

A GIRL'S FOLLY.

A small, sweet cottage of bright red brick, with a porch of white trim, and a garden of flowers, and a charming country landscape spreading out in the distance. Inside, in its small but pretty parlor, on the red table-covered with the tea-tray, with its cups and saucers. The window stood open to the still, warm autumn air, and the French porcelain clock on the mantel-piece was striking five.

A slender girl of some 20 years came in. She was very lovely. But her bright blue eyes bore a sort of weary or discontented look, and her bright brown hair was somewhat ruffled. She wore a print washing-dress of black and white, neither very smooth nor very fresh, and a lace neck collar fastened with a bow of black ribbon.

She had made an appointment to meet Reginald Vavasour, a rich young gentleman who had made her acquaintance down by the willow walk, and her lover, Thomas Watkyn, had told her he could call that evening. Just before he left, he said:

"May I ask you to do me a little favor, Thomas?"

"What is it?" he repeated.

"If you would not very much mind going home by the hill and would leave this note at Miss Ford's, I particularly wish her to have it this evening."

He paused for an instant, not replying. She went on hurriedly:

"I see that it is disagreeable to you. I have said too much."

"Not that," he answered, looking out his hand for the note. "But I can hardly spare the time for the long way this evening, as I have to call at Killick's for my father. However," he said no more, but took the note.

"Good-by, Thomas."

"I'm glad he took the note! I shall be sure now."

Miss Alison Reece was a clever young lady. The direct and near way to Mr. Watkyn's home would lead him past the willow walk. She had advised this important note to her dresser in the afternoon to prevent his taking that usual route. Had he seen young Vavasour cooling his heels within the precincts of the willow walk he would inevitably suspect he was a twig to keep a lover's trust.

Alison was busy in the kitchen next morning when she heard her mother open the front door and some one came in. It was that character, Mrs. Bennett, thought she, as she dried the teapots.

"Alison, come here," called her mother, in a quick voice.

She went to the parlor just as she was—her sleek, smooth hair, her wrist, a large, brown Holland apron on. Very pretty she looked with it all. But it was not Mrs. Bennett who sat with her mother; it was a venerable, white-haired old gentleman—Mr. Watkyn, the older.

"I am come to ask about Thomas," said he. "I believe he came here last night, Miss Alison; at what time did he leave you?"

A prevision struck her with a sort of terror that something was wrong. "He left quite early," she faltered.

"Well, he has never come home,"

"Not come home!" she said, with a whitening face.

"I sat up till 1 o'clock, and then I thought the mist must have kept him; that he had stayed at some friend's house. I knew not what to think, and that he would be home the first thing this morning. But we have not seen him, and I cannot hear of him."

Mrs. Bennett was seated in the frightened, guilty look that a son could not keep out of her countenance, and began to feel uneasy. "Cannot you tell what time it was when he left you?" she demanded, sternly.

"It was after 10 o'clock. It was just after sunrise—before the mist came on. It must have been near 7 o'clock."

"Which road did he take?" pursued Mrs. Bennett. And very reluctantly Alison answered for the foresaw it would bring on a terrible scene.

"The long road—round by the hill."

"Round by the hill?" echoed Mr. Watkyn in alarmed surprise. "Why did he take that way?"

Alison flushed and paled alternately; her lips were trembling. The fear creeping upon her was that he and young Vavasour had met and quarreled. Perhaps fought and injured one another fatally. In these dread moments of suspense the mind is apt to conjure up far-fetched and unlikely thoughts.

"I asked him to go around that way," she replied, in a timid tone. "I wanted him to leave a note for me at the dressmaker's."

"Old Mr. Watkyn sank into a chair, putting his hands before his troubled face. "I see it all," he breathed faintly. "He must have fallen down the Scar."

Alison uttered a scream of horror.

"Deceived by the mist, he must have walked too near the edge," continued the old man. "Heaven grant that it may not be so, but I fear it. Was he mad, to attempt to cross the plateau on such a night?"

Catching up his hat, Mr. Watkyn went out swiftly. Mrs. Bennett grabbed her daughter's hands. They were icy cold.

"Alison, what passed between you and Thomas last night?"

