

THE CHARITY GIRL

By EFFIE A. ROWLANDS

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Glendurwood carriage was standing where Jack had ordered it to remain when he arrived. Jack had thrown himself back in his corner and had folded his arms across his breast; Audrey sat bolt upright, her two cold little hands clinched tight together, her teeth set so that the soles that rose to her throat should not escape her lips.

Who shall attempt to describe the state of those two hearts, both wounded to the very quick, both heavy with that deep sorrow that comes when one has been deceived where one loves best?

"Why did they take me to him? Why was I married to him? I would sooner have died than have listened to what those women said to-night, and know that he has never, never loved me," said Audrey to herself, passionately.

"And so my happiness is over," ran Jack's troubled thoughts. "Well, it has not lasted long. Fool—fool that I have been, to believe that any woman could be the angel I have pictured her to be, and that she should love him—him, above all other men! I feel as though his very life's blood will not give me satisfaction."

They reached the gates of Craighlands at last; a few minutes' drive through the well-kept avenue, and then the door. Jack got out, and then forcing himself by an almost superhuman effort to appear natural before the servants, turned to assist her. Audrey put her cold hand in his as she stepped out of the brougham: How little did either of them think that they would not clasp, or even touch, hands again for many a weary day.

The fragrance and warmth of her bedroom seemed to choke Audrey. Hastily flinging off her domino, she passed to the window and pushed it open, and then stood by it, the sound of her own heart beating in her ears like a sledge hammer.

Would Jack come? She waited several moments. If he had come to her then she would have done that which would have put matters straight at once, for the agony in her breast was urging her to speak out to ask him why he had deceived her, why he had married her. The hot blood rushed to her cheeks again and again, as she recalled the remarks those two women had made, and realized how cruelly the world judged her already.

Five, ten, fifteen, twenty minutes went by, and Audrey still stood waiting for the sound of her husband's footsteps on the stairs and the passage outside.

Her happiness was ended; Jack no longer loved her—indeed, had never loved her. She was his wife, that was true, and it must be her lot to bear with the difficulties as with the joys that fell to her as his wife.

"Still," the child thought sorrowfully to herself, "he has acted wrongly; he has been cruel to Sheila, to himself, to me. I am glad he did not come in just now, just glad, for it shows that he is tired of deceit and hypocrisy, and—and I cannot bear to think that the nature I thought so honest should only prove false. What was it that those women said? The worst day's work Jack Glendurwood did when he married me." People should be careful how they speak out—the truth. Her lips quivered, but her face flamed with proud color.

"The worst day's work for Jack," she repeated slowly, "and I am the one who has brought that to him. I—I who would lay down my life for him. Why did I ever meet him? Why did I ever leave home? Why did not heaven let me die before all this sorrow came upon him through me? Jack! My darling! My darling!"

Her hot, tearful eyes stared into the fire, as if to seek some solution of this painful problem there. In her loving generosity Audrey made all excuses for her husband now. She no longer blamed him; she was still to her the dearest creature on earth; and yet so great was the agony at thought of his deceit that he had held out his arms to her and called her tenderly by name, she would have turned from him and stood aloof.

CHAPTER XXV.

Jean Thwait was lying in a delicious daze, half waking, half sleeping, on the morning following the Dinglewood masked ball, when a sharp tap at the door, followed by Audrey's rapid entrance, aroused her completely.

"What is it, darling? Something has happened?" she cried, hurriedly.

"Jean, can you pack up a few things and come with me at once?" Audrey spoke faintly, her face was deathly white, she shook in every limb; then before Jean could answer, she went on swiftly, "My mother is very ill. She has telegraphed for me. Perhaps even now I may be too late; she may be dead. I have ordered the carriage to be here in an hour, can you be ready?"

"Yes," replied Jean, briefly. It needed no words to tell her that more was the matter than this telegram from Germany. Audrey had never spoken like this to her before, had never looked as she looked now.

