THE NEW ISABELLA

By MARGARET LEE.

It is with great gallantry as well as with great ability that Margaret Lee has ventured to combat in the ranks on what must be taken nowadays as the unpopular side and has indicated her belief in a certain old fashioned doctrine that the path of suffering may not be the path of duty only, but likewise the path of glory and of triumph for our race.—W. E. Gladstone in Nineteenth Century.

One sunny morning in early spring a tall, slight girl dressed in a gray cloth costume opened the door of a bank building in the vicinity of the New York city hall and addressed the first person whose head was visible behind the strong partition that rose like a wall between them.

"May I see the president?"

The mingling of decision and despair in the woman's voice made the paying teller hesitate until he had given her a comprehensive glance. Then he spoke slowly, allowing a man who was on his way to the street an opportunity to overhear the conversation.

"Do you want to see the president?"

"Yes."

The girl was too absorbed in her own

"I am Jasper Barclay's sister."

lisle. Their mother's illness made an excuse for keeping Sallie and Tom at home from school, but the great difficulty was to detain them in the house until a refuge could be found where they would not hear their father discussed.

Miss Barclay pondered this problem, wholly indifferent to the objects that formerly would have attracted and interested her. She looked ahead, seeing only her way, but suddenly a man's figure approaching caused the blood to rush to her cheeks, while her heart again commenced its painful throbbing. Mr. Andrews was one of her most devoted admirers, her most regular caller, her favorite escort. Did he also see her? She raised her eyes, with a feeling of desperation. He was steadily regarding something on the opposite side of the street, and as she passed him she knew intuitively that he was purposely avoiding a meeting. Perhaps it was done out of consideration for her. She was willing, quite willing, to give him the benefit of the doubt. But the incident caused new reflections. She could not but admit to herself that the family was well nigh friendless. Only very near relatives had come to the house since the publication of the news of the defalcation and her brother's disappearance from his post as assistant cashier, and these relatives had only come to moralize on his folly and offer useless advice. Substantial help was out of their power. At length a sensation of physical exhaustion overpowered her. She felt like falling, and she attempted to hail a passing street car. An obliging person in her vicinity stopped the vehicle, and she felt sure that he assisted her to a seat. She seemed to be under the influence of a terrible dream, out of which she must awaken to find herself the happy girl of former days. The blow had fallen so suddenly that a perfect realization of its full meaning was utterly impossible. She found herself revolving one idea on the next Saturday. Mr. Messenger would at least see her again. It was necessary for her to think deeply, to overcome this timidity, this nervous excitement, this cowardice of conscious disgrace and present every possible argument, every plea that could be urged in her brother's behalf.

When she reached home, the children were at lunch, and her sister-in-law was asleep, so she had a short respite from eager eyes and pointed questions. She had no wish for food. Solitude was the only desire she knew. But this was wholly unattainable throughout the day. Her lunch was sent up to her by the thoughtful servant, and in due time Mrs. Barclay had to hear the result of the visit to the bank. About 5 o'clock in the afternoon something happened. A gentleman sent up his card, with a request for an interview. The name was not familiar—William Howe.

Miss Barclay prepared to see him with a sense of dread that was perfectly visible in her manner and her appearance as she entered the darkened drawing room. Mr. Howe rose with a reassuring gesture and offered his hand.

"I am a friend of your brother," he said quietly, "and I am inclined to think that I can convey a message to him should you care to communicate with him."

"Oh, indeed we do long to hear from him, and Mrs. Barclay would like to write to him."

Miss Barclay's agitation was painful.

"If you will procure me the letter, I shall try to get it safely to him. Do not address it and use no names. How is Mrs. Barclay?"

"Oh, wretched!"

"You really overestimate my power. I have not the control."

"But you have influence."

"Influence is not always successful. Suppose you take a few days to think over the bank's side of this matter, and in the meantime I shall consider yours. This is all I can promise you to do."

Mr. Messenger's eyes were cold, searching, judicial, and he glanced from Miss Barclay to the door as if every moment were fraught with incalculable importance to him and his affairs.

