assisted to complete a course. She had also by personal application learned stenography and bookkeeping.

About seven years ago the family with whom she had boarded during her struggles in the college went to Chicago and she accompanied it. The young woman was now talented and ambitious. Her applications for employment were of a higher order than those of most stenographers and she was successful. The World's Fair was then in existence and she went there for a position, and a few weeks later she was accepted as a secretary to the Board of Lady Managers and was provided with apartments at the Windmere Hotel. When the fair ended she still found lucrative work. Then the Presidential campaign came on and Miss Burke became stenographer for Mark Hanna, work in which she was regarded an expert.

Her acquaintance began to broaden, her wages were high and it looked at last as if sunshine were to come into her life. Her beauty made her a favorite in the small social circle in which she moved. Then came illness. The bloom left her cheeks, her frame wasted. The doctors told her that a tumorous growth made an operation necessary. For nine months Miss Burke lay in the hospital, and when she finally did return to her home, with sunken cheeks and pale face, she was not entirely recovered. This fact saddened her whole life, though she gradually regained her former good looks and went about quietly in the society in which she had been accustomed to move before her illness. She was bright and clever, a good musician and a strikingly pretty girl, and therefore was much sought after, and had half a dozen admirers. But to intimate friends she confided upon her return from the hospital that she would never marry.

Finally she met David J. Wile, the attorney whose life she attempted to end. Their manner of meeting was clearly in the relationship of attorney and client. The young woman had be-

come imbued with the idea that she had cause for a suit against a physician for malpractice. It bore upon the operation she had undergone. Wile allowed her to believe that there were some hopes for her to recover. They were frequently in each other's company regarding the matter. Their acquaintanceship ripened into friendship, and when finally Wile had persuaded her that she had no case he continued to call upon her.

He had found a bond of sympathy between them. They were both lovers of music, and thus in this platonic sort of way they enjoyed each other's companionship. Months passed by and it was no secret that Miss Burke's friendship for Wile had ripened into love.

Then came the story to the ears of Miss Burke that Wile was already married. She sought out his wife and learned from her lips that the rumor was true. Her last hope vanished. The deception, the wrong practiced upon her was more than she could endure. Discouraged and disheartened beyond all reparation, she plotted her own destruction and to take from the world with her the man whom she loved.

Meeting Wile by appointment, they went together to the Hotel St. Anthony and engaged the parlor with its piano for a few minutes. Miss Burke asked the man to play a love song they had often admired and sung together, and as his fingers glided over the keys and with the strains of the music ringing in her ears she shot him twice. He fell from the stool, and, with the evident impression that he was killed, she turned the smoking revolver to herself and sent a bullet through her heart.

GRANT MONUMENT.

New Bronze Equestrian Statue of the Great Commander in Philadelphia.

The heroic statue of Gen. Grant, cast in bronze and erected in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, was recently unveiled under the auspices of the Fairmount Park Art Association. The statue is the work of Daniel Chester French and Edward C. Potter, the former being the sculptor of the figure and the latter of the horse.

The artists chose for their motif a moment when Grant was surveying a battlefield from an eminence, intent upon the operations of the forces before him. The horse is merely obedient to the will of the rider. They endeavored in the figure of Grant to give something of the latent force of the man, manifesting itself through perfect passivity; to portray the sphinx-like character which has mystified all who have studied him. Grant's costume and its arrangement were chosen from the few collections available with a view to carrying out the impression as forcibly as possible. The long cape to the overcoat was adopted on the authority of Gen. Fred Grant, who



PHILADELPHIA GRANT STATUE.

says that his father wore one several inches longer than was usual. The hat was also made on his authority. The height of the statue from bottom of plinth to top of rider's hat is 15 feet 1 inch; the size of the plinth is 5 feet 6 inches by 12 feet 6 inches. The total weight of the statue is five tons.

The pedestal is built of pale pink Jonesboro granite. Its total height to the bronze plinth supporting the statue is 15 feet 3 3/4 inches. The pedestal is supported on a step, which supports a seat entirely surrounding the molded base of the monument. On this rests the die, a plain mass of granite, diminishing toward the top with considerable entasis and crowned with a molded cornice and neck moldings. The total cost of statue and pedestal was \$32,675.35.

Strange Blood Poisoning.

A schoolgirl of Elizabeth, N. J., died from blood poisoning, resulting from blows on her arm playfully inflicted by a schoolmate on her birthday.

You don't respect a person very much if you are willing to play a "joke" on him.