

FROM POORHOUSE TO PALACE

BY MARY J. HOLMES

CHAPTER XII.—(Continued.)

Here Jenny's remarks were interrupted by the loud rattling of wheels, and the halloo of many voices. Going to the door, she and Mary saw coming down the road at a furious rate the old hay cart, laden with young people from Chicopee, who had been berrying in Sturbridge and were now returning home in high glee. The horses were fantastically trimmed with ferns and evergreens, while several of the girls were ornamented in the same way. Conspicuous among the noisy group was Ella Campbell. Henry Lincoln's broad-brimmed hat was resting on her long curls, while her white sun-bonnet was tied under Henry's chin. The moment Jenny appeared the whole party set up a shout so deafening that the Widow Perkins came out in a trice to see "if the Old Harry was to pay, or what." No sooner did Henry Lincoln get sight of Mary than springing to his feet, and swinging his arm around his head, he screamed out: "Three cheers for the schoolman and her handsome lover, Billy! Hurrah!"

"Wasn't that smart?" said Jenny, when at last the hay cart disappeared from view, and the noise and dust had somewhat subsided. Then as she saw the tears in Mary's eyes she added, "Oh, I wouldn't care if they did tease me about Billy Bender. I'd as lief be teased about him as not."

"It isn't that," said Mary, smiling in spite of herself, at Jenny's frankness. "It isn't that. I didn't like to hear Ella sing with your brother, when she must have known he meant to annoy me."

"That certainly was wrong," returned Jenny, "but Ella isn't so much to blame as Henry, who seems to have acquired a great influence over her during the few weeks he has been at home. You know she is easily flattered, and I dare say Henry has fully gratified her vanity in that respect, for he says she is the only decent looking girl in Chicopee. But see, there comes Mrs. Mason; I guess she wonders what is keeping you so long."

The moment Mrs. Mason entered the school room, Jenny commenced talking about Mount Holyoke, her tongue running so fast that it entirely prevented anyone else from speaking until she stopped for a moment to take breath. Then Mrs. Mason very quietly remarked that if Mary wished to go to Mount Holyoke she could do so, Mary looked up inquiringly, wondering what mine had opened so suddenly at her feet; but she received no explanation until Jenny had bidden her good-by and gone. Then she learned that Mrs. Mason had just received one hundred dollars from a man in Boston, who had years before owed it to her husband, and was unable to pay it sooner. "And now," said Mrs. Mason, "there is no reason why you should not go to Mount Holyoke, if you wish to."

"Oh, what a forlorn-looking place!" exclaimed Rose Lincoln, as from the windows of the crowded vehicle in which they had come from the cars she first obtained a view of the not very handsome village of South Hadley.

Rose was in the worst of humors, for by some mischance Mary was on the same seat with herself, and consequently she was very much distressed and crowded. She, however, felt a little afraid of Aunt Martha, who she saw was inclined to favor the object of her wrath, so she restrained her fault-finding spirit until she arrived at South Hadley, where everything came in for a share of her displeasure.

"That the seminary!" said she contemptuously, as they drew up before the building. "Why, it isn't half as large or handsome as I supposed. Oh, horror! I know I shan't stay here long."

The furniture of the parlor was also very offensive to the young lady, and when Miss Lyon came in to meet them she, too, was secretly styled "a prim, fussy, slippery-tongued old maid." Jenny, however, who always saw the bright side of everything, was completely charmed with the sweet smile and placid face. After some conversation between Miss Lyon and Aunt Martha it was decided that Rose and Jenny should room together, as a matter of course, and that Mary should room with Ida. Rose had fully intended to room with Ida herself, and this decision made her very angry; but there was no help for it, and she was obliged to submit.

And now in a few days life at Mount Holyoke commenced in earnest. Although perfectly healthy, Mary looked rather delicate, and it was for this reason, perhaps, that the sweeping and dusting of several rooms were assigned to her, as her portion of the labor. Ida and Rose fared much worse, and were greatly shocked when told that they both belonged to the wash circle!

"I declare," said Rose, "it's too bad. I'll walk home before I'll do it!" and she glanced at her white hands, to make sure they were not already discolored by the dreadful soapsuds!

Jenny was delighted with her allotment, which was dish-washing.

"I'm glad I took a lesson at the poorhouse years ago," said she one day to Rose, who snappishly replied:

"I'd shut up about the poorhouse, or they'll think you the pauper instead of Madam Howard."

"Pauper? Who's a pauper?" asked Lucy Downs, eager to hear so desirable a piece of news.

Ida Selden's large black eyes rested reprovingly upon Rose, who added to

ward Mary, and forthwith Miss Downs departed with the information, which was not long in reaching Mary's ears.

"Why, Mary, what's the matter?" asked Ida, when, toward the close of the day, she found her companion weeping in her room. Without lifting her head Mary replied, "It's foolish in me to cry, I know, but why need I always be reproached with having been a pauper? I couldn't help it. I promised mother I would take care of little Allie as long as she lived, and if she went to the poorhouse I had to go too."

"And who was little Allie?" asked Ida, taking Mary's hot hands between her own.

In a few words Mary related her history, omitting her acquaintance with George Moreland, and commencing at the night when her mother died. Ida was warm-hearted and affectionate, and cared but little whether one were rich or poor if she liked them. From the first she had been interested in Mary, and now winding her arms about her neck, and kissing away her tears, she promised to love her, and to be to her as true and faithful a friend as Jenny. This promise, which was never broken, was of great benefit to Mary, drawing to her side many of the best girls in school, who soon learned to love her for herself, and not because the wealthy Miss Selden seemed so fond of her.

Soon after Mary went to Mount Holyoke she had received a letter from Billy, in which he expressed his pleasure that she was at school, but added that the fact of her being there interfered greatly with his plan of educating her himself. "Mother's ill health," said he, "prevented me from doing anything until now, and just as I am in a fair way to accomplish my object someone else has stepped in before me. But it is all right, and as you do not seem to need my services at present I shall next week leave Mr. Selden's employment, and go into Mr. Worthington's law office as clerk, hoping that when the proper time arrives I shall not be defeated in another plan which was formed in boyhood, and which has become the great object of my life."

Mary felt perplexed and troubled. Billy's letters of late had been more like those of a lover than a brother, and she could not help guessing the nature of "the plan formