THE CHARITY GIRL

By EFFIE A. ROWLANDS

CHAPTER I.

"And is it really good-by, Audrey, really and truly good-by? Oh, dearest, I am so grieved to let you go. I don't know what my life will be like now."

The speaker was a thin, nervous looking girl, with large gray eyes, and a weak mouth. She stood with her roughened hands clasped tightly together, and tears were rolling down her cheek, and falling unheeded on her shabby serge gown.

Audrey Maxse also wore an old serge gown, but somehow the garment did not seem to be as shabby or as ugly as that which Jean Thwait had on; her small hands were roughened, too, as with much work, yet their shape was exquisite, the fingers slender and straight, not swollen and disfigured with chilblains like poor Jean's; her little head was poised proudly on her shoulders; she carried herself with a regal air, and gave evidence at this early age of possessing that most rare of gifts, a beautiful face.

What a dreary place this Female Orphan Asylum was, to be sure! There was an air of gloom in the dirty-gray-colored walls; an unspeakable sense of sadness and restraint in the unlovely, high-walled grounds, the severe matron, the young persons in their dingy uniform of blue serge, with their duster aprons and thick gray stockings. It was called the Girls' Home in Broadborough, and never was anything under the sun so misnamed. From morning till night the day was one long round of drudgery, good hard manual labor, lightened by many prayers, and by one hour's so-called recreation, in which the girls found many odd tasks to perform that were not exactly in the category of idleness or pleasure.

The Mayor of Broadborough had much to say in the matter of election into this asylum, and it was entirely through his influence that Jean Thwait, granddaughter of old Samuel Thwait, the bookseller, was provided with a home when the old man died suddenly and left her, a little child, without a penny or a known relative in the wide world. Everybody knew that Ralph Thwait, Jean's father, had made a bad marriage, but the shop of Samuel Thwait had been an institution in the town, and naturally out of respect to an old inhabitant the Mayor did his best to get the orphan girl well cared for in the future. This done, little Jean Thwait troubled no one any more; so Jean was left to the tender mercies of the matron, and grew up from babyhood to girlhood, working in the gloomy routine of the asylum as hard as though she were of the stronger, not the feebler, sex. Most of her companions were cases like her own, all respectably connected, with an occasional aunt or cousin to pay them a visit on the day set apart for this function, and who all with one accord held up their heads and looked down on Jean's pet, Audrey Maxse.

How this latter ever got into the home was a miracle to most people. A foundling, the waif and stray child of a vagrant woman who breathed her last in the Broadborough workhouse infirmary, she was, by general consent, considered as outside the pale and therefore ineligible for election into the institution sacred to the memory of the pious widow of a rich Broadborough tradesman.

Audrey's pride had brought down many a weary punishment on her head; her fearless, outspoken disposition was called rebellious; her innate sense of delicacy and neatness became inordinate vanity, and her beauty was the last straw to the heap of objections that the matron and her assistants piled on this girl. Every means had been tried to crush Audrey's proud spirit. Every possible barrier had been thrown in the way of her advancement in education, and yet, in spite of all, the girl progressed; her hot pride, her extraordinary will carried all before her, and to the chagrin of the matron and her other enemies, at the usual public examinations, held in the charnel-house-like schoolroom, before the Mayor and committee, it was always Audrey Maxse who carried off the first marks for proficiency and general satisfaction.

In all the years she had lived at the asylum Audrey had only one friend, one loving heart to sympathize and help her in her troubles, and this was Jean Thwait. Often and often at night, when the two young creatures were alone in their cold meagerly furnished bedroom, they sat and whispered in the dark of the time when they should be free from the miserable place they called their home.

"We are alone in the world, Jean," Audrey would say; "there is nothing to stop us. We must leae here when we are seventeen—the rules of the home won't let us remain longer—and then we will go away togther, and work for each other, and be happy! We will leave England, Jean, and go abroad—I want to see foreign lands, don't you?"

"But you forget, darling; we—we may go out to service before we are free!"

Audrey always shuddered at the word. The parting was not a thought now; it was a reality, a horrible reality. Three days before this one that saw Audrey engaged in putting her few coarse clothes into the yellow tin box, the girls had been summoned into the chapel and catechised by a clergyman, who came in place of the ordinary minister. He seemed to find much pleasure in examining Audrey on certain points, and the girl's clear, fresh voice, added to her intelligence and wonderful face, made a great impression on him.

After the girls were dismissed, he had a short chat with Miss Irons, the matron, in the course of which he told her he was anxious to find a young woman as maid for a lady who was one of his parishioners.

"My wife can find no one suitable. Your girls always give great satisfaction; and so, if there is one ready to go out to service, I might arrange this," he said as they talked.

Miss Irons gave a cordial consent, but looked vexed when he suggested Audrey as the one to go. She bore many a grudge and spite against the girl and had determined to put her out into the hardest and least comfortable situation she could find. But fate was evidently against her, for the board accepted the Rev. Mr. Thorngate's proposal and Audrey was given a new black gown, bonnet and cloak, and was bid hold herself in readiness to depart on the morning of the fifth day.

Jean spent the whole of the long night that came before that fifth day in comforting her beloved friend and herself, and at last had the satisfaction of seeing Audrey drop off into a deep, troubled sleep. No rest came to her; her poor young heart was torn and bleeding, and no salve was at hand to heal it.

The parting between the two girls was very quiet; neither of them could speak the words of farewell, and their eyes were too hot and aching for tears to come.

"Think of me always, Jean, dear. Whatever happens, whatever lies before us, I shall love you, darling, till I die!"

Then they kissed each other and Audrey went swiftly down the stairs, seeing nothing, hearing nothing for the passionate beat of her heart and the blur of sorrow before her sight.

Jean stood with her hands pressed to her breast, and as the wheels of the cab carried all that was precious to her away from her, perhaps forever, she gave one moan and fell forward on her outstretched arms.

When the assistant matron came in, scolding and grumbling, as usual, she received no reply from Jean Thwait, and, bending over the prostrate figure, she saw that the girl had fainted.

CHAPTER II.

As Audrey found herself alone in the cab, driving out of the high, iron gates of the asylum, she felt she must be in some extraordinary dream. She had never driven in any sort of vehicle before, and the curious sensation of being carried over the road at a quick pace added to the vagueness that seemed to envelop her; but the keen east wind as it rushed in at the window awoke her, and with a sigh, she knew it was no dream, but a reality full of excitement, confusion and unspeakable pain. The tears she had repressed rolled down her cheeks as she thought of Jean left alone in that miserable life. Then her young spirit rose above her grief. She was free, and before very long Jean should be free, too, and they would go away together, as they had dreamed and whispered so often in the night hours. Mr. Thorngate was waiting at the station and spoke kindly to the girl.

"There is your ticket, Maxse," he said. "and when you reach Mountberry you must get out and wait on the platform till a lady speaks to you. She is my wife, and will look after you. I should have taken you down myself, but I cannot leave Broadborough for another week. Now, you must be a good, diligent worker, and never forget your duty to your employers and to heaven."

Audrey thanked the kind-hearted clergyman and accepted his advice gracefully. The train carriage was quite empty, and they were proceeding at a quick, even pace that had the effect of soothing the girl. The rumble of the wheels buzzed a sort of lullaby in her ears. She was very weary and was soon lost to everything in a deep, dreamless slumber.

She was awakened by a sudden opening of the door, by several voices shouting, and by some person jumping into the carriage and sinking on to the seat, breathless, evidently with having run very fast. It was a young man. Audrey gazed at him in startled amazement through her veil. He was splashed with mud from head to foot, but his clothes were perfect in make and fit. He wore rough riding breeches and boots, and had a hunting crop in his right hand. He laughed and brushed some of the mud off his sleeve with his crop. He pulled out his watch and consulted it.

"Just twelve," Audrey heard him mutter, and she was bewildered to think she must have slept for something like two hours. She drew back a little nervously into her corner, for the young man had folded his arms and was gazing intently at her slender, black-robed figure out of a pair of very handsome gray eyes.

As a matter of fact, Lord John Glendurwood was not even aware of what was opposite to him. He was busy making a rapid mental calculation.