She rose, making an effort to regain her composure, and lingered at the door to hear him repeat the Saturday arrangement. Evidently she and her misery were dismissed from his thoughts, so she passed out of his office and the building, feeling quite exhausted and somewhat bewildered.

Had she gained anything by carrying out this resolution to obtain an interview with the president of the bank to plead her brother's cause, or had she simply exposed the family suffering to an unsympathetic heart?

She pursued her way slowly, wearily. It seemed almost impossible to go home and meet her sister-in-law's eyes. There was nothing hopeful to report. The children, too, would gather about her, ignorant of the cause of the general suffering, yet expectant of some relief coming through her, their girlish aunt and playmate. She had already explained their father's absence by telling them that he had gone out of town on business. This answer satisfied them, although Sallie, the eldest, had wondered why papa did not bid them "goodby," or take his va-

clay's sister."

"There, that will do. It is useless to discuss his affairs. The police authorities have the matter in charge, and"——

"But you could stop all these efforts to arrest him"——

"Do you know where he is concealed?"

Miss Barclay's flush deepened, but her eyes still held Mr. Messenger's prisoners. He had read of such eyes, but this was his first experience of their power.

"No. I wish we did. His wife is ill, dying. I am sure if Jasper knew it he would risk everything to come back to her. If you will stop all these proceedings against him, we can advertise for him, and perhaps he will see the notice."

Mr. Messenger smiled sarcastically.

"You tell me that you have no method of communication with him."

"Oh, no! He left the house one morning as usual to come here. We have never seen him nor heard from him since. We only know the terrible things that the papers are publishing about us all."

"Truth is sometimes disagreeable."

"But it is not truth."

"Not truth! My dear young lady, do you know what he has been doing systematically for years?"

"But his wife was not extravagant."

"That is one of the evil effects of crime. The innocent have to suffer, perhaps more than the guilty. I am very sorry for you and your family, but the law must take its course in this case. I am very busy this morning. Perhaps you are aware that the unexpected death of the cashier not only left matters in confusion, but led to your brother's sudden flight. You must excuse me."

"Don't send me away until you have heard all that I want to say. What good can it do you to put him in prison? He has no money. He can do nothing there to repay you. We have nothing. We have never earned a dollar."

"Yes, it is all very sad, but it is about time to make an example of somebody. This sort of thing is growing too rapidly in the community. The banks charge their losses to the general account and make no effort to bring these offenders to justice. We have concluded to spare no efforts in this case. I am glad to know that you are ignorant of your brother's whereabouts. It somewhat simplifies the matter. Now, if you will excuse me"——

"Surely you cannot be so cruel, so heartless. Think! Is there not something that we can do? I am willing to work and try to return at least some of the money."

"One hundred thousand dollars, with the interest and the costs—you think you could earn it! Miss Barclay, your brother has been cruel, heartless, cowardly, swindling his employers, who trusted him, and keeping his family in a style wholly inconsistent with his salary. You know I am right in what I say. Why, you must have been a child when your brother began clerking it for us."

Mr. Howe was observing her closely, and she met his glance timidly. He was a slight, fair haired man of medium size,

"I am a friend of your brother," he said quietly.

colorless, with refined features and a certain air of languor which might result from lack of strength or simple affectation.

"I am sorry to hear it."

"So you know where Jasper is?"

"I do not. I am leaving town, and I may make it possible to see him. But this is between us. Now, what are you doing? Have you seen the bank people?"

"Yes"— she hesitated.

"If you would trust me, I think I could be useful to you." He smiled. "But I must know everything."

"You are very good. No one has offered to help us in anyway." Miss Barclay controlled herself and told Mr. Howe what had passed between her and Mr. Messenger. He seemed much interested and kept his eyes fixed on her face.

"You must not take offense, but in regard to money. How do you manage?"

Miss Barclay flushed.

"Mrs. Barclay had several diamonds, and one of her brothers advanced some money on them."

