

The Overton Claim.

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"Yes, the major's daughter, as like him as two peas and the very apple of his eye. Folk that knew him well said in those days that his Peggy—his 'Pretty Peggy' he called her—was the one thing in the world he put before the claim. How he ever agreed she should stay a whole winter away from him is one of the mysteries, but he did agree to trust her in care of her mother's sister, who was a matchmaker and a fool. When Peyton Fauntleroy came, she thought here was her chance to make an end of the feud. She let Margaret believe he was a widower until the girl was mad with love for him and he more than lunatic over her. Then my lady wrote to her brother-in-law circumstantially the state of affairs; also that it was his Christian duty to see that Peyton divorced his wife and married Margaret. When the letter was past recall, she got frightened and told Peyton what she had done. He did what anybody who knew him would surely have expected—told Margaret of his love, his despair, and persuaded her to run away with him. He would take her to New Orleans, to France, where nothing, nobody, could separate them, and make her life all one long happy dream.

"So at least the aunt told us when we got there, your uncle and I. I was his clerk at 15. Major Overton had let us know what was in the wind. I remember now how he looked stepping into the office with that woman's letter in his hand. Though we set off at once, somehow he got ahead of us and had been three hours on the trail of the elopers before we got to their starting point. We pushed after at our best speed, but that was mighty slow. It was February, had been raining a week, and all the world was a quagmire. Your Uncle Allen was a hunchback. Peyton throw him in one of their boyish scuffles and hurt his spine, but he was a fine man, a fine rider for all that. We got ahead at a sort of snail's gait, and I remember thinking that he looked as hurt and miserable as did Major Overton.

"Presently we began hearing of our couple. Peyton had a team that even those roads could not stall, but in one place the trap upset; in another a broken strap delayed them. They were heading for the railway station, 50 miles off as the road ran, but less than 30 if once you got across the river, up whose bank we were riding. But crossing for a sane man was out of the question. The stream was bankful and running like a mill race. Higher up the waters had run out a trifle; besides a considerable affluent must be reckoned with half way.

"Yet we did not think even Peyton would tempt fate in such fashion, even though he knew who was hard on his track. We had ridden 20 miles or more when we caught sight of the major and heard him give next minute a wild, strangling shout.

"The road ran straight and level for a mile in front of him. Half way a track ran down from it to a ford, passable at low water, and into this Peyton Fauntleroy was madly urging his tired horses. He must have known the water was

swimming. I think he reckoned that the team would take him half way over, and from there he could carry Margaret safe to the other bank. It was just a bare chance, but I am sure he chose it—the risk, I mean—with full knowledge, in preference to the certainty of losing her forever.

"He sent the horses so slowly down to the water that we, all his pursuers, were in halting distance as they struck the stream. We shouted to him to stop. We had as well called to the wind. I saw what the slowing up meant. He wanted the horses to be well breathed when they lost their footing in the water. They had long ago thrown out their little luggage—everything, in fact, that was movable—to lighten the load. I tell you it was a sight to see that tall, handsome fellow, with such a flower face beside him, drive down so quickly and carefully into the raging torrent.

"The beasts took it gallantly. When they lost their feet, after one snort they swam beautifully for the other side, taking the current quartering so that the buggy did not upset. But for accident they must have got over safe. Indeed they were more than midstream when a big drift log shot down upon them and sent all to the bottom, the horses madly plunging, their master clinging to the last to the girl he had brought to her death.

"Before we could stop him Major Overton was in the water. I never saw such a swimmer. First he brought Margaret to us quite dead, but with the happiest smile on her face. When he laid Peyton at our feet, we saw how it happened. He had the print of a hoof in the right temple. Major Overton looked at the two of them—oh, such a look!—and said in gasps to your uncle: 'Remember—please—there has been an accident. My daughter—will remain for awhile longer—with—her aunt.'

your uncle saw to it that things should be as he said. They had great respect for each other after that, those two men, though they never spoke again. In fact, if your uncle had lived, I think the claim would have been settled years ago, but he died in six months, leaving everything to you."

"The claim. Oh, it is settled now and forever," young Fauntleroy said, sinking back with a long, shivering sigh.

