

A Modern Heroine.

"There are no heroes now, the race is dead!"
The gay and happy Julia smiling said,
Betwixt the changes of the dance. "I know
The last were killed by cannon long ago."
"And as for heroines—my friend, like you
They, science 'stead of sentiment pursue."
Across the southland swept a bitter cry—
"Help us! Have pity, for we die, we die!"
"In every house one lieth sick or dead.
For grief our hearts cannot be comforted."
Like a great sob that prayer shook all the land.
And gold, and strength of skillful brain
and hand
Were offered as to God, to stave the woe
That o'er the land was going to and fro.
Among the women nurses one most fair
There was, blue-eyed, with honey-colored hair.
"Where help is needed most, send me,"
she said.
They set her to a spot whence all had fled,
Save the plague-stricken. Poverty and sin
Had wrestled there with all their frightful kin.
But brave, unflinching, went the blue-eyed nurse,
To tend and watch sick beggars, thieves,—
and worse.
Day after day the dank, warm fog and rain
Made carnival for death, and grief and pain
Wailed up to God; yet calm, from bed to bed,
She walked betwixt the dying and the dead.
The hot sun, like a golden flame, shown down
Upon the silent, fever-stricken town,
And men took heart; but, in an attic lay
The fair-haired, stranger woman all the day.
Nor spake to all the weeping folks who came
To sob a fervent blessing on her name.
And long before a new day dawned, they hid
Her body 'neath a rough-hewn coffin-lid.
And quickly buried it, crying, "Alas!
The brave, true soul has fled! Alas! Alas!"
"For sorrow all our hearts are like to break;
We hold all women higher for her sake."
And on the tablet set above her breast,
Was written, "Julia: entered into Rest."
—Golden Rule.

The Spiders that Danced.

One little spider without a thing to do;
Another came to gossip, then there were two.
Two little spiders with their tongues quite free;
One came to quiet them, then there were three.
Three little spiders talking matters o'er;
One came to beg some web, then there were four.
Four little spiders with mischief all alive;
One came to bring a fly, then there were five.
Five little spiders cutting up such tricks;
One stopped to "see about it," then there were six.
Six little spiders of the town of Devon;
Another came from Brunswick, then there were seven.
Seven little spiders talking there so late;
Another came to scold them, then there were eight.
Eight little spiders sitting in a line;
Another came to count them, then there were nine.
Nine little spiders wished to dance like men;
Another came to teach them, then there were ten.
Ten little spiders dancing such a jig;
The fairies came to wonder at the funny rig.
Then these little spiders, black and brown
and grey,
Went dancing and dancing the summer night away.
They danced and they danced till the morning came again;
"For there's no place to stop," said these little spiders ten.
So they danced and they danced, and a merry time had they—
It maybe they're dancing on that very spot to-day!
—CLARA F. DENTON, in *Wide Awake*.
—Blessedness is a whole eternity older than damnation.—*Richter*.

Down the Chimney.

BY HELLAN C. WEEKS.

"Quay way sanee mow ee!" said Lozette, confidently, leaving her seam and creeping up behind me. "Kaget mow ee!" ("Truly the boy is crying!") with a little scornful look, as if crying was all that could be expected of a white boy. But as a sob escaped, and then another, sympathy stirred her fierce little heart, and she ran to the lounge and sat down by him.
"Kahwin mow ee. Wagonind nechee?" ("Don't cry. What's the matter?") she said.
"Get out!" Harry returned, flouncing over with his face to the wall; and though Lozette knew no English, kick and tone did not need interpretation. For a moment she looked ready to kick back; then deciding here was something she could not understand, went back to her work.
"What is the trouble, Harry?" I asked. And with another frounce, Harry rolled over and showed a very red unhappy face.
"Why, Christmas is most here."
"And that is something to cry about is it?"
"O' course, it is, if you are away off where you can't keep it. I always hung up stockings, and had things in it; and now father has gone below, and I shan't have a thing. Oh-h-h!"
Once more Harry rolled over to the wall, and laid silent, as if his grief were too great for words.
"Hang up your stockings just the same, Harry," I said. "There will be something in it, I promise you. And now run out and see what a good bargain you can make with Beshkay for those rabbits. See, he has a string of them."
Harry ran, and Lozette followed, her black locks streaming behind and her little red blanket dragged by one corner. After followed Stars and Stripes, our Indian cat, and a good judge of rabbits in any form; and after him would have run Nub, smallest and wisest as well as fattest of gray kittens, had not the door shut suddenly and driven her back to the window, where she sat and watched all that could be seen of the children.
It did seem a lonely Christmas for this little fellow, only nine years old, and many days' journey through dark pine wood and over frozen lake from the mother who till now had always had him close under her wing. Too close, perhaps; for bones and eyes were all that could be seen of him when, two months before, he rolled off the ox team which brought him all the way from St. Cloud. A grist and saw-mill had long been promised our Red Lake Indians, and Harry's father had taken the contract for building it, and come up with his men to cut timber for the dam and make ready for the spring work. At the last moment fired with enthusiasm at the sight of the great teams, the gayly dressed guides, and his father's gun and knife, Harry pleaded to be taken, too; and was, on half an hour's notice, to the utter bewilderment of Polly, aged three, who decided that he was dead and never would be seen again, and who wept big tears many times a day.
So it chanced that, as we walked down the clearing to meet the teams, said to be close at hand, and thought of the home letters, which came so seldom and only in this way, we were startled to see rising from the blankets this great-eyed, fair-faced child, who shouted, as he looked:
"Why, Pa! I see a white woman! I thought that there wasn't anything but Indians. Can you make doughnuts, ma'am?"
"Yes, sir," I said, "and small pies, too."
This was our introduction; and the acquaintance was continued by all the party sleeping on our floor that night. By afternoon of the next day a house was builded, and, in one or two more, bunks made at one side and filled with spruce twigs, a great fire started in the middle of the room, and every-