"Don't ask me, mother. Let me follow Mr. Watkyn. I cannot rest indoors. Oh, it cannot, cannot be as he fears?"

"Not one step until you tell me what passed," said the mother firmly. "There's more in all this than meets the eye."

"He asked me to give up talking to Mr. Vavasour."

"And you refused. Well?"

"He told me I must choose between them," continued Alison, bursting into tears. "Oh, mother, it was all my folly, all my temper; he could not see that, and when he went away he said he went for good."

Mrs. Bennett drew in her thin lips sternly. She was thinking.

"And what does it mean about your giving him a note for the dressmaker? I do not understand. You had nothing to write about."

The girl had got her hands free and flung them before her face to deaden the blows. But Mrs. Reece was a resolute mother at times, and she executed the confession. Alison had improvised the note and sent Thomas around the long way to deliver it, and so keep him from passing by the willow walk.

"Oh, child, child!" moaned the dismaying woman. "If he has indeed fallen over the Scar it is you who have given him his death."

And it proved to be so. In taking the two miles road between the cottage and the farm, a high and peculiar precipice, called the Scar, had to be passed. The tableland, or plateau on the top was wide and a perfectly safe road by daylight, since a traveler could keep as far from the unprotected edge as he pleased, but on a dark night, or in thick fog it was most dangerous.

Thomas Watkyn must have drawn near the edge unwittingly and fallen over it. There he lay, on the sharp rock, when the poor father and others went to look for him, his deathly face turned toward the blue sky.

"Speak to me, Thomas, speak to me!" wailed Alison quite beside herself with remorse and grief, as she knelt by him, wringing her hands. "Oh, Thomas, speak to me! I loved you all the while."

But Thomas neither spoke nor moved. The voice that had nothing but tender words was silent now; the heart she had so grieved might never beat in sorrow or joy again.

No person had seen or spoken with him since he quit the previous night, save the dressmaker, little industrious Miss Ford. She had answered the knock herself, she related, and he put the note into her hands, saying, "Miss Reece has asked him to leave it in your hands. What a thick mist it is that has come on," he remarked to her in his pleasant, chatty way. "Aye, it is indeed, sir," she answered, and shut her door as he walked away.

For many weeks Alison Reece lay ill with brain fever, her convulsions of life and death. Some people said it was the shock that made her ill and took her senses away; others thought that she must have loved the poor young man to distraction; no one, save her mother, knew that it was the memory of her last interview with him, and the seeming to send him on the route that led to his accident, that had well nigh killed her. But the young are strong in their tenacity of life, and she grew better by slow degrees.

One warm April afternoon, when the winter months had given place to spring, Alison, leaning on the arm of her mother, went to sit on the porch. She was very feeble yet. It was the first she had sat there since that memorable evening with her ill-fated lover. There she remained thinking and dreaming. They could not persuade her to come in, and so wrapped her in a warm shawl.

And she was, and almost as beautiful, curious, perhaps, that it should be so, as the one he and she had watched together more than six months before. The brilliant beams shone like molten gold in the glowing west, the blue sky around was flecked with pink and amethyst. Alison's eyes were fixed on the lovely scene with an enraptured gaze, her lips slightly parting with emotion.

"Alison, what are you thinking of?"

"Oh, mother, of his happiness. He is living in all that glory and beauty. I think there must have been an unconscious prevision in his mind by what he said that evening as we watched it, that he should soon be free. Oh, mother, I wish I was going to him! I wish I could be with him to-morrow."

The mother paused; she felt inclined to say something, but she feared the agitation it might cause.

"Well, child, you are getting better," she presently answered.

"Yes, I do get better," sighed the girl. "I suppose it pleased God that I should."

"Time smooths all things, Alison. In time will be strong again and able to fulfill life's various duties with a zest. Trials are good—oh so very good! for the soul. But for meeting with them we might never learn the way to heaven."

Alison did not answer. Her feeble hands were clasped in silent prayer, her face was lifted to the glories of the evening sky.

It was at the same sunset hour, an evening or two later, that Alison, who was picking up strength day by day, strode away to the churchyard. She wanted to look for a newly-made grave in that corner where so many of the Watkyns lay buried.

She could not see it; the same grave-stones that were there before were now; there was no fresh one.