CHAPTER X.

Three days later Hawkins walked into Mr. Hildreth's office with much the air of a man going to have all his teeth pulled. The older lawyer greeted him cheerily enough, but to Hawkins' ear there was an under note of triumph. In truth, Hawkins had in the last two days suffered a moral shock that had left him a prey to emotional neuralgia. What he misread as elation was really but a sort of whistling to keep the courage up.

Mr. Hildreth knew well whose business alone could bring Hawkins to his office and had got some hint of the syndicate's overtures. So it was plain to his mind that Major Overton's antagonists meant to force the fighting, with what result he had no manner of doubt. Well as he loved a legal battle, Mr. Hildreth had never been able to quite sink the man in the lawyer. Next to Major Overton himself he would feel the sting of the claim's oversetting, which, as he had all along felt, only a miracle could prevent.

After a glam "good day" Hawkins dropped heavily into a chair, put his elbow on the table and said, affectedly: "I tell you, you don't know what may happen. If anybody had said to me a week ago things were going to turn out thus and so, I'd 'a' told them to their teeth they lied. I would—sure as I sit here."

"What's the matter? Syndicate busted or gone back on you?" Mr. Hildreth asked, with a sympathy that had the liveliness of relief. Hawkins snorted with rage. He was being mocked as well as despised.

"See here," he growled, "let a man down easy, can't you? I couldn't feel more out up if the claim had been all my own."

Mr. Hildreth looked puzzled. "Is this one of your jokes?" he asked. "For the life of me I can't tell what you are driving at."

"Don't you really know?" "What?" "On your honor, now, haven't you heard?"

"About what?" "Why, this infernal foolishness of Allen Fauntleroy's."

"What's the size of it?" "Oh, nothing much! Only he gives up the fight. Will let the case go by default next time it comes up. Just now, too, when the thing means a cool million in hand and more to follow. All lost for lack of a little bit of sand."

Mr. Hildreth gave a long whistle. "The boy's no fool. He must be drunk or crazy," he said, half to himself. Then to Hawkins: "Are you sure? Maybe he is only joking to frighten you."

"Wish I could think so," Hawkins retorted ruefully, "but I can't. He put it in black and white. I read the letter myself. What's more, I saw it dispatched last night by special messenger to Major Overton. That was why I thought you knew. I made sure he would be here before me this morning."

"We have seen nothing of him yet. Oh, I say, Vance"—to his partner, who was just coming in—"here are the story books' outdone, the miracle come to pass and Major Overton a millionaire if he chooses to be."

Vance looked sharply at Hawkins. He did not trust the man. After he had heard the story he turned to the news-bearer, saying:

"For such an effect there must be a cause. Can you enlighten us as to that?" Hawkins shifted his feet uneasily and answered, with dropped eyes: "Oh, he saw the oil major and heard—well, some things that have happened. So the notion takes him to play Don Quixote, not fight any longer with an old man and a—child."

"H-m-m," Vance said, setting his lips close. "The child's pretty well grown. I saw her only last month, and a handsome, high stepping, up headed young filly you seldom cross. Pity she and Alley can't make a match of it. That would be an ideal settlement of this 50-year-old lawsuit."

Hawkins and Mr. Hildreth exchanged looks. Clearly Vance did not know all that might be known regarding Overton's claim. Finding the others silent, he went on:

"Good thing for you, Hawkins, to have it settled anyway. I was talking yesterday with one of those syndicate fellows. From what he said, no matter whom they buy from, your commission is safe. I always thought you were a sharp fellow. Now I know you for the prince of double action bargain makers."

Hawkins smiled all over his face at the equivocal compliment. Yet in the same breath he sighed.

"One way I am safe," he said. "Still if Allen had held out—but never mind. As you say, any settlement is better than none, for no settlement no sale, and that's the main thing with me. I tell you it's a chance that doesn't come to a poor country lawyer more than once in a lifetime."

