

HELEN LAKEMAN;

The Story of a Young Girl's Struggle With Adversity.

BY JOHN R. MUSICK.
AUTHOR OF "THE BANKER OF BEDFORD,"
"WALTER BROWNFIELD," ETC.

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CHAPTER I.
WARREN STUART'S RETURN.

"Don't you hear the wagon, Rose?" Mrs. Stuart asked.

"Where?" queried the dark-eyed girl, breaking off the air she was humming and ceasing to swing on the creaky gate.

"Down at the bridge," the mother had evidently asked Rose the question to draw her attention and stop the noise she was making.

"Yes, I do; they are crossing the bridge now," cried Rose, letting go the gate and ready to fly down the road to meet her father and long-absent brother.

"No, no, don't," said her mother, "it may be some stranger crossing the bridge, and you will feel somewhat embarrassed to be running to meet him."

"O, I'd just pretend the pet lamb had got away, or the calf was out of the lot, and I had been sent after it," said Rose, with a merry laugh.

Mrs. Stuart smiled as she gazed into the happy face of her daughter. But the attention of both were fixed upon the road. The sun had now kindly dipped behind the tree-tops, so there was no need to shade their eyes longer, though the light was yet brilliant and glorious.

There was no sound after the wagon had crossed the bridge, and mother and daughter knew it was crossing the sandy strip at the foot of the hill. Soon the light rattle of a wagon could be heard. There is something in the clucking of a wagon by which we can almost recognize one from another.

Mrs. Stuart felt sure this was her husband's vehicle, yet, for fear she might be mistaken, she dared not say so. To have expressed even a firm belief would have sent Rose bounding toward it. But now it comes up the hill around the bend in the road, and there is no mistaking the tall gray and roan, as well as the large fine figure of father and husband in the back seat. And there too, at his side, is the brother and son, with Clarence before, driving up the hill at a sweeping trot. Rose uttered a scream of "there they come!" and was half way down the hill before her mother could utter a word.

She met the wagon down the hill much to the annoyance of Clarence, and springing in kissed her father and long-absent brother, and then sat down between them, like the child she was, to ride to the house.

Warren sprang from the wagon and was clasped in the arms of his proud mother.

"Oh, Warren, how you have grown; but you are only taller," said Mrs. Stuart. "You look real pale. I fear, my son, you have studied too hard this winter. Did you get through all right?"

"Yes, mother," said the young M. D., with a smile, "I am through with college now, though my preceptors say I am just prepared for study."

"O dear! I thought when any one went through college they never had to study any more," said the giddy Rose. "I thought they got it all at once."

Warren laughed at his sister, and told her she would learn better when she was older. He then offered to help his brother Clarence carry the trunk to the house, but the young farmer said that doctors were not fit persons to handle luggage, and, throwing the heavy trunk upon his own broad shoulder, he walked in the house with it.

The return of a youth to his home after a long absence is always pleasant. There was so much to talk about on this evening that Warren was kept busy. The college, the graduating speech he had delivered, which Rose wanted him to repeat for the "edification of the crowd," his classmates, boarding house, city and even journey home had to be thoroughly discussed. Then with supper came Pete, the peddler, who, in traveling around the Sandy Fork neighborhood, always made it convenient to stop over night with farmer Stuart. Pete was an old and intimate friend of the family, and Mrs. Stuart purchased many ribbons, laces, handkerchiefs, and also table linen, from his pack.

Pete unslung his wares and merchandise at the door with as much freedom and familiarity as if he were a member of the household. He greeted Warren's return in a hearty manner, declaring, in his laconic way:

"I'll be doggoned, boy, if you don't begin to look like a doctor, sure enough. All ye lack is some beard on yer face. Next time I git the rheumatism I'll furnish you a first-class patient."

Warren was the center of attraction at supper, and all the evening, but his mother, seeing how tired he was, induced him to retire early.

CHAPTER II.
THE LITTLE CRIPPLE.

Warren Stuart arose early the next morning, and as he had not been enabled the night before to pay the dumb animals of the place a visit, he concluded he would do so before breakfast. The sun was up shining brightly, and Clarence and Will were feeding the horses and getting ready for the day's work. There were many familiar creatures for him to see. Bally and Bess had to be patted, caressed and made to know that their former master

had come home. Then he paid a visit to the goats and sheep in the pasture. Some seemed to recognize him, and ran bleating toward the outstretched hand that so oft had fed them. When he came to gaze about on the beautiful landscape, the fields and pastures of his dear old home, he was almost sorry that he had that diploma with the degree of M. D.