"I see. Has she enough for present demands?"

"Yes. I think so."

"Then we can correspond safely. You will keep this appointment with—Messenger, and let me know what transpires."

"Yes. I hope so much. He would not have asked me to come again unless he felt willing to help us."

Mr. Howe's gaze was perplexing.

"No doubt he is willing to be kind. I trust so, for your sake. My name is new to you, I think. I have known your brother for a long time, but our relations were entirely business ones. I suppose I was wrong."

The last sentence was spoken dreamily.

"How do you mean?"

"It would be difficult to explain the meaning of my remark. We often see our mistake too late to do anything but regret them. Now, if you will get me the letter."

Miss Barclay left the room, and Mr. Howe looked around him as if taking a mental inventory of its contents. It was certainly an expensively furnished apartment, but people are given to acquiring a lot of costly movables and concentrating them in a limited space, with a view to appearances, even if other parts of the house are left bare of ordinary necessaries. Then, again, Mrs. Barclay might possess some resources, although the incident of the diamonds was against this supposition.

Mr. Howe was anxious to be charitable, but any practical person would wonder how a man could expect to support a family in such surroundings upon a salary of $5,000 a year and make provision for that conundrum called the future. Barclay also owned a country house, and he belonged to several clubs, of which he was a prominent member. The inconsistency of his method grew in proportion as Mr. Howe considered its extent. It was limitless. No doubt the family had credit and owed all the neighboring tradespeople. Here were two women and four children left to face the situation.

Miss Barclay came in with the letter, and Mr. Howe took it mechanically and put it in a pocketbook. Then he looked at her.

"You say there is money in the house?"

"Yes. We had to dispose of the diamonds. Several persons refused to give us any more credit."

"Have you any plans whatever?"

"No. Mrs. Barclay is prostrated. We are too anxious about her to think of anything else. She dictated the letter. If we could only get away from here with the children."

"Have you any resources personally? I mean this kindly, but you need not answer me."

"Why not, when you are so kind? I have nothing. Jasper has taken care of me."

"Does he own this house?"

"Yes, but Uncle Charley says that the bank will take everything. However, that is only right. I suppose we are beggars."

She looked straight at Mr. Howe. A slight flush made him much more attractive.

"I wouldn't put it quite so hard. You must have relatives able to assist you until you can adopt some method for taking care of these children."

[CONTINUED.]

The Marie Antoinette blue glove is a novelty. It is made of fine suede, and in that peculiar shade of blue which has been so popular throughout the winter. A bright terra cotta glove is another novelty shown for early spring wear. All the shades of tan, from a pale fawn to a delicate brown, are the vogue for this season of the year. A new shade of tan is known as Smyrna, and promises to be much worn with the spring tailor made gown. Fashionable women are wearing both glace kid and suede gloves. One is quite as popular as the other.

IN ARCADY.

It was easy to say "I love you!"
  Under a summer sky,
When the hours went slow and the bees hummed low,
  And the winds went whispering by.
For we were young and happy,
  Nothing of life knew we:
And what more sweet than with careless feet
  To wander in Arcady?

To-day, in a book forgotten,
  I found a rose you had kissed.
Do you remember the moonlight?
  The path to the lover's tryst?
And do you sometimes, I wonder,
  Think of the past and me?
And wish some day we could steal away
  And wander in Arcady?

Ah, no, 'tis a foolish fancy.
  The dream is dreamed and over,
And you have forgotten the dear, dead days
  When I was your royal lover:
For we were two weary worldlings,
  Seldom from care set free,
And never again can we find the path
  That leads through Arcady!
—Detroit Free Press.

THE INSPECTOR'S LOSS

Inspector Hookyer had served his twenty-five years in the detective force, and his colleagues were entertaining him at a little farewell dinner, in anticipation of his forthcoming retirement. The chairman having eulogized the guest of the evening to an extent that brought a blush to the face of that case-hardened officer, the inspector rose to reply, and at the finish he said:

"The chairman has said that I never let a man slip through my fingers after I had once got on his track, but I am sorry to say he is wrong. I am bound to acknowledge that once an offender was too clever for me."