"Hear him, will you?" said Vance, apostrophizing space. "Poor country lawyer indeed! Why, Hawk, your bank account is positively corpulent, your purse overloaded with fees and charges from the claim alone. You owe Major Overton a monument when he dies. He's been your best friend. His persistence has been the cornerstone of your fortune. I don't wonder that you are downhearted over not having to fight him longer. But cheer up, old lad. Once the furnaces are running again, there'll be fine pickings in the harvest of damage claims."

Hawkins turned the livid blue red of a turkey gobbler's snout. Though money was his god, he hated to be proclaimed its worshiper. He got up, saying stiffly:

"Good day, gentlemen. Mr. Hildreth, no doubt you'll see the major pretty

soon. When you do, my regards to him, and tell him I'll be pleased to wait on him with the agent of those foreign capitalists. Not that I'm trying to worm you out, sir. Not at all. Only I know their ways and might give you and the major a hint or two worth having."

"No a doubt of it," said Mr. Hildreth, bowing his visitor away. As the door closed Vance flung a curse after him and said, shaking himself as if to be rid of something unpleasant:

"That fellow walks straight enough, but I never see him that I don't feel as though he were crawling and I wanted to tread on him."

"It would scarcely be safe, in the main he's a good enough fellow, but there is something of the reptile about him," Mr. Hildreth said, puffing a big blue cloud all above his head.

"You mean the fangs, I suppose," Vance said, banging down the lid of his desk with extra force and putting his heels upon it.

Mr. Hildreth eyed him approvingly. "That's right," he said. "Old man, I never before knew you to give yourself a holiday at 11 o'clock in the morning, but what we have just heard requires to be celebrated in some of our uncommon fashion. It is so unheard of I can hardly believe it even yet."

"Could anything surprise you more?" asked Vance, lighting a cigar. "I hardly think so."

"Not even if the major should refuse to give up the fight?" "Good God, Vance! You don't dream he will do that?"

"It is what I expect of him." "Vance!" "Hildreth!" "Are you sane and sober?" "I'll make affidavit to both."

"What gives you such an idea?" "Major Overton, if I at all comprehend him, has fought all these years not for fortune, but to clear his father's name. Winning by default will never do that."

"No. I remember now, he has put away every compromise. But, hello! What's this? Letters from Ridgely?" Jubilee, in Sunday best, came through the office door and laid a packet on the desk before Mr. Hildreth, saying, with his best school boy:

"My employer, Major Overton, bequeathed me to survey those letters into your hand and seal. Will you have the



A minute later he passed it to Vance, amiability to give me a reacknowledgment of it to take back to him enduring my return?"

"Yes, wait outside," said Vance, seeing that Mr. Hildreth was absorbed in the note, whose seal he had immediately broken. A minute later he passed it to Vance, who read:

Find inclosed, from Peyton Fauntleroy's son, a full withdrawal of their side of the case. Let him know at once that the suit must go on to a legal determination. If he will not fight, the day of trial I shall be able to prove my case. Meantime believe me, your obedient servant, FRANCIS BILLINGTON.

Vance laid it down, with a hard breath, but next minute laughed aloud, saying:

"Poor Hawkins! He'll be madder than a wet hen."

(CONTINUED.)

Mrs. Billington. Students of the musical history of the close of the eighteenth century are familiar with the name of Mrs. Billington. For some 30 years, at a time when the art of singing was perhaps at its zenith, she reigned as one of the bright particular stars of the musical world. Sir Joshua immortalized her as St. Cecilia, and in the false fashion of the day it was said that instead of representing her as listening to the angels he should have painted the angels as silent before her. Michael Kelly, the pupil of Mozart, said of her, "I thought her an angel in beauty and the St. Cecilia of song," and Haydn naively recorded in his diary, "She is a great genius, and all the women hate her because she is beautiful." Her history is very curious, and the brilliancy of her career as an artist is in strange contrast to the scandals which surrounded her from her very childhood.

The Georgian era was not a period remarkable for morality, on or off the stage, but making every allowance for the exaggeration of newspaper gossip, it is impossible to come to the conclusion that the life of Mrs. Billington was remarkable for its virtue, even if the darker accusations which were freely brought against her are untrue. It says much for her personal charm that she remained from first to last a favorite with the public, and her fascination as a singer enabled her to triumph over difficulties which, even in those days, would have wrecked the career of a less popular artist.—National Review.