"Perhaps they opened the old vault for him," thought Alison, as she sat down on a bench just inside the gate, for she was too weak to walk back again without a rest.

The sun was going down to-night without any loveliness, just as a crimson ball, which seemed to give red light to the atmosphere, and to light up redly the face of a pale, tottering man who was coming up to the gate by the help of a stick. He halted when he reached it. Alison turned sick and faint with all manner of emotions as she gazed at him, faint being uppermost.

"Alison!"

He held out his hand; he came inside; his pale, sad face wore for her its old sweet expression.

"Oh, Thomas, I thought you were dead," she burst out in a storm of sobs. "I came here to look for your grave. I thought I had killed you."

"They thought I was dead at first. They thought for a long time that I should die," he answered, as he sat down beside her, keeping her hand in his. "But the skillful medical men have raised me up, under God. I hope in time to be strong and well again."

"Can you ever forgive me?" she wailed, bitter, painful tears falling down her cheeks like rain. "I shall never forgive myself."

"No, you must atone to me instead, Alison. Deal the more loving to me during our future lives. We must pass them together, my dear."

"Do you mean it still?" she gasped.

"Oh, Thomas, how good and true you are. If I can only be a little bit worthy of you."

They walked home slowly, arm in arm. Neither could walk fast yet. Mrs. Reece came to the porch to meet them. God is full of mercy, she thought.

"I did not tell her, Thomas," she said; "she was so dreadfully low when she came out of the fever. I meant to tell her tonight."

"I have told her myself; it was best so," answered Thomas Watkyn.

THE VILLAGE DOCTOR.

How His Patient is Made to Forget Sickness and Find it Easy to Die.

(Ben Wyde in Chicago News.)

Pison lay piece by piece every symptom, every little particular of his patient's last night; and then, when the conversation ceases and the wife goes back quietly up the narrow back stairs to make the children's little bed, the old doctor sits and pines long curly shavings off the yellow pine stick, softly humming a good old Methodist hymn, and thinks what he should do next for his sick man.

Half the forenoon is gone when the good wife comes to the door and says, in the same old subdued tone to which she has habituated herself: "Doctor, he's awake now." The old doctor slowly lifts himself, unlinks his stiffened joints, kicks his legs out to straighten down his trousers, shuts his big bone-handled knife, brushes the shavings from his shiny clothes, and goes to the bed room. The sick man slowly turns his head toward the doorway, smiles sadly, puts out his long, white, bony hand to him and whispers hoarsely: "Well, doctor?" which is a sick man's favorite form of asking how his doctor thinks he is getting along. The old doctor raises the blue paper curtain and slowly draws a chair close to the bed.

"Oh, you're looking ever so much better to-day. We'll have you out hoeing potatoes in a day or two."

The old doctor knows this is false; knows that no human power can prolong the man's life a month, but he is one of those great good men who live above the necessity of telling the truth on all occasions. Only the purest of creatures who have to keep themselves in straitjackets lest they do something wicked need to live within the narrow limits of an inviolable rule always to tell the truth. "You're getting on nicely. Don't you see you've got more color in your hands?" And your eye looks brighter than it has for a month. A very sick man couldn't sleep as you did this morning. Why, I've been here two hours, and you've been sound asleep and snoring every minute of the time; ain't the, Mrs. Sanford?" The poor wife is almost afraid the doctor exaggerates, but there is something so wholesome in the old doctor's manner and so encouraging in his words that she quite forgets her troubles, and becomes ever chinner in her efforts to assure her husband that the doctor is right.

While the little woman moves softly about, gently dusting this and that piece of furniture, turning the shutters so that the sunbeams creeping toward the bed not climb up and get into the eyes of the sick man, the old doctor urges on the conversation, adroitly turning the subject from sickness and trouble, and even from health and prosperity, with which the sick man might make painful comparisons. Soon the room is changed from a chamber of death and despair to a panorama of scenes pictured by the doctor in the relation of his recollections and experiences. The sick man turns his head to catch every word. He is an interested listener while the old doctor sits there and relates as actual personal history a hundred and one things that never happened to anybody. Why should he stop to ask himself whether truth is mightily so long as he can see that falsehood is prevailing over his patient's despair and causing him to forget whether he is sick or well.