thing ready for housekeeping. Don't be frightened at the idea of a fire in middle of the room, for nothing else would satisfy a logging camp. To begin with, the floor is earth, you know, and the chimney not much more than a great square hole in the roof. The fire place is made by piling up earth underneath it and putting four logs in a square about it. Then such a fire is started as you have never seen. Whole trees feed it, and as the ashes accumulate they pack down from the weight of the logs, and make wonderful nests, in which are buried pots of beans eaten not less than three times a day, and baked to just the color and flavor given by our grandmothers' brick ovens.

In these same hot ashes the Indian boys roast potatoes, snow-birds with the feathers on, and even rabbits; and in taking lessons in all these accomplishments Harry had till now almost forgotten to be homesick. To-day one of his old headaches had kept him prisoner and had given time for thinking. His father had been gone for a week, having left to over-see the sending up of supplies; and, though Harry had not quite settled whether Father or Santa Claus had the most to do with stockings, it was certain that they held communication of some sort, and, were on the whole, rather necessary to each other.

With the evening, which began about four o'clock, we gathered around the open fire; and Harry looked critically at the mud chimney, made, in Indian fashion of a frame work of sticks, plastered over and held together by clay.

"It's a shaky old thing," he said "and I don't believe Santa Claus could get down there if he tried. Besides I'm sure he never came up so far."

"Why, he starts from here," said I. "Don't you know he drives reindeer, and they live farther north than we are—close up to Hudson's Bay."

"Well, but he has to drive down to some town or city for his toys and things. He has to see all our fathers and find out what we want. No, he don't either. I don't believe there is a Santa Claus. Any way he wouldn't come among Indians. They don't hang up their stockings."

"Ah! but they would, if they had any," I said. "And he always comes wherever he knows he is wanted. You must have more faith, or he will feel too hurt even to look at your stocking."

Harry shook his head, but said no more; and in the day or two afterward seemed almost to have forgotten the whole subject. But as the day before Christmas passed I saw him in the afternoon at his little carpetbag, laying all his little stockings side by side, and finally taking up the shortest one.

"I'd hang up Pa's, if I was at home," he said. "But I'm sure there can't be enough up here to fill even the toe of this one. Shall you hang up yours, Mrs. Weeks?"

"Why, of course, Harry. It would not be Christmas without it. Mine has been hung ever since I was two years old."

"How many times in all?" asked artful Harry, at which attempt to find out just how old I was I remained silent.

Harry laughed and then turned red.

"Mother said I mustn't ask people how old they were," he said. "But I always forget. I don't see why I shouldn't though. I'd just as soon tell how old I am; and I'd have to, any way, 'cause everybody always asks me. I don't see why you've got to tell when you're small, and haven't got to tell when you're big."

"Here's one big person who will tell," I said, whispering in his ear. "Now give me the stocking, and I'll sew a loop on it, so that you can hang it on one of those knobs in the chimney. You can hang the Doctor's and mine too."

Harry spent an hour hanging the

three stockings first on one rough knob and then another; and finally went to bed, thinking to-morrow would come more quickly that way than any other. Then, leaving him asleep, at last, we bundled up and went out for a walk down the road, Leech Lake, well trodden now by the lumbermen's feet. We looked in a moment as we passed the lodging camp, finding the "Deacon's seat" in front of the great fire filled with a dozen men, listening to some story from Mr. Lee the overseer, who started up as he saw us and came to the door.

"I was telling 'em a bit about Christmas in the Old Country, ma'am," he said. "I'm English born, you know, and many times I've been out half the night, singing Christmas waits. But that's long ago. Most o' mine these years back have been in the woods, and I allow we might as well work to-morrow as lay off. Here's something for the little chap, though. He ought to have some sort o' Christmas. Good night to you, ma'am."

"It does seem as if Santa Claus would have a wild time driving over these wild pine-tops," the Doctor said, and we turned from the bright doorway to the night and stood for a moment watching the pale, clear auroras, as they rose and fell in the north. "What a dense forest, everywhere but in this little clearing, and drearily, far away, home seems to-night. We must do something lively. I think I'll go up on our roof, and see how our chimney looks at the top."