"I could live happier here as a farmer-boy than anywhere else on earth," he sighed. But he remembered that he could not always be a boy, and all the boys could not be farmers. Blessed, indeed, is the lot of the boy who is a farmer, untrammelled by ambition, holding sweet communion with nature the year 'round—we can but envy the farmer. Thus, he toils, but when night comes he sleeps without harassing cares or annoyances of the morrow. No troubled brain and vexatious suits, fall in price of goods, tottering banks or dangerous patients disturb his sleep. And while he sleeps the corn and cattle grow in value.

All these reflections came to the mind of the young M. D. as he gazed about over the old homestead. At last he turned about to enter the house. He had wandered around to the rear of the farm-house, and was coming up to the kitchen when he discovered some one sitting on the back porch who attracted his attention. It was only a little boy, not over six or under four years of age to judge by his face, though his body was dwarfed and his little form misshapen. He was a little hunch-back, with a sweet patient face, which bore evidences of suffering, and yet the large blue eyes were clear and bright. He sat in his little rocking chair enjoying the warm sunlight which streamed in upon the latticed portico.

"Where did the child come from?" he asked aloud, though he evidently did not expect an answer, for he was too far away from the child for it to hear, and he saw no one else. Some one else saw him, however. Peddler Pete was an early riser, and on this morning, as was his usual custom when at farmer Stuart's, he lit his pipe and took a stroll "about the place" before breakfast.

"Ye never saw that little feller before?" he asked, stepping from behind a cherry bush within three or four feet of Warren, and nodding toward the little cripple.

"No, I never saw him, nor heard of him before."

"He's well known all over Sandy Fork," and Pete pressed his finger in his pipe bowl.

"That may be true, Pete, and he still be a stranger to me. You know I have not been about Sandy Fork very much for the last five years. Three years in college and then two in the medical school have taken considerable from my life."

"That's so, why doggon it, I'd forgot that," said Pete, puffing away at his pipe.

"That is an interesting child."

Pete shook his head sadly and said: "Yes, he's a good child and will never be at home any place save in Heaven. He's just one o' them good little boys the Sunday-school books tell us about who 'aller's die; he's got to dip, and then I guess some one will write a book about him."

"Who is he, and why is he here?"

"Didn't ye ever hear of Mr. Lakeman, Benjamin I believe, who lived down on Sandy Fork creek on the old Plumber place?"

"I think I heard of the name a year or so ago when I was home during vacation."

"Well, that's his child."

"Where is Mr. Lakeman?"

"O him? he's dead."

"And the boy's mother?"

"She's dead, too, died fust," said Pete, sadly, refilling his pipe.

"And the child is heir to the Plumber farm? Well, it's very valuable, and he has ample support."

"Not much," said Pete, striking a match and applying it to his pipe.

"Why not?"

"The little fellow was eured out o' it some way. He hasn't nothin' but a hundred and sixty acres o' brush and hills not worth ten cents an acre."

"Then father keeps him as a matter of charity?"

"No, boy, yer wrong agin—I should have said doctor, but I forgot," and Pete laughed. But Warren was too much interested in the little cripple before him to heed the little joke of his friend, the peddler.

"You say my father does not keep him?"

"No, yer father does keep him; but not as a matter of charity," said Pete. "He has other means then?"

"Not a dollar."

"Why, Pete, what do you mean?" Warren asked, in astonishment, "you talk in riddles; please explain yourself."

"Haw, haw, haw, I like to see ye puzzled, boy—no, doc, I mean—but I'll not keep you on the ragged edge o' suspense any longer. That boy is supported by his sister."

"His sister?"

"Yes, Helen Lakeman. There were only two o' them when the old folks died. I didn't know much about the family cos' I'd never sold 'em much goods, they bein' out o' my regular range, ye know. But when Lakeman died it seems every body, even his own gal, thought he was well-to-do in the world, but some debts come agin his estate and took every thing except that brush and hill land, too poor to sprout beans. Well, there were the gal, then fourteen, for it was two years ago, and her crippled brother only four. She had some education an' tried to keep school, but couldn't pass muster, some way then she hired out; she's been

here I believe for the last six or seven months."

The story was a simple one, and told with but very little feeling on the part of Pete. It was simply the struggle of a young girl trying to do her duty.