"Ten minutes to the stables, and then a good hour's hard ride back, and then it will be just a toss-up or no whether they will not be miles away before I even am half-way there. Well, it's worth having a shot at anyhow. I must get a brush-down somewhere. Sheila will have a fit if I turn up like this. I don't know how I came such a cropper; making such a jolly fool of myself, too, before everybody. I hope poor Hector isn't badly lamed, poor old chap! Can't take him out again this week, that's very certain. Here we are at Glaston, another five minutes, and then Beignton, and then the stables just as fast as I know how to run."

The train drew up at a little station, and the guard came running down to the carriage. He touched his cap with great respect.

"'Ope you didn't 'urt yerself, my lord; but you know it is dangerous a jumping in like that, when she's on the move. Won't you change carriages, my lord? This ain't fit for the likes of your lordship—— What did you say, ma'am?"

"Am—am I near Mountberry Station, please?" faltered Audrey, breaking in on the brief conversation.

"Mountberry? Why, we've passed it a quarter of an hour ago. Right, Bill; yes," giving a shrill whistle. "Right she is. Now, then, there!"

The train moved on. Audrey looked about her uncertainly; she was frightened and bewildered. What should she do? Lord John, usually called Jack, glanced at the figure before him with some interest.

"Looks like a widow. Can't be, though, she's so small and young. Poor creature; She's very poor, at any rate. She's evidently upset at pasing her station."

He leaned forward and addressed Audrey in his kind-hearted way.

"You can get another train back immediately from Beignton. You will reach Mountberry in a very short time. I am getting out at Beignton myself, and I will put you in the care of old Staple, the station master, unless you know your way about."

"No, oh, no!" she broke in nervously. "This—I am a stranger. I have never been on a train before. I—oh! and I shall have kept Mrs. Thorngate waiting. Oh, dear!"

"Never been in a train before!" repeated Jack Glendurwood in amazement. He knit his brows and pulled his handsome golden-brown mustache. What manner of creature was this, with her sweet, childish voice, her curiously black draped figure in cumbersome cloak and thick veil; her shyness and her ignorance? He laughed a little easily. "It must seem strange to you. But did I understand you to say you were going to meet Mrs. Thorngate?"

"Yes; at—at Mountberry. Mr. Thorngate told me she would be waiting for me, and now——"

His voice was so kind that Audrey felt irresistibly drawn toward him.

"Well, she will not have to wait long," Lord John answered, cheerfully, and then he all but whistled aloud, for Audrey, with a quick gesture, had flung back her veil, and he beheld her face in all its beauty. Tears were still hanging on her lashes, but her eyes shone through them like sapphires; her raven black hair, brushed vigorously back from her brow, enhanced the delicate pallor of her skin. Jack Glendurwood thought he had never seen anything so perfectly lovely in his life as the straight, small nose, the red lips, the pale, ivory complexion, and those wondrous deep-blue eyes. He forgot all about his haste, his muddy appearance, or his lame hunter—he even forgot his manners—in his admiration and surprise, till a deep blush, spreading over her throat, cheeks and brow, recalled him.

"Are you going to stay with Mrs. Thorngate, may I ask?" he inquired almost involuntarily.

Audrey felt strangely shy and childish. He seemed to her like King Arthur, with his tall, strong figure and courteous manner.

"I wish Jean could see him," she thought to herself, and then she glanced at him like a shy, startled bird when he asked her that question.

"I beg your pardon. I—I have no right to ask you such a question," he stammered, hurriedly; "it was only because Mrs. Thorngate is a friend of mine."

"I have never met Mrs. Thorngate," she said in a quiet, respectful manner. "Nor am I ever likely to become her friend. You—you have made a mistake, sir; I am not a lady, I am only a servant maid."

Lord John felt an involuntary confusion in his breast. Audrey's clear, refined voice, her curt, proud words, roused his ire against the fates that condemned so fair, so young a being to a menial life.

"Staple will do everything for you, and there is a train directly," he said hurriedly. "I hope you will reach your destination safely, and—I will say good morning now."