"Tell us about it," arose spontaneously from almost every throat, and Inspector Hookyer, in response to the request, gave the story.

"It was a good many years ago now when I had intrusted to me a case of a young woman named Eliza Thickbroom, who had been found dead (evidently murdered by having her throat cut) in some fields adjoining a canal near a town in Lancashire. She had been a domestic servant, and was of a very retiring, staid disposition, and bore an irreproachable character. Her friends lived in quite another part of the country, and her mistress had no knowledge of her keeping company or anything of that kind. For some time I had considerable difficulty in fixing the crime or any reason for it upon anyone, but at last, after a lot of inquiry, I ascertained that she had been out walking with a man named Lamprey, who lived near Stockport, in Cheshire, some thirty miles from where Eliza Thickbroom resided.

"It seemed that the girl had been in the habit of spending her holiday, when she had a day off, in going to Stockport, where Lamprey met her, and that she had become engaged to him, but that, hearing something to his discredit, she had refused to have anything more to do with him, and, so far, nothing further was known to implicate Lamprey in the crime, but I, of course, at once took the train to Stockport and proceeded to hunt up Lamprey, and to make inquiries in the town where he resided.

"I knew nothing about him except his name, but from the local police and cautious questions of one and another, I ascertained that he had been a sailor and was then a 'steeplejack,' and one of the best climbers known.

"'Jack Lamprey!' cried one man to whom I had spoken. 'Ah, he can climb, for sure, can Jack! Why, he climbed to the very top of yon steeple,' pointing to the church hard by, which had a spire remarkably tall and slender, and very hard to mount. 'After the storm had damaged the weather cock Jack climbed and fixed it all alone for the parson, and he refused to be paid for it.'

"The man seemed to look upon Lamprey's refusing payment as more wonderful than his climbing the steeple, and perhaps he was right. Well, bit by bit, I found little things which, when pieced together, pointed unmistakably to Jack Lamprey as the murderer. He had, until recently, been seen frequently in and about Stockport with the girl, but for the last two or three months she had not been observed in his company. He had been a jolly sort of fellow, but since the girl had ceased her visits it had been noticed that he had become moody and silent, and he had taken to drink a good deal, although he had previously been a most abstemious man.

"He was away from his lodgings on the night of the murder, and on his return early the next day he was travel-stained, as if he had walked a long way. His landlady remembered that he told her he had fallen down in some chemical works where he had been on a job, and had stained his clothes, and she recollected immediately after his arrival home he had busied himself brushing and sponging his garments.

"There was sufficient to justify me in obtaining a warrant; but he was away on a job—no one knew where exactly, except that it was somewhere near Liverpool—and it was useless for me to leave Stockport, where I had the best chance of catching him, on a wild goose chase to Liverpool without better information. My only course was to wait and keep quiet till he came back, which he was expected to do the following day.

"I took every precaution to prevent anyone knowing that he was 'wanted,' but some 'pal' must have got to suspect it and given him warning. The police in Liverpool had been wired to, and had kept watch of all trains in the direction of Stockport, and toward evening of the second day I received the intimation that a man resembling his description had taken the train and was on his way. Assisted by a local detective who knew the man, I watched every passenger out of the train on its arrival at Stockport, but no Jack Lamprey alighted, and, on inquiring of the guard, it seemed pretty certain that he had got out at Cheadle, a station a few miles outside of Stockport.

"It was the beginning of winter and night had set in, so that it was extremely doubtful if we could follow the man, but we took a train which was just going out of the station, and in a few minutes were at Cheadle. I there made certain that my man had got out. He had booked for Stockport and had given up his ticket, but do all we could we could get no trace of him. He had left the station immediately on leaving the train; no one knew him and we could find no one to tell us anything more. So, hoping perhaps to pick up a clew on the road, we walked back to Stockport and on to the town where he lived, which was a few miles the other side, but our tramp was in vain.