A writhing of the sick man's face and the placing of his thin, clammy hand upon his breast tell of a sharp pain. Quick the opiate! There, he sleeps! Now all is still. Ah, yes, he sleeps. He will not wake again. Death came to him in a pleasant dream. He knew it not, and hence he died but once. Kind-hearted, warm old doctor! Dear old country doctor, who has seen disease, but surrenders at its new-fangled, and labors lovingly to smooth the way to death! Blessed old bungler, who gives no dying man the warning that would turn his latest hours to business care and save his wife a world of worry and loss! Who does not love the old doctor?

Cutting Diamonds With a Saw.

(Cincinnati Enquirer.)

"There are three processes necessary to be gone through with between the rough stone and the diamond as you see it here," replied the jeweler.

"First, a piece of stone the required size must be cut off. To do this we use a circular saw made of sheet iron and without teeth. It is worked like a wood-worker's saw and the diamond is cut at the treadle. One man holds the stone to be cut tightly against the edge of the saw, while the other, using a small feather dipped in oil, applies diamond-dust to the edge of the saw."

The saw is made of the finest, ductile metal, and the particles of diamond dust becoming firmly set in it, soon wear through the hardest stone. Now the piece of diamond passes to the cutting-table, upon which is strapped a wheel running parallel to the top of the table. The stone is fastened by cement to the end of a stick six inches long.

"The lapidary takes the stick in his right hand and holds the stone firmly against the wheel until one facet is ground down. Diamond dust and water are constantly applied to the wheel. The table and upper facets of the stone are cut this way, and the stone is then removed from and readjusted to the stick before the lapidary cuts the under sides, callus and remaining facets. The stone is manipulated the same in the third or polishing process as in the cutting process. The wheel, however, is composed mainly of tin, and tripoli and rotten stone are used in the polishing process."

Japanese never wear shoes in the house, but always take them off before entering.

MAUD AND THE ROSES.

(New York Journal.)

Within the elaborately furnished parlor of a palatial Fifth Avenue residence, her dainty feet enmeshed in dainty slippers of violet colored silk, sat Maud L'Aquilotti, the cherished child of fortune.

Heard in the lap of luxury she was ignorant of the trials and sorrows which beset the busy man where men battle for bread. In her hand she held the picture of a young man who, like herself, had been reared amid scenes of elegant affluence.

Maud was a sweet-faced girl and was loved by all who knew her. There was an indescribable tenderness in her great blue eyes, a soft, tender, yet withal a firm expression in the slight compression of her lips, and a definiteness, as it were, in the character of her face which stamped her as a woman whose compassionate nature was under the control of a high order of intelligence.

As she sat before the parlor grate, her fair skin delicately tinged by the rose which came from the blue sky, she was a woman of surpassing beauty. The loosely-dressed morning wrapper which she wore fell gracefully over her person, revealing occasional outlines of a form of which Psyche herself would have been proud.

Horace L'Aquilotti, the moneyed master of the house, was devotedly attached to his only child, and left nothing undone which he had reason to believe would contribute to the happiness of her young and innocent life. Though already a millionaire he longed for an opportunity to double his vast wealth, his purpose being to present to his daughter, upon her arrival at the age of maturity, a fortune which would enable her to live in the lap of luxury.

Maud was unconscious of her father's perilous ambition. She only knew that her every want was supplied, and she was quite as happy as it is possible for mortal to be.

"I wonder," she mused, the while gazing fondly at the picture, "whether he really loves me? Yet why should I be so exacting when I scarce know my own heart? He is young, handsome—"

A gentle tread upon the velvet carpeting attracted the quick ear of the sensitive girl.

"Roderick!" she exclaimed. "Who gave you permission to enter here?"

Maud's beautiful face flushed crimson as she rose hastily from the sumptuous ottoman and turned toward the intruder.

"The figure before her was that of a dashing man of the world. He was tall, fine looking and elegantly attired. His mustache was long and silken, and his eyes, though bearing the evidence of dissipation, were still lustrous with youth. There was an expression of sadness in his face which deepened when he caught sight of the picture in Maud's hand.