Audrey made no inquiries about Jack, although she knew she must acquaint him with her journey before she started. Jean found plenty to do in the time allotted to her, but she was wonderfully quick, and was in her hat and coat when she went to the door to open it in answer to a sharp summons. It was Jack, also fully attired in outdoor costume, with a railway rug over his arm.

"Good morning, Miss Thwait," he said, hurriedly. "Please forgive me for this unceremonious intrusion, but I wanted to speak to you before I leave."

"Are you not going with us?" she asked in surprise.

It was Jack's turn to show astonishment.

"Where are you going?" he asked huskily.

Jean in three words, explained what had happened, and then she knew something was very wrong, indeed, by the expression on Jack's face.

"Poor Constance!" she heard him mutter under his breath; then he gave a quick sigh. "I hope things may not be

so bad, Miss Thwait. It is quite impossible for me to get to Cronstadt yet."

"Does Audrey know you are not going with us?"

"I have not seen her this morning," was the answer, given with much evident pain.

Jean clasped her hands suddenly. Then her worst fears were realized, and something more had, indeed, happened; something, too, very terrible, to work such a change as this.

"Lord John," she said, involuntarily, "you must please forgive me, but is your business so important that you are compelled to attend to it rather than accompany your wife on such a journey as this?"

"Miss Thwait," he said as well as he could speak, "the business I am going on touches that which is dearer to me than life—my honor! I am sure that you to leave would not wish me to neglect anything with which that is concerned."

"I will answer for Audrey as for myself," Jean said, hurriedly, "if your honor is concerned, Lord John, no other reason is needed; but is there nothing I can do?"

"Give this letter to Audrey, Miss Thwait," his voice quivered as he spoke his wife's name. "It is a sacred trust, one that I would not give to every one; but I know you are her friend, you will comprehend and sympathize with what I am going to do."

"Stay, Lord John; you must hear me!"

Jean's gray eyes were full of tears. "I love Audrey better than anything on earth. I do not ask to know the reason, but I see, alas! only too well, that something has arisen between her and you. I ask you now, and it is my love for her that urges the question, will you not see her yourself before you start on this journey?—will you not smooth away the quarrel? She is in trouble—will you not take her to your arms?"

"It is impossible," he said quickly, but with such determination in his voice as made Jean shudder, and sent a thrill of exquisite torture through Audrey's aching heart, as she, at that moment, opened the door in time to catch Jean's last words and her husband's reply.

By and by, when they were speeding to Dover, Jean and Willie Fullerton—who, when he found Jack did not join them, insisted on going—in a corner talking earnestly, Audrey drew out her husband's letter.

"Audrey—In future, after the events of last night, it will be impossible for us to live together. This, I take it, will be as much your wish as mine. To continue to live as we have been doing would be a mockery of marriage, a disgrace to our race, a dishonor to our name. This, then, is what I propose to do. There shall be no divorce; the pride and honor of the Harbord family protest against such a course. After all, you are very young, a mere child; you may have erred through ignorance, but be that so or not, from henceforth you can never be my wife in sight but name. My wife must be above suspicion—pure, sweet, true—not a girl who, before scarcely six months of her marriage have gone, encourages a man for whom she openly expresses horror and contempt."

"As for Beverley Rochfort, before many hours are over—unless he be a cur, which I take him to be—he will have answered to me for his own part in this affair. Audrey, I am trying to write kindly; I am trying to remember your youth and the many disadvantages that have been yours since the first, and you—if you have justice and honesty in your heart—you will recognize that I am not treating you harshly. Your future is my care. This morning I have made my will. I leave you all the money I possess, together with Minster, in Blankshire, the property my father has just settled upon me. Whether I live or die, I wish you to make your home at Minster. I should like to think Miss Thwait was with you. Your money will be transmitted through my lawyers. I intend to start at once on a tour of the world, giving the condition of my health as a reason for thus relinquishing my parliamentary career. I shall be absent, perhaps, two years, and I leave it in your hands to judge whether at the end of that time your conduct has been such as to permit me to occupy the same house as yourself, and appear before the world in my proper position as your husband."