"Good-by, and thank you. Oh, thank you!" Audrey answered him.

Now that he was going, she clung to him as to something bright and pleasant such as she had never known before. In a vague sort of way he seemed almost like a friend and protector to her.

Audrey sighed as she felt herself being whirled along to Mountberry. Now that she was alone again, all her nervousness returned, and she was quivering with excitement and fear as they reached her destination.

(To be continued.)

He Relented.

Restaurant Proprietor—Here's your wages. I don't want such a careless waiter around my place.

Waiter—What's the matter?

Restaurant Proprietor—Why, the gentleman ordered sirloin and you served him porterhouse.

Waiter—Well, we all make mis-steaks occasionally.

Then the boss relented.—Toledo Blade.

Whipped Cream.

"Look here," shouted the irate neighbor over the fence, "your youngest son has been stoning my cats and pilfering my apple trees. He is a scamp!"

"Don't talk that way about my son," blurted the fond parent. "Why, he's considered the cream of our family."

"The cream, eh? Well, I'd like to see him whipped."

Progress.

"Yes," said the old man, "my daughter is still studying French."

"But she can't speak the language at all, can she?" remarked the friend.

"She couldn't at first but now she can speak it just enough to make herself unintelligible."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Sure Proof.

"Sir, the owner of this automobile has not run away from the consequences of the smashup. He is above suspicion."

"I know that, because he is under the auto."—Baltimore American.

Usual Thing.

"What is it a sign of," asked the innocent maid, "when a young man begins to tell a girl his troubles?"

"It's a sign that he will soon ask her to share them," answered the pretty widow.

Why She's an Angel.

Mr. Urban—Commuter's wife must be an earthly angel.

Mrs. Urban—Why do you think so?

Mr. Urban—He tells me they have had the same cook for three weeks.—Chicago News.

Matrimonial Joys.

Mrs. Peckem—Here's an invitation to my cousin's wedding. Will you go?

Peckem—No, I hate weddings. I sometimes wish I hadn't attended my own.

No Empty Joke.

First Legislator—Are you going to vote for the charter of this vacuum company?

Second Legislator—What's in it?—Baltimore American.

LITTLE MEN AND LITTLE WOMEN

An Alphabet of Sports.

A is for archery, sport with the bow,
B is for balls, of rubber or snow;
C is for cat's-cradle, coasting and chess;
D is for dominoes, played with success.
E is for euchre, an old German game,
F is for fishing, a sport of great fame.
G is for golf, a popular play
With ladies and gentlemen, merry and gay.
H is for hare and hounds—see the hounds run,
I is for Indian—boys think them fun.
J is for jackstraws and jackstones, too,
K is for kites, far up in the blue.
L is for leap-frog, jump over his back!
M is for marbles, blue, yellow and black.
N is for ninepins, roll the ball straight!
Down go the ninepins, five, seven, eight!
O is for observation keen;
Try to remember the things that you've seen.
P is for polo, played in the park,
Q is for quoits, pitched at a mark.
R is for rowing, by river and sea,
S is for skating, for both you and me.
T is for tennis, a game to allure,
The hand and the eye that are skillful and sure.
U is for umpire, quarrels he'l quell;
V is for vaulting, jump high and jump well!
W is for wheeling, for man and for maid,
X is for Xystus, where Greek games were played.
Y is for yachting, from port to port,
Z is for zigzag, the very last sport.
—Chicago Daily News.

Proving a Proverb.

"'A stitch in time saves nine,'" said mother, leaning over Molly and showing her where the tiny rip had begun in the pocket of her plaid dress. "It is just a little place now, and you know how to backstitch it just as well as I, and so I am going to leave that for you to do. That is the dress you will wear to the fair."

Molly sighed. "I will do it by and by," she promised herself. She did not intend to leave it for her mother. She knew with three brothers there were a great many stitches to take.

A Celebrated Hymn.