"We had left instructions at Stockport for Lamprey's lodgings to be watched, but by some blunder a man had not been sent there for some time, and, much to my anger and disgust, when I arrived at his house I found that he had been there, just for five minutes, his landlady said, and had left again with a bag of clothes.

"I was mighty savage, you can guess, both with myself and with the police of the place for not keeping a better look-out, but it was no use losing my head over it, and I at once set to work dogging his footsteps after he had left his lodgings. In the public house which he frequented I came across a man to whom I had previously spoken, who seemed to know Lamprey in a very distant sort of way, and I turned the conversation on the man I wanted.

"'Ah! I've just seen him,' said the fellow. 'About an hour ago or mayhap a little more. He was going to Macclesfield, he said, to catch the early train in the morning into Staffordshire, where he's got another job. He seemed in a mighty hurry, too.'

"I had reason afterward to think that this man was the one who had given Lamprey warning, but whether that was so or not his information that night appeared to be correct, for I met several people who had seen Jack going across the fields toward Marple, which was his best way of getting to Macclesfield from the place he lived in; but when I arrived at Marple station I was at fault again, for no train had been out for quite two hours, and although I waited till the last train to Macclesfield had left Lamprey did not show up.

"Tried and vexed beyond description, I tramped back and got what rest I could, hoping that something might turn up in the morning to assist me in recovering the ground I had lost, but afraid that for once I had let my quarry slip, and that I might never catch him, now that he was aware he was being tracked.

"Sure enough, something did turn up in the morning, and something which confirmed my fears, though I felt that I had got my man dead if I had missed him alive. The postman came around soon after 7, before it was quite light, and I had only just got up when a boy came running in with a letter, which had been delivered at the police station. It bore the Marple postmark, and was addressed to 'The Detective from London.'

"Tearing it open, I read something like this:

"'From John Lamprey. I know you are after me, and I know what for. I managed to keep out of your way to-night and I meant to try and get down south, but you are sure to have me, sooner or later, so I've determined to make an end of it. Look at the church steeple when you get this to-morrow morning.'

"The church steeple was a tall and prominent feature whichever way you turned, and I had only to go to the end of the street to get a full view of it. When I got there and looked up I saw something that gave me a start. In the uncertain light of the early morning I could discern against the gray sky, hanging by the neck to one of the iron loops which serve for a ladder on the side of the spire, the figure of a man!

"'So much for Jack Lamprey!' I said to myself, as I hurried to the police station. 'He has saved me any more trouble.'

"By the time I had been to the station and back to the church it was broad daylight, and of course the body hanging aloft had been seen and a crowd had already collected, every one recognizing it as that of Jack Lamprey.

"'A strange freak,' I remarked to the sergeant who was with me.

"'I don't think so,' he replied. 'Jack had made himself a sort of hero over going up the spire to repair the vane and there was nothing more likely to occur to his mind than to finish his career at the same place.'

"There was no one round Stockport who would venture up the spire and a telegram had to be sent to Stalybridge for a man to come and get the body down. It was past midday before the steeplejack arrived and by that time half Stockport had heard of the affair. Work was discarded and an immense crowd collected to witness the sight. Every foot was watched by thousands of eyes, and when at last he approached the swaying body of Jack Lamprey the tongues which had been loudly wagging were hushed as by common consent.

"I shall never forget the few minutes that followed, while the steeplejack (now looking the size of a little child) made his way very cautiously close up to the body, and, fixing a rope to it, made his preparations for lowering it to his assistant, who was waiting on the top of the square tower to receive it. There was something awfully sad and solemn about it all!

"In due course the assistant received the corpse, which he let down to the ground and everyone around me remarked that he swung it roughly to the earth, without showing the respect which might have been looked for. In fact some actually called out 'Shame!'

"But all at once the hush which had fallen upon the crowd was broken by a storm of jeers and laughter! The rope which had given us all trouble was nothing but a guy! And I had been such a fool in all my life.