"JOHN GLENDURWOOD."

When Dover was reached a telegram was brought to Jean.

"For Lady John Glendurwood," the waiter said, inquiringly. "Is that right, madame?"

"Quite right."

Jean hesitated only a moment, and tore it open. She gave a little sound of sorrow as she read. It was from Marshall—poor, faithful Marshall—and ran thus:

"Mrs. Fraser died this morning. Her last wish was that you should not travel here, but that she should be carried home and buried in England. I, therefore, beg your ladyship to obey this wish. I have telegraphed for my poor mistress's lawyers."

"SUSAN MARSHALL."

Poor little Audrey! Robbed already of the mother she had longed for so much, loved so dearly, and possessed so short a while!

CHAPTER XXVI.

There was nothing to do. Audrey fell into a sickness that threatened serious consequences. Jean sent at once for Lord Glendurwood and Fullerton, and he came in hot haste from a vain search for Beverley Rochfort. There was nothing to be done but wait. Audrey had fallen into a stupor. Her dear mother was buried without the presence of her beloved child.

For three days and nights Jean sat beside Audrey's bed, watching and dreading for the moment when that fair, frail face should grow even whiter, the faint, low breathing even fainter. Three long, weary days these were; but if she found them terrible, how much more so did the one who had nothing to do put to pace to and fro in the wet, leafless garden; his hungry eyes fixed always on the low, square window which hid his darling from

his view? The doctors forbade Jack Glendurwood from entering his wife's sick room. He had crept in for a few moments the night before—no argument or threat could keep him out; and as he had bent over the girl's silent form, calling to her in his agony to speak to him, she had opened her eyes, and at sight of him she had given one little scream, and then had relapsed into unconsciousness, in which condition she had remained for three days and nights. When reason returned Audrey was better, and Jean sought out Jack and told the good news.

"And may I see her—when?" he asked, eagerly. "When may I see her? My darling! My darling!"

"The doctor will tell you. Perhaps to-night!"

As Jean sat by Audrey's bedside that evening, resting back wearily in the chair, now that all extreme anxiety was gone, a small, sweet voice came from the pillow, and she was alert at once.

"Jean," she said, after a little pause, "is—Ja—is my husband here?"

"Yes, darling; he has been here nearly all the time. Do you want to see him?"

"No, no, no! I will not see him. Jean, if you love me, send him away! I shall go mad if he is here! Promise! Promise! You must; you shall!"

"It shall be as you wish, my dearest," Jean said, softly. "You can trust me."

"Yes—trust—you—always," she murmured, and in a few seconds she was asleep.

Constance Fraser had been brought over to England and laid beside her mother in an old-fashioned country churchyard. It had been a simple funeral enough, though flowers had come from far and near. High and low, rich and poor, one and all, had a sorrowful thought for the sweet, gentle woman, who had merited a better sojourn on earth.

Sheila was left to herself and her not very agreeable reflections. The masked ball had cost her an enormous sum. Lady Daleswater had never offered to take her away with her; she had absolutely no notion of what had happened to Jack and Audrey. Beverley Rochfort never made the least sign, and to crown all, Murray, the william maid at Craighlands, and her much too clever accomplice, took matters into her own hands and bolted one night with all the available jewelry and lace she could lay her hands upon.

Enraged beyond all expression at the loss of her property, Sheila at once put the matter into the hands of the police, and, in fact, was far more interested in this affair than she was at the death of her stepmother.

But a more disagreeable condition of things than this awaited Sheila when the report of Audrey's disappearance spread to Mountherby. She was fairly frightened; ignorant of what might really happen, she conjured up all sorts of evil that would be visited upon her when the whole truth was given to the world, as it most probably would be. She eagerly searched for Rochfort, to force him to exonerate her from blame in the mischief they had brought about, but like a coward he was hiding from his consequences.