Warren received it as such. He saw nothing especially grand in it then. There was nothing noble in a girl hiring out to earn a livelihood for herself, or herself and invalid brother, much less any thing romantic. What romance could there be in a girl hiring out. It was too common, and a romance to be a romance in the world's eyes must be very unnatural, very uncommon.

"He's a nice little boy," said Pete, after a few moments' silence, still looking at the child. "Though he's awfully crippled and can't walk without havin' his hands on his knees; he's just as patient as kin be, an' Helen she's mighty good to him. She never scolds him an' allers looks to his comfort, though she be tired out. I sometimes think death to that child will be a blessing."

Pete's tones were sad. This nomadic man, with all his bad grammar and pronunciation, was something of a philosopher. He had traveled considerably in his humble calling, and, having a keen perception, picked up many truths not to be found in text books. In fact, he was an educated man, not from the standpoint of books, but from nature.

"Why do you think the death of that child would be a blessing, Pete?" Warren asked.

"Did ye never see a bird with a crippled wing, and see how the poor little thing tried to fly and couldn't? Well, this child, good as he is, holds down that gal. Every cent she makes goes to support herself an' the child."

The breakfast bell rang, and Pete did not complete his sentence.

That morning Warren noticed that the eyes of the hired girl, who was sacrificing herself for her crippled brother, were very large and blue, and her forehead was broad and high, and her features were regular. She was neat and tidy, and did not look at all like the sloven kitchen girls he had seen. Her hair was golden and neatly gathered in a net. There was a sweet sadness upon her face, which touched him not a little, when he remembered that all her earnings barely supported herself and her brother.

CHAPTER III.
AT CHURCH—THE MOONLIGHT WALK.

Warren Stuart regarded the girl as a commonplace mortal, and yet there was something a little more than common about her. He seldom saw her, save at mealtime, when she came in to wait upon the table. She knew a servant's place, and kept it. She was modest almost to shyness, and seldom spoke, never unless compelled to do so. Commonplace as he supposed her to be, he one day thought he discerned a poetic sadness in the large, dark blue eye, as she stood like one in a reverie. The kitchen work at Stuart's was no very small matter, and it required all her time and energy to accomplish her part. She was nearly always busy, and frequently when he saw that sad worn face, and tired little form, he felt a sympathy for her.

One evening after the day's work was done, he was passing the kitchen where Helen would insist on staying, and heard her engaged in an animated conversation with her brother. It was a simple conversation such as a child might understand about Heaven. Little Amos was asking his sister if he should be relieved of his infirmities there, and whether or not he would see his mother and father. The answers of the girl were low and sweet, assuring the little cripple that he would suffer no pain there, and would meet those who had gone before. Simple and commonplace as the conversation was, it had something about it which affected Warren.

It was Warren's intention to remain at home during the summer, and early in the fall seek a location to enter into the practice of his profession. It was now the busy season for farmers, and he did not meet many of his former friends and acquaintances. The second Sunday after his return was the day for preaching in the Sandy Fork school-house. The Methodist had taken this in one of their circuits, and sent Rev. Allen Blaze, a famous "gospel pounder" to preach there once a month. The school-house was about three-fourths of a mile from Mr. Stuart's and down the creek known as Sandy Fork. It was well hidden in the trees and the road to it led through the forest. The new preacher was very popular and his audiences were always large. Not infrequently the school-house failed to hold them and many stood outside at the door and windows.

Peter Stair, the peddler, had been his rounds and "dropped in" at the Stuart's the night before the Sunday on which Mr. Blaze was to preach.

"You'd better go'n hear him," said Peter to Warren. "He's a regular stunner, I tell ye. He can make things blaze, too. His sermons are all wool, hand-made and warranted not to fade. You can hear one on Sunday, and it'll keep a ringin' through yer ears all the rest o' the week just like one tune at a dance. Besides, sometimes he fairly lifts a feller out o' his boots. He raises ye so high ye can most git a bird's-eye view o' the New Jerusalem."

Warren consented to go, and the next morning the horses were hitched to the wagon, himself, his father and mother and sister got in and drove off to the school-house. The other two boys went on horseback, preferring a gallop through the woods to the ease and comfort of any wagon or carriage.

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CHINESE MASONRY.

The Meeting Place of a Curious Lodge in New York City.