"So that he might get nearly a day's start Lamprey had cleverly made up the night before. While I had been wasting my time at Marple he had been employed in stuffing the suit of clothes which he had taken from his lodgings with straw, making a very passable representation of himself, and in the middle of the night had climbed the steeple (which was child's play to him) and left his effigy to deceive me and keep me into inaction.

"I need not dwell upon the chagrin I received. It is too painful, even now, for me to recall without annoyance, but you may be sure that I quickly made up for lost scarce."

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"Did the fellow get clear?" asked someone. "Yes. He took the train to the east coast and succeeded in getting to Holland unnoticed," replied Hookyer. "But he hanged himself to earnest considerable time afterward, leaving a letter behind admitting his guilt and stating that his conscience troubled him so that he could not bear to live."—Bits.

KING'S WIFE IN A WORKHO

Sad Story of a Refined Woman's Her Wretched End.

The romances of the London houses would form a thrilling and pathetic record, and for sad vicissitude and ill luck few cases could surpass that of an inmate of one of these houses who has recently passed away. A lady visiting the institution was struck by the evident refinement of an elderly woman in the infirmary. She was a Norwegian by birth, but spoke English and other languages fluently. She had all the beaux restes of a very lovely woman, which years of poverty and ill health could not destroy. She was very reticent as regarded her past, but was so evidently a gentlewoman that the sympathetic visitor exerted herself to obtain admission for the invalid into a home for the destitute in which she might pass her last years in peace and amid congenial surroundings.

Before her death the stranger told her story, and a strange and romantic one it proved to be. At 17 she was informed by her parents that she was to be married, and although she had no voice in the matter nothing could have been more satisfactory. Her husband was handsome, cultured and devoted. They lived in a charming country house, surrounded by every luxury, and four children were born to the couple. The only drawback to the perfect happiness of the young wife was the long and frequent absences of her husband, which he attributed to business, but would explain no further.

At last there came a day when the man returned no more from his accustomed journey, but sent his lawyer instead, from whom the bewildered and heartbroken woman learned that her supposed husband was the king of bigamists, and that, owing to pressing reasons, the liaison should terminate. An adequate sum was settled on her and her children, and, wishing to break entirely with the past, she came to live in London. After some years she married an Englishman and shortly afterward died, leaving a lump sum to her. This money the husband got from her to invest and ran off with the entire amount, leaving his unfortunate wife penniless. She had never been trained to do any sort of work, and things went from bad to worse until, utterly destitute and dying, she became an inmate of the workhouse.

Dissatisfied.

"That's the way things always are," exclaimed the man who is never pleased about anything. "The manner in which things are laid out in this life is all wrong. You always find what you don't want in unlimited abundance and what you care for you can't have."

"What are you talking about?" asked his wife.

"What am I talking about? What is everybody talking about? Inauguration day; that occasion when you can escape the most trivial remarks of the badge-peddler and popcorn man, and won't be able to hear three words of the President's address."—Washington Star.

Decline in Pearls.

A curious effect of the plague in India has been a sudden increase in the number of pearls reaching the London market, and a consequent marked decline in prices. This is not due to unusual industry on the part of the divers, but to the fact that the native dealers in Bombay have been in such haste to quit the stricken city that they have eagerly disposed of their wares at rates below the customary market value. One English firm of importers of Indian pearls has accumulated a stock which, if placed suddenly on the market, it is estimated, would send down quotations fully 25 per cent.

In View of Recent Events.

"Jimson wants the Presidency of the Fifth National Bank, doesn't he?"

"Yes; but he stands no show against Shumway."

"What's Shumway's recommendation for the place?"

"He hasn't any relatives."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

His Regret.

"What are you crying about, Willie?"

"I feel bad."

"Did you eat too much at Charlie's party?"

"No, sir; that's the trouble; I feel bad because I didn't eat more."—Yonkers Statesman.

It only does a woman good to go visiting when she comes back expressing thankfulness that she is not married to her hostess' husband.