Then one day she had a frantic visit from Alice Fairfax, who was in great and terrible fear lest something would happen to her. She had seen Willie Fullerton, who had boldly stated that it was Lord John's intention to sift out the whole gossip that had been spread about his wife, and clear away much that he could not understand.

"And, if so, we shall be ruined, Sheila," sobbed Alice Fairfax; "but, anyhow, I shall tell the truth, and say you asked me to do so."

"You dare to turn on me!" Sheila flashed, furiously, white with anger, and then she would have proceeded to further ebullitions of wrath had not the door of her room been opened at this moment and Mr. Fullerton announced by the waiter. A glance at the two flushed faces would have satisfied Willie as to their guilt, if he had not, at that moment, reposing in his pocket, a complete confession signed by Murray, whom Dawson, the detective, had easily found—and who, discovering that her chance of a brilliant career on Sheila's jewels was briefly cut short, eased her conscience and her spite by disclosing the whole plot.

Willie's interview with Sheila was short and to the point; and when he left the room he carried with him her signature and a few words at the bottom of Murray's confession testifying that all the maid had written was true.

(To be continued.)

Fully Qualified.

"So you're after the job, eh?" said the milkman who had advertised for a helper.

"Yes, sir," replied the young man.

"Well, what experience have you had?"

"Why, I've pumped the organ down to our church for years."—Philadelphia Press.

Absent Minded.

Stranger (with suitcase)—Can you advise me, sir, as to the nearest route to the leading hotel?

The Native—Straight ahead three blocks. Two dollars, please.

Stranger—Eh!

Native—Beg pardon. Force of habit. My card. I'm Dr. Pellet.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

No Graft in It.

"See here," said the lieutenant of police, "that countryman claims he told you of his experience with a bunco man, but you paid no attention to him."

"Dat's all right," replied the cop. "He didn't interest me none. He admitted de bunco man had took de last cent he had."—Philadelphia Press.

Usually the Case.

"Say, pa," said Tommy, looking up from his paper, "what does 'obvious reasons' mean?"

"Usually, my son," replied pa, "it means reasons that the writer is too lazy or too ignorant to explain."—Philadelphia Press.

Convenient.

"So you have three pairs of glasses, professor?"

"Yes—one pair to read with, another for near-sightedness, and a third pair to look for the other two with!"—Fliegende Blätter.

GIRLS AND BOYS AT THE SMART "FOOL" AGE



JULIET V. STRAUSS.

The young animal of either sex, when arrived at the "smart" age, is indeed a trial to beholders in general and to parents in particular.

Patience, and in a chastened mood, we must live through the pert speeches, the heavy tragedies, the sickening affectation, the mouthing, the baby talk, the mincing walk, the wagging head, that belongs to the fool age. By turns we take courage, remembering our own idleness and how we came through it, and again we never were quite so bad, and that our child is not merely at the silly age, but that the fool goes all the way through and there is absolutely no remedy. In moments of desperation we wonder if a cudgel or a perforated shingle would do any good, and then parental affection gushes forth and we are appalled at the thought of so disgraceful a thing as corporal chastisement for a child supposed to be "grown."

No, there is no help for it. We must let nature take its course, thanking our lucky stars if the happy young fool comes off without ruining his prospects in life.

In gazing upon the youthful subjects of this sketch, I wonder which is more painful to the beholder who has come to years of discretion, to see them walk or to hear them talk. In walking there seems to be a sort of spiral wiggle in the gait that produces, at once, a strut and a wobble of the head deemed particularly pleasing. In talking there is a disposition not to speak plainly, to bite off the words about half articulated and to assume a peculiar quirk of the eyes or twist of the mouth, which, it is to be hoped, is thoroughly enjoyable to the speaker as it is so utterly exasperating to the hearer as almost to provoke to assault and battery.

I once knew a rather belligerent old lady, who, in a luckless moment, fell afool of one of these young women who was living through the fool period. After listening to her queer jargon a while, the old lady inquired: "Is there anything the matter with your talking apparatus, or is this here mumbly meant for style?"