A Lynching Tax. Senator Flanagan has introduced a bill in the Virginia legislature to prevent lynching. It carries into effect in part the governor's recommendations by providing that the board of supervisors of any county or council of any city or town wherein a lynching occurs shall pay into the state treasury \$3 for every 1,000 inhabitants for each lynching.

Harriet M. Aspinwall. Miss Harriet M. Aspinwall has been appointed by Dr. Charles R. Skinner, state superintendent of public instruction in New York, to be his confidential clerk at a salary of \$2,000 per year. Superintendent Skinner recently said that the four women school commissioners are among the best in the state.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

A BOSTON WOMAN WHO HAS SUCCEEDED AS A CONTRACTOR.

Some Alluring Deceptions—Women as Pharmacists—Chains and Beads Fashionable—Parliament's Typewriters—Seasonable Home and Dress Hints.

Conservative Boston has become a veritable hotbed for the advancement of women in business enterprises. There are progressive Boston women who can conduct almost any desired line of business, design an artistic dwelling or municipal building, take an excellent photograph, print a novel in the latest style, and, if the novel is not a success, arrange for the author's funeral in a fashion only possible to a tender hearted feminine undertaker familiar with business reverses in the Hub.

Mrs. Alice E. Cram, who has made such an enviable reputation for herself as a contractor, is also a Boston woman. Mrs. Cram says that she had no special business training beyond a good public school education and the fact that she was the sister of six brothers.

She started in business as a contractor with her husband nine years ago. Her business ability was manifest from the start. Together Mr. and Mrs. Cram contracted for the foundation work of some large recent public buildings, among others the new public library, the courthouse, the boulevard bridge and the Albany railroad, which is said to be one of the finest pieces of masonry in the country.

The entire work on these contracts was superintended by Mrs. Cram, whose judgment in such matters is considered something unique.

About a year and a half ago Mrs. Cram decided to paddle her own business canoe. She now has her own offices, manages all her business dealings and is proving the wisdom of her choice in her remarkable success as a contractor.

In addition to her regular work Mrs. Cram conducts a commission business, selling machinery and materials used in excavating and in general masonry work. She superintends all her own work, and to this fact she attributes the satisfactory results obtained. When she has a large contract on hand, she drives to and from the scene of action several times a day in a jaunty cart that is managed with the skill of an expert whip.

To Mrs. Cram was confided the entire management of the construction of the foundation for the Edison Electric company building of Boston. Her most recent achievement was securing the contract from the Chase Granite company of New York to team 40,000 tons of stone to be used in elevating the tracks of the New York, New Haven and Hartford railroad. For this contract she competed with contractors all over the country.

Mrs. Cram is of the "newest woman" type. She is a pretty, well dressed, home loving woman on one hand, and on the other thoroughly businesslike, energetic, just to a degree, farsighted and generous without being sentimental. She employs women entirely for her office work. "I find that they can always be relied upon," she said recently. Mrs. Cram is a member of the Professional Woman's league of New York, an executive officer of the Boston Business league and treasurer of the Boston Playgoers' club.—New York Journal.

Some Alluring Deceptions. In one of Marlitt's German romances there is a clever young widow who fools her men admirers in the matter of her "simple dressing." She wears white muslin gowns that are vastly becoming and seem alluringly modest and inexpensive. Only her seamstress, who hems the yards and yards of tiny lace trimmed ruffles, and her tire woman, who spends hours at the ironing table "doing up" the billows of flimsy fabric, that must be fresh and unrumpled twice a day, only these—and other women—know no wardrobe could be devised more expensive and more difficult to keep in order than one which demands perennial, presentable and dainty muslin gowns.

In the same list of alluring deceptions must be classed the present "plain skirt" ordered by fashion. It is plain in one sense alone—that of having no trimming. In all others its elaboration is maddening. To cut, line and hang one of these ripple skirts requires great skill. The first requirements are a pattern perfectly cut, a lining as exactly basted as the outside, the two laid together seam to seam and held without an iota of "draw" or "pucker," the whole then hung from the hips with perfect smoothness.