"Had I known so much," said Roderick Froyart, his voice husky with emotion, "I would not have ventured here."

This is folly, Roderick!" exclaimed Maud, in her lively nervousness, toward "Really, you misjudge me—you cannot understand it."

And tossing the picture upon an ivory-mounted centre-table, she threw herself back into the ottoman, and buried her face in her hands.

For a moment Roderick Froyart stood gazing fixedly upon the form of the woman whom he madly loved. The rose in his fingers dropped to the floor, and lay there unheeded.

"And this is why you have ceased to care for me," he said finally.

A deep change had taken place in the man. He seemed to have aged a score of years in the brief interval during which he had surrendered himself to the conflicting emotions of his heart.

"I am now a man," he said, "I have given you the truest and best love of a man, and would have died rather than cause you one moment's anguish."

"Roderick," gasped the unhappy girl, "you misjudge me."

"You misjudge me," he lifted up her little hand, who prattles 'papa' when ever she sees Roderick Froyart, and little Maud when she plays with the roses that meet her everywhere never dreams of the romance they typify in that happy home.

Dead Men's Shoes.

(Washington Republican.)

"Dead men's shoes?" Yes, sir, several dealers make a specialty of them, and sell large numbers. The speaker was the proprietor of one of the innumerable second-hand stores which line D street from Eighth to Tenth streets, and whose presence has christened that thoroughfare the "Chatham street" of Washington.

"How do you get them?"

"Oh, that's easy enough," he replied, with a strong German accent, accompanied by a shower of oaths. "We have agents. They go about town, and whenever they see a corpse on the door they put down the number and street in their memorandum book. Then, after waiting a reasonable time, until the burial is over, the agent calls again and makes an offer for the dead man's shoes, which is generally accepted. Sometimes the agents buy clothing in the same way, but boots and shoes can always be bought. If they are out of repair we mend them. I guess at least 5,000 pairs are sold on D street alone every week at an average price of \$1 per pair. Colored men are the best customers." At this point the dealer in pedal coverings of defunct citizens was called inside by the minor clerk, who was trying to force the sale of a large taster on a very thin man, with the frequent remark that it "fit him like the paper on the wall."

Spotted It All.

(Exchange.)

A farmer went to hear the great Wesley preach upon the subject of money. "Get all you can," said Wesley. The farmer was delighted. "Save all you can," the farmer was still more delighted, and thought Wesley the most practical preacher he had ever listened to. "Give all you can." At this the farmer exclaimed: "Pshaw! He has gone and spoiled it all!"

Travelers in Africa assert that the most certain cure for malarial fever is strong coffee.

prohibits me from becoming your wife it cannot take from me the right to love you through life as a sister. Leave me, I beg of you, and never come here again. The honor of my father's house commands us to part as strangers."

There was an imperial grandeur in the girl's delivery that staggered Roderick Froyart, accomplished worldling though he was. His eyes fell to the ground, and with bowed head and aching heart he dragged his heavy feet into Fifth Avenue.

As the door closed behind him Maud L'Aquilotti's courage forsook her. She reeled back into the room and clutched the fallen rose as she fell prostrate on the floor.

"Unhappy child," groaned her father, as he pushed aside the tapestried partition which marked the division of his spacious parlors, and rushed to his daughter's side, "what wretch has dared to tell her that I am a ruined man?"

As Roderick Froyart descended the steps of the L'Aquilotti mansion Oscar Bristol, the weak-eyed, knock-kneed beggar of a latherly millionaire, began the ascent. There was a triumphant gleam in the eyes of the latter, for he read in Roderick's face the story of a broken heart. Roderick glared savagely at his rival, and clinched his fists in the agony of jealous despair. With a mighty effort, however, he mastered his emotion and passed on. An hour later a man whom he had esteemed as an old friend refused him the loan of a dollar.

"They say it is disgraceful," he said to himself, "but I will do it. Aye, even this very day I will go to work and endeavor to win back the fortune and honor of my family."

One week later Roderick Froyart was a salesman in a Bowers hat store. He had made rapid strides in the affection and confidence of his employer, and had begun already to look forward to the hour of his appointment as cashier. At last his proud ambition was crowned with success and the funds of his employer were in his keeping. In keeping the honest hat store could not have trusted his hard-earned wealth.