After all is said and done, however, we old folks must return to the only remedy for our rasper nerves—patience. We must bear with our dear ones and love them through it all and stand ready to confront them when the gayly-tinted balloon of fatuous fancy and self-esteem bursts and they come down with a dull thud to life and its actualities.—Juliet V. Strauss, in the Chicago Journal.

HER LIFE'S SUNSET.

How the Angel of the Red Cross Is Spending Her Declining Years.

Thirty years ago and even later, the name and the fame of Clara Barton were spread through two continents. She ranks to-day with the greatest heroines the world has ever known, and history a half century from now will glow with accounts of her noble work. Yet she lives just out of Washington in a retirement that is almost isolation, surrounded by only a few faithful friends, who have spent their lives in her service, and nearly forgotten by the heedless generation that follows her. Now and then some old and stanch friend of Miss Barton makes the long trip out from town to the big



MISS CLARA BARTON.

yellow house at Glen Echo, occasional sightseers and curious strangers invade her solitude, and from time to time she makes a short trip into the city herself; but for the most part she spends long, sunny days in the silent house overlooking the Potomac.

This house, a roomy one built for a hospital for sufferers in the Johnstown flood and afterward given to Miss Barton and moved by her to Glen Echo, is a rather dreary place in winter, although it is delightfully cool in summer. A trip down the wide hallway running through the center of this house, on a bleak winter's day, is enough to chill the marrow in one's bones, but the long walk ends in a warm, sleepy sitting room which is inviting in its comfort. Old-fashioned cushioned rocking chairs, a lounge with bright-colored Afghan upon it, and a great waterfall of Wandering Jew in the window all breathe of the quaint home-likeness of a quarter century ago. Miss Barton fits into it like a picture into its frame, and a chat with her there is the sort of experience that finds one coming away smiling a little.

The winter months, when the Virginia hills opposite her study windows are forlornly bare, Miss Barton spends writing and reading. In spite of her 80-odd years, she is still mentally keen and interested in all the events of the day, and she keeps up with current affairs to an amazing degree. Now and then articles from her pen are sought by various publications, and it is hinted, too, that she is busily preparing a volume of recollections, which shall perhaps be somewhat in the nature of an autobiography. Miss Barton has for years been urged to write such a book, and since her connection with all public affairs was severed, some two or three years ago, she has been giving more and more time and attention to her personal writings.

Her habits while thus at work are curiously erratic. She is up early in

the morning, and often by daybreak the scratch of her pen may be heard in her study. During the day she often takes little naps, resuming her writing with fresh vim, and frequently she will lie down from 8 or 9 o'clock in the evening until 10 or 11, rising then to go vigorously to work and write busily until 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning. One of her most faithful companions states that frequently, when she has had some difficult piece of writing to be done, she would go to the kitchen and work energetically with her hands, at canning or ironing or some domestic task—all the while revolving her subject and its arrangement in her thoughts.

Then suddenly she would go to her room, take up her pen and write her article with scarcely the change of a word. She insisted that her thoughts came much more clearly and smoothly when her hands were occupied.

During the summer months Miss Barton generally goes to her old home, the little town of Oxford, Mass., where she was born and where her remaining relatives still live. She is dearly loved and revered there, and is usually the patron saint of the young men and maids of the graduating classes. She has an unflinching interest in young people, and enters into their ambitions and troubles with real sympathy. Another of her great pleasures is the annual reunion of the G. A. R., where she is always a beloved and honored figure.

The old "boys" have never forgotten the heroism and courage with which she went among them, helping to save their lives, and here at least there goes out to her a gratitude which never forgets her nor takes for granted the great work she has accomplished.

Cloth to Stop Bullets.

"A new protective principle for soldiers has been discovered by an Italian, Sig. Benedetti," says the Technical World Magazine. "Experimentation shows that great resistance is offered by substances that have air within their cells. The principle may be illustrated in this manner: Fire under precisely the same conditions in both cases, a bullet at each of two calendars, one of which consists of thick sheets of paper, the other of thinner sheets. The ball will penetrate farther into the calendar of heavier material. This difference is due to the elasticity of the layer of air that is imprisoned between the successive sheets. The thinner the cushion of air, the more elastic it is, and the more sharply it reacts."