Few people know that the hymn "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," one of the best known in the English language, was written in a few minutes. Dr. Shipley, Dean of St. Asaph and Vicar of Wrexham, on Whitsunday of the year 1819, preached a sermon on the propagation of the Gospel. On the Saturday preceding the delivery of the sermon, the doctor asked Heber, who was his son-in-law, and then on a visit to him, to write something "for them to sing in the morning." Heber sat down, and, without leaving the room, wrote the hymn that is now famous all over the world. He was then in his thirty-sixth year, and was rector of Hodnet.

Goldbeater's Skin.

The skin used by goldbeaters is made from the large intestine of the ox. It undergoes a number of processes to free the outer membrane from grease and other impurities, and is then cut into pieces about four inches square. So great is its tenacity and power of resistance, that it will stand the continuous blows of a twelve-pound hammer for many months.

Old-Time Railroading.

Railroading to-day is not what it used to be, says an old engineer, who ran over the Indianapolis, Madison and La Fayette Road, in Indiana, the first line built in that State. The rails of that day were of wood, with an iron sheet spiked over the surface. The jar of a train would loosen these coverings and they would bend upward. They were called "snake heads," and when one was approached the train would be stopped, and it was the duty of the baggage-master to nail the track down again. The speed never exceeded twelve miles an hour, which was considered very fast running. The engineer was the aristocrat of the system and never condescended to perform so menial a task as to nail down a "snake head." When a stop was made he employed all his time in wiping the mud off his engine, which, with such a track, was always kept covered with dirt in bad weather, and in oiling parts.

"In that day," says Mr. Hughes, "the engineer who would have thought of running his engine backward would have been discharged at once. It was believed that the way to ruin an engine was to run backward. People thought they were making a fine speed at twelve miles an hour, and everything exceeding that would have been perilous in the extreme. One can appreciate the changes time has wrought when he fancies a vestibule express stopping to allow a baggage-master to go ahead and spike down the track.

A Smart Dog.

There is an old lady in Rochester, N. Y., says the Herald of that city, who lives with a family which keeps a big dog of which she is at the same time very fond and somewhat afraid. The house contains an armchair, which both lady and dog particularly like to occupy.

When the dog gets to it first, the old lady, fearing to order him out lest he bite her, tries subterfuge. She opens the window, puts her head out, and exclaims "Cats!" in a loud voice. The dog at once leaps to the window to see, and the old lady gets the chair.

One evening, however, the dog came in and found the old lady in the chair ahead of him. He wandered round uneasily for a time, eying her and the window. At last he seemed to come to a determination, for he suddenly rushed to the window, his hair all bristling up on his back, and began to bark and growl frightfully.

If ever a dog cried "Burglars!" he did so then. The old lady, much surprised, rushed to see what was worrying him. She saw nothing—until she turned round. Then she saw the smart dog peacefully enthroned in the contested chair.

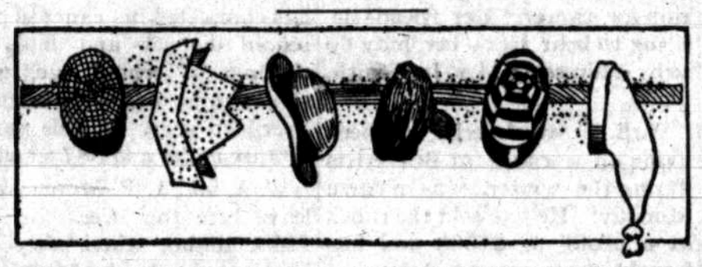
The old lady is not sure, but she is almost convinced that he closed one eye solemnly at her in a veritable wink. Two had played at the same game.

The trouble with having a fair opinion of yourself is that you are liable to make yourself despised by being self-satisfied.

About Adverbs.

Perhaps the editor may give the boys and girls a better understanding of the nature of adverbs than they now have by saying that they are always convenient forms of abbreviation, enabling us to use a word where otherwise a phrase would be necessary. Thus we say "here" instead of "in this place"; "then" for "at that time"; "thus" for "in that manner." A great many adverbs are formed by adding to adjectives the termination "ly," which means "like," but the principle of abbreviation still holds good; as in the case of "foolishly," for "in a foolish manner"; "hastily," for "in a hasty manner"; and "wisely" for "like a wise man."

BALLAD OF LITTLE HATS.