Old Masons were, until late, of the opinion that no such thing as a Chinese Mason existed. One gentleman said he had seen Arabs and Turks who were good Masons, but, to the best of his knowledge, no Chinaman was in the order. Nevertheless, there are not only Chinese Masons, but right here in New York there is a Chinese Masonic lodge in full blast with a membership of over three hundred. It is a native organization, not allied directly to the Free and Accepted Masons, but said to be founded on principles very nearly akin.

The lodge-room is at No. 18 Mott street, second floor, front, and has recently been remodeled and refitted in very good shape, all newly painted and cleaned. The lodge furniture is of Chinese design, and imported from China expressly for the society at a great expense. A tall flagstaff with a rope for running up colors is on top of the building. Above the door as one enters the lodge-room is a red sign in native characters signifying "Chinese Masonic Society," and down the sides are two long slips of red paper bearing no-tos. One of these is "Do good to one another," and the other relates to the business of the order.

The interior is like most Chinese quarters, only lighter, and not full of odd turns and unsuspected corners. Immediately on entering one is led into a sort of ante-room and thence into the main or lodge-room. At the lower end of this room is the altar, and a very valuable one it is, costing in China \$1,500. Above it is an alcove in which a colored drawing is suspended. It is not the least curious thing in the place, the design being three figures, one seated and two others bending over his shoulder. The seated figure represents the venerable father of Chinese Masonry. The face is heavy, placid and adorned with a long black beard. The other two are respectively the spirits of light and darkness, who are supposed to be giving him counsel. In front of the altar a lamp is hung. It is never extinguished, and burns in commemoration of the dead of the order. Another emblem is two sticks of sandal-wood punk thrust into a box of sand. They keep smoldering away and fill the air with a faint but sweet perfume.

On the wall is a long board, and on this are pasted a great number of sheets of paper covered with Chinese hieroglyphics. These are the lists of members voted on in the New York lodge. Near the raster hangs two books. One of these is sent out from the Supreme Lodge at San Francisco and gives a detailed account of a number of cases of those in distress and sickness, and the whereabouts of each one who needs help. The other is a subscription book in which the various amounts subscribed are entered. At intervals these two books and the amount raised are transmitted to the Supreme Lodge, from which the dependent members are relieved.

Meetings are not held upon regular nights, but at intervals decided upon by the dignitaries of the order, as the necessities of business may demand. The members are notified of meetings, held generally on Sunday nights, by the appearance of a triangular flag at the top of the pole on top of the house. This flag is white, and bears the picture of a huge red dragon with its tail towards the point. There are grips, signs and passwords, exactly as in an American lodge. "The traveling card" of this society is quite a curiosity in itself. It is a square of red silk inscribed with Chinese characters, and is a document highly prized by all its possessors.—N. Y. World.

Edward Wilmot Blyden is perhaps the ablest negro in the world. He can read the Koran in Arabic, the Bible in Hebrew, Homer in Greek, Virgil in Latin, Shakespeare in English, and Dante in Italian. Though a native of the island of St. Thomas, he was brought up in Monrovia, Liberia, and there, by his unusual literary ability, he has attracted attention to himself as the champion of a negro civilization that shall be coterminal with the limits of the Dark Continent. Blyden controverts the idea of Winwood Read that the natives in Africa will disappear before the whites, as the Indians did in America. The climate will save them, and, instead of being destroyed by the Europeans, they will be civilized by the efforts now being made to open Africa to commerce and settlement. To Blyden the Anglo-Saxon is hard of heart and strong of will, while the negro is the child of love and suffering. Blyden is a complete know-nothing, and his cry is "Africa for the Africans." He is likely to have few to oppose him in this matter, for not even the children of Africans raised in America can be induced to remain there if they have the means to get away.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

William Ulysses Scott, a seventeen-year-old public-school boy of New York, has developed the genius of a lightning-calculator. Young Scott can answer any question in mathematics almost as quickly as it is put to him, but he doesn't seem to know how he does it. His teachers have racked their brains to find problems too hard for him to solve, but as yet he has entirely baffled them. To their inquiries as to how he does it he only answers, "I dun know."

A lady teacher of music in Ontario County, N. Y., inserted her professional card in one of the county newspapers. It was seen by an old lover in Chicago, who at once hunted her up, explained his absence of a quarter of a century, and married her. It pays to advertise.

A colossal stick of lumber from Puget Sound has been contributed to the Mechanics' exhibition at San Francisco. Its length is 151 feet, and it is 20x20 inches through. It is believed to be the longest piece of lumber ever turned out of any sawmill.

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