"If nobility is lacking in any of America's upper middle classes," thought Roderick Froyart, "it shall never suffer by act of mine."

As he wandered to his boarding house that night his attention was attracted to a young and beautiful girl who stood at the corner of Third Avenue and Ninth street, offering bouquets to the passers-by.

"Roderick," he thought, "roses that once I showered upon Maud."

Something in the manners of the girl's face appealed to him. He stopped to buy a rose. Again the flower dropped from his fingers.

"Maud!" he exclaimed. "Can this be you?"

"It is, Roderick," replied the poor girl, bursting into tears. "Father is dependent entirely upon me for his daily bread. He hopes, however, to relieve his fortune as soon as he recovers from rheumatic fever."

"Has he rheumatic fever?" asked Roderick, his voice showing the emotion which racked his frame.

"Yes, Roderick," replied the girl. The old love look was in her eyes. She stooped and picked up her rose and told you, my friends, de time will tell when I speak to see our children cut all de shins off de white nation, and I hopes as how you will member dat de bible says as how 'you must turn good for evil.'"

Ingersoll on Success.

(Inter Ocean Interview.)

Drifting then, as the conversation did from point to point of interest, like a freighted bark along a rugged coast, Mr. Ingersoll said:

"Fame, sir, is a fleeting thing. Men drop out of sight as fast as they are forgotten. I do not see why these men want to be president."

"Did you ever have any such aspirations?"

"When I was a young man I had ambitions. I wanted to be a great man, a man which came to a man in a place like that of president of the United States are enormous. After Garfield was nominated I said to him one day, 'Garfield, you are going to be elected president I hope, but by the time you have been president a month you'll wish you were running an ice-house in hades. Well, I saw him after he had been president a little while, and I said, 'Well, Garfield, how does it go?' And he answered, 'I don't know but I'd prefer the ice-house business.' I tell you the hardest thing a young man can do is to be a president. Success to a young man, coming to him when he is young, is one of the hardest things he can have to stand and keep his place. Fame! Why, think how few, how very few of the names of the great, grand men of Rome have been wafted along down to us across the centuries. And the men themselves, where is their fame? Who knows them? Who thinks of them? The men of this world, how fast they go, how little they leave behind them. And I tell you, when a man grows to be a great man, then does he begin to feel how little he is. The greater he is, the less he knows."

Reducing the Armies.

(Demorest's Monthly.)

The king of Europe have recently been conferring together. The emperors of Austria and Germany have met, and the king of Spain has paid a visit to several of the sovereign nations. The result is said to be an alliance between a number of the leading powers to bring about a reduction of the several armies. In times of profound peace Europe represents a vast camp, nearly all the able-bodied men are drafted into the armies, and the financial burdens of the several nations have, in consequence, become intolerable. It is believed that the conference of the sovereigns will be held to see if something cannot be done to reduce the military establishments, and save some of the money now wasted on costly and useless armaments.

Mexico's Railroads.

(Inter Ocean.)

American companies have built over \$30,000,000 worth of railroads in Mexico, and completed over 1,600 miles of track. The English lines consist of 333 miles, and the Mexican roads 635 miles.

A TRAGEDY IN PAST PARTICIPLES.

Sally Salter was a teacher and taught, and her friend Charley Church was a preacher who preached.

Though his friends all called him a screacher who screached.

His heart, when he saw her, kept sinking and sunk.

And his eye, meeting hers, kept winking and winking.

While she, in turn, felt to thinking and thinking.

And hastened to woo her, and sweetly he wooed.

For his love grew until to a mountain it grew.

And what he was longing to do, then he did.

In secret he wanted to speak, and he spoke.

To seek with his lips what his heart long had sought.

So he managed to let the truth leak and it leaked.

He asked her to ride to church, and they rode.

So she sweetly did glide that they both thought they glided.

And they came to the place to be tied and were tied.

And homeward, he said, let us drive, and they drove.

And as soon as they wished to arrive they arrived.

For whatever he couldn't contrive she contrived.

The kiss he was dying to steal then he stole.

At the feet where he wanted to kneel there he knelt.

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