Six little head-covers, all in a row,
Some for use are, some for show,
A cap for school, and a cap for play,
And a hat to wear on the Sabbath day.
A cap for winter, a cap for ball,
All hanging on pegs in the upstairs hall.
But the cap I love—I'm a sleepy head—
Is the little white night-cap over the bed.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN

1500—Vicente Yanez Pinzon discovered Brazil.
1530—Confession of Augsburg published.
1552—Protector Somerset beheaded.
1788—City of Sydney, New South Wales, founded.
1802—Albert Gallatin of Pennsylvania became Secretary of the Treasury.
1814—French victorious at battle of St. Dizier.
1827—Duke of Wellington made commander-in-chief of British army.
1833—Argos united to Greece under King Otho.
1842—Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (Edward VII.) christened at Windsor.
1846—Sikhs defeated the British in sanguinary battle at Aliwal.
1849—Mooltan taken after a siege of twenty days.
1851—Walter Colton, who made first public announcement of discovery of gold in California, died.
1853—Napoleon III. married Eugenie de Montijo, Countess of Teba.
1855—Alliance of Sardinia with the western powers.
1856—The Victoria Cross instituted.
1857—First outbreak of the Sepoy rebellion at Barrackpoor.
1867—President Johnson vetoed the bill to admit Nebraska.
1868—Spain ordered 50,000 American breech-loading rifles.
1873—Northfleet lost in collision with the Murillo; 300 persons perished.
1874—Duke of Edinburgh married to the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovana at St. Petersburg.
1876—Northampton bank robbery occurred.
1882—Charles Guiteau, after trial of 72 days, sentenced to death for murdering President Garfield.
1885—Fall of Khartoum and death of Gen. Gordon.
1886—Fall of the Salisbury ministry in England.
1888—New South Wales celebrated its centenary as a colony.
1889—Municipal banquet given in London in honor of United States Minister Phelps.....General strike of street railway men in New York City ....Republican tariff bill passed by the Senate....John M. Clayton, prominent politician, assassinated in Arkansas.
1890—Nellie Bly completed circuit of the globe in 72 days, 6 hours and 11 minutes.
1891—Prince Baldwin, the Belgian heir presumptive, died suddenly.
1894—Reconciliation of Emperor William of Germany and Prince Bismarck.
1895—President Cleveland asked of Congress authority to issue gold bonds.
1896—France announced annexation of Madagascar.
1898—National Monetary convention met at Indianapolis.
1899—Adelina Patti married Baron Cederstrom.
1900—Brigham H. Roberts of Utah excluded from the House of Representatives.
1901—Edward VII. proclaimed King of Great Britain and Ireland and Emperor of India....Fire in Montreal destroyed property valued at $2,500,000.
1902—Andrew Carnegie gave $10,000,000 to the trustees of Carnegie institution.
1903—United States and Great Britain signed treaty providing for commission to settle Alaskan boundary dispute....Col. Arthur Lynch convicted of high treason in England.
1904—Ten thousand made homeless by fire in Aalesund, Norway....Two hundred killed in coal mine explosion at Cheswick, Pa.....Thibet demanded the withdrawal of the English expedition.
1905—Successful flight of airship "California Arrow" at Los Angeles....Charles L. Tucker found guilty of Mabel Page murder at Cambridge, Mass.
1906—Steamer Valencia wrecked off Vancouver island; 129 lives lost.

Night Bank Innovation.

The Day and Night bank at New York, the first institution of its kind in the world, has now inaugurated a system of automobile collections for the benefit of theaters and other enterprises who handle large sums of money at night, thereby obviating the necessity of sending individual messengers to the bank at late hours.

Alexieff Again in Power.

The resignation of Russia's reform admiral, Birileff, was coincident with the reappearance of Admiral Alexieff, who was viceroy of the far east before the war with Japan, as a favorite of the Czar. Official statistics of the political repressions in Russia last year show 1,252 persons were executed, 2,029 sent into penal servitude in the mines, 186 exiled to Siberia for life, 5,945 imprisoned, 562 newspapers suspended and 732 editors prosecuted.