"Softly, then," I said, "or you may waken Harry."

And so we crept to the back of the house, where the roof sloped almost to the ground, and I watched as the ascent was made.

The dress for that country is, on the whole, not very civilized, and I think our best friends would have studied a little before recognizing the couple who stood there—the Doctor especially, buried in a buffalo overcoat, a mighty many colored scarf wound about his neck, a fox-skin cap with lap-ropes tied over his ears, moccasin boots and rabbit-mittens. The snow crunched as he stepped softly toward the chimney and looked down; starting back, in a moment, as if he had been shot. The roof sloped suddenly; and, forgetting where he was, he lost his footing and rolled over and over to the bottom, half burying himself in a drift, and laughing so that it was impossible to help him out.

"Hush!" he said. "That child was looking straight up the chimney, and such a pair of eyes I never saw."

"I'll go in," I said listening for some sound. "He may be terribly frightened."

"No, don't, unless he calls out," said Doctor. "He didn't look frightened, only wonderfully surprised. Wait awhile."

No sound from within. And after a time we walked; coming back presently to find Harry sound asleep, and smiling, as if in the midst of pleasant dreams.

Long before daylight the next morning he had roused us with exclamations over the fat bulging stockings. And as we threw on some wraps and came out to look with him he met us triumphantly.

"Nobody need ever tell me again there isn't a Santa Claus. Why, I saw him my own self."

"What an idea Harry!"

"Oh! but I did. It was when you had gone to walk. I heard a little crunch, crunch on the roof; and I was bound to peek, an' I wasn't a bit frightened either. I looked right up an' he looked right down, an' he laughed, so I could see his teeth. An' just look at my stocking! Did you ever look at Cracky?"

Harry sat down to his, and we to ours—all of them most astonishingly full, and giving plenty to talk about the whole day long. And toward evening Harry wrote, or rather, printed,

a letter to his mother, a copy of which you will see, spelling and all:
RED LAKE, CHRISTMAS.

DERE MOTHER:

Santy Claws did come. I did not think he would. I saw him looking down the chimne, and he saw me. I was not afrade one speck. He gave me a big knife. mister Lee says he knows about that knife, but I gess not. There was candy and nuts and razsns, and a book, and a cake. I gess misses weeks put inn the cake. It tasted like hers. tell Polle I love her. I want to see you all. Yours truly,
HARRY MORRILL.

Why?

Why do we see people trifling away their precious time, seemingly forgetful that every lost moment is irretrievably lost?

Why is it that people will turn a deaf ear to the voice of every-day duties, time-and again, when there is so much danger in delay?

Why will they persist in sowing, in early life, the seeds of want, distress, crime, and misery—when they know they must reap as they sow, and of that, an abundant harvest?

Why do they trust the formation of their character to chance, when if they would only consider, they could not fail to realize that they were at sea without compass or rudder, with natural depravity for their chart?

Why will they from middle life, even on to old age, push from them the idea of death, when they know that all men are mortal?

Why will they search far and wide for happiness, instead of in their own hearts, forgetting that they must plant and care for the tree, if they would eat of its fruit?

Why will they persist in relying on their own strength, when they know of the thousands that have fallen, through the weakness of the flesh?

Why will they refuse to acknowledge humble dependence upon the God who gave and sustains their life?

Why will they scorn to own allegiance to such a mighty king as the maker of Heaven and Earth?

Why will they refuse the shelter of the Rock, the least of whose weight would grind them to powder?—*Rural Home*.

A Glimpse at Jean Ingelow.

In a smaller room at the end, which looked into the conservatory at one side, and the garden in the rear, beside an oriental divan, stood Miss Ingelow, a small, slight woman of perhaps forty years, with a pleasant manner, and a quiet, somewhat timid smile. Her eyes were bright and expressive; her hair, tinged with gray, was drawn smoothly from her forehead, under a head-dress of muslin and lace. Her dress was of black silk, trimmed with crape. Altogether she looked a model of a quiet English lady, in a pleasant English home.

After a few cordial words from her hostess, one of the guests, an American lady, was emboldened to ask a direct question concerning a favorite poem.

"Miss Ingelow," she said, "it is thought in America that your song, 'When Sparrows Build,' refers to the story of Lady Franklin. Will you tell me if that is true?"

"Oh no," replied Miss Ingelow, smiling; "it is not true at all. Lady Franklin is a very dear friend of mine, and probably that fact gave rise to the report."

"How much I should like to go to America!" she remarked later, in the course of the conversation. It is needless to say that she was most heartily assured of the warm welcome which would be given her should she ever visit our country.

The desire to make the trip across the water seems by the way, to be almost universal among the English as with us. America seeming, at the present date, to be to them a kind of Mecca or Promised Land in the way of excursions.—*Harper's Bazar*.

—The four electric lights which illuminate the reading-rooms of the British Museum at evening have each a power equal to 5,000 candles, and cost a shilling an hour.