When all this is done, however, the worst remains—the slope on the lower edge. Look at the majority of skirts at this crucial part, and it will be seen how few achieve success. It is a "dip" here and a "hitch" there on nearly all, with waves and billows pursuing their chaotic way between. The front breadth has an insidious tendency to poke out directly in the center, an evil which the amateur dressmaker accepts and the tailor attempts to lessen by putting two or three featherbone reeds from

seam to seam at the foot and about six inches apart. Nothing short of the most expert make prevents this skirt from swinging about the ankles in a very ungraceful way.

The fashion is an abomination, the greater because it poses as simple and desirable. Its cost, too, and comfort are as delusive as its design. The perfectly fashionable skirt is supposed to take a dozen yards of silk width material and a corresponding amount of lining and a corresponding amount of padding from haircloth stiffening, and it weighs from three to six pounds, according to its heaviness of goods. This weight is intolerable to many women who insist on wearing it because it is the fashion. Are we ever to be "advanced" enough to be superior to the dictates of fashion when her commands necessitate such exaggerated and comfortless garments?—New York Times.

Women as Pharmacists. Today the pharmacist is a trained scientist, and pharmacy has been elevated to a profession. In its present form it has no unclean and unpleasant features and is therefore liked by women. Nevertheless it is only of late years that they have overcome the former prejudices and crossed the threshold of the calling.

They have a natural aptitude for the trade on account of their constitutional caution, deftness and delicacy of touch. The first woman to enter the profession in our country was Mrs. Jane Loring of Boston, in 1800. She was a granddaughter of Congressman Loring. Under the old system there was no state supervision of the profession, and any one could take it up who desired without any legal impediments. Under this system over 1,200 women became pharmacists. Of late years, however, there has been a profound change in the industry. Partly to prevent competition, or rather to restrict it, partly to raise the professional standard, and partly to protect the public, colleges of pharmacy have been started in various places in the country and laws passed requiring all candidates for the profession to pass examinations almost as strict and difficult as those laid down for physicians and lawyers.

The new system has cut down the number of candidates, both male and female. In Massachusetts not more than a score of women have passed the examinations in the past 15 years. In New York the number is said to be nearly 50, and in the various states of the Union the entire total is below 500.

Many marry and leave the calling, a few have retired, and a few have continued their studies and have become physicians or chemists. At the present time the total number of women who practice pharmacy either as proprietors, clerks or apprentices is estimated at about 1,500.—New York Mail and Express.

Chains and Beads Fashionable. Chains are extremely fashionable this year, and the jewelers in Paris are showing them in great variety, but the fine gold chain, with a single pearl every four or five inches, has the preference. A pretty chain of a fanciful description is composed of pearls set alternately with olive shaped beads of dull chased gold. Some chains are made of small black agate beads, also separated at intervals by single pearls. There is a decided fancy for these black agate beads, which are deemed—not without reason—extremely becoming to the complexion. Necklaces are made of them, their simplicity relieved by the addition of a diamond clasp. A row of black beads, divided on either side by a long 8 in diamonds, makes a beautiful ornament for the throat.

In the gold chains pink coral beads are sometimes substituted for pearls. Chains are also made of black or blue steel—a metal in as high favor as ever—the pearls introduced as in those of the more precious metal. They are not only used for watches and eyeglasses, but chain purses and other knickknacks, such as pencil cases, tiny powder boxes, mirrors and charms, are suspended from them. These, however, must not be worn openly. It is considered a breach of good breeding to have a bunch of valuable trinkets dangling about the person—to say nothing of the danger of such a proceeding—and it must be hidden either in the breast pocket of the coat or beneath the folds of the dress.—Manufacturing Jeweler.

the resistance which such sleeves oppose to the wind. Why women to whom they are grossly unbecoming—the vast majority—submit to the tyranny of these sleeves, I know not. Who would be themselves must use the scissors if dressmakers won't. Friends of the emancipation of women should reflect on this topic, which offers arguments to the adversary.—Andrew Lang in Lang man's Magazine.