"Benedetti, adopting this principle, has constructed a cuirass of a kind of felt. It is not rough, however, like ordinary felt. The special features of this new device for stopping bullets the inventor has not as yet disclosed in any detail."

Don't Fit the Case.

"You shouldn't have hit that man who called you a liar."

"Shouldn't, hey?"

"No, you should have demanded the proof, and if he could not produce it he would have been branded as a falsifier."

"That's all right ethically, but I knew he had the proof."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Extremely.

"The subject of the club discussion to-day was an extremely difficult one to bring up."

"What was it?"

"Children."—Baltimore American.

FIFTY YEARS A PUBLIC SINGER.



CHARLES SANTLEY.

Fifty years a public singer is the record of Charles Santley, the most celebrated of English barytones whose jubilee recently was marked by congratulations and presents from musicians and music lovers all over the world.

Santley is in his 74th year, and still retains a remarkably vigorous voice. In an interview with a London correspondent he said that he had no thought of retiring. Whatever time is not spent in rehearsal and performance in concerts is devoted to the teaching of his art to students in London. He is a complete master of his art, and he has succeeded perhaps more than any other Briton in spreading a love for it in his country. Though his actual debut took place in his birthplace, Liverpool, in 1853, he does not count his consecutive career to begin before his London debut, in 1857, when he sang off the same score with the great Julius Stockhausen. His inspiring barytones at once fascinated the public, and in both hemispheres he has been acclaimed as the equal, if not the superior, in some respects to Edmond de Reszke.

At Pavia, Italy, in the beginning of 1867, he stopped the boards for the first time as the doctor in "La Traviata." He was an impecunious youth then, and in Milan later he felt the pinch of poverty keenly till he met the famous impresario, Henry F. Chorley, who sent him back to London, where he entered the concert tours under the late Manuel Garcia, who recognized his wonderful talent. Since then he gained world-wide fame in oratorio and opera.



A financial genius is a man who can have a family and money at the same time.—New York Press.

Either a man is fool enough to speculate in the stock market or to try to have a vegetable garden.—New York Press.

Most people's idea of a good cook is one that can fix up a thing that you eat without guessing what it is.—New York Press.

A woman can never understand how a man who is careless about parting his hair can be successful in business.—New York Press.

It's a funny thing how so many widows think they ought to wear yellow hair for mourning the second year.—New York Press.

When a girl pretends she doesn't like candy it's a sign she is trying to grow thin.—New York Press.

Views of Maori Member.

Twenty years ago when a bill for the enfranchisement of women was introduced into the legislature of New Zealand one of the Maori members made a speech which for directness and force, from his standpoint, could not be surpassed, and it is a little strange that the radical opponents of woman suffrage, especially in England, where the subject is an exciting one, have not unearthed it. The pithy and somewhat humorously suggestive remarks of the Maori member were as follows:

"It will be a source of trouble. I think we have only to look back to the trouble that came upon Adam through his wife giving him an apple. We should bear in mind the evil that befell Samson when his locks were shorn by Delilah; also the story of Naboth's vineyard, where a woman incited a man to murder another in order to obtain possession. If ladies were allowed seats it would distract the attention of some honorable members. Although I am getting on in years, I must confess I should be affected by a weakness of that sort. If only plain women were allowed in this house the source of danger would be removed, but if any beautiful ladies were sent they would lead astray the tender hearts of some honorable gentlemen, particularly the older members. In conclusion, if attractive ladies are allowed to come into this house I am quite certain my own wife will never consent to my returning here."

Wise Man.

Wise—He doesn't feel that he's eligible for membership in your Browning society.

Woody—You mean because he does not know anything about poetry?

Wise—Not at all. I mean because he's sensible enough to admit it.—Philadelphia Press.