Mrs. Livermore. A reception was given to Mrs. Mary A. Livermore by the Massachusetts nurses on March 18 at the headquarters of the Woman's Relief corps in Boston. Distinguished guests were present. The Massachusetts Army Nurses' association, auxiliary to the national association, was formed, with Mrs. Fannie Hazen of Cambridge as president; Mrs. Jane M. Worrall of Boston and Mrs. Ellen W. Dowling of Melrose, vice-presidents; Mrs. Marguerite Hamilton of Wakefield, secretary; Miss Mary J. Farnham, treasurer. Mrs. Livermore was elected an honorary member, with a privilege of voting on all questions. It was decided to send greetings to Mrs. Clara Barton, with an invitation to her to become an honorary member.—Boston Woman's Journal.

Won Her Degree. Miss Ida H. Hyde of Chicago, formerly fellow in biology at Bryn Mawr, has just taken the degree of doctor of philosophy magna cum laude at the University of Heidelberg. Miss Hyde was admitted to the lectures at Heidelberg upon the presentation of her thesis—preparation of which was begun under Dr. Thomas Hunt Morgan, professor of biology at Bryn Mawr—and has studied there for two years, holding the Phi Kappa Phi fellowship of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae for part of the time. She also held the European fellowship of the association for 1893-4, during which she studied at the University of Strasbourg.

Dinner Flowers. The fashion which prevailed some time ago of presenting expensive bouquets to one's lady guests at a dinner has entirely gone out. Now a few flowers arranged in a loose bunch are sometimes given, but anything more considered in bad taste. At a recent dinner given by a prominent society was a vase filled with pink roses were placed here and there around the tall center-labna, which occupied the center of the round table, and two loose, long stemmed roses, laid carefully over one another, were at each lady's place.

She Is a Candidate. Mrs. Margaret L. Watson, secretary of the Texas Equal Rights association is a candidate for city secretary of the month, Tex. Mrs. Mariana T. Peck writes from Edna, Tex.: "The ladies have decided that there is no law in a woman's holding the office. Initial men, both white and colored, are working for her election. Her charm and popularity are such as to make canvass very interesting for her opponents. The impetus given to the discussion of the woman question in Texas is marvelous."

Mrs. Lease's Plans. Mrs. Mary E. Lease has declined a call to the pastorate of the Christian church of Wichita, Kan. She will take me a year," she said the other day, "to fill my engagements in American lecture field, and then expect to take a trip around the world. Keir Hardie, the well known Socialist, has invited me to Glasgow, have accepted and likely will make first speech of my foreign tour in city. I hope to remain abroad two years. Then I may settle down to preaching."

Massillon Women. At the Republican primary election last month in Massillon, O., 200 women voted. Their efforts were rewarded by the election of Mrs. Ella O. Shuman to the school board by a majority of 38. This is the largest vote ever won by women in Massillon. Mrs. Shuman is vice president of the Equal Rights association. Mrs. K. B. Folsom is president of the association and Miss Folger recording secretary.

The Election Voted. At an election held in Ames, March 2, the women of the city cast a heavy vote. In the second ward they cast over 60 votes. The vote on the proposition to bond the city 5 per cent of its valuation to erect waterworks system and install electric light plant. The decision in favor of public improvements is generally expected.

Arkansas has decided that women are personally responsible for loans negotiated by themselves. The acquisition of other rights under this one also. Contracts signed by themselves are binding upon themselves.

The North India M. E. conference followed the lead of the Ohio conference, China, conferences, and elected two women—Mrs. E. W. Peck and Mrs. J. C. Butcher—as lay delegates to the general conference.

The Woman's club and Mrs. Skowhegan, Me., are negotiating the election of a woman to serve on the committee. Several years ago she served there with acceptance.

The M. E. church of Upland, N. C., elected four women as stewards. They will, by virtue of their office, be to sit as members of the next general conference.

A sister of charity is the first to receive a decoration in Holland. She was made a Knight of the Nassau-Orange by the two Holland.

There are now 19 state women's clubs.



Mrs. Alice E. Cram.



First he brought Margaret to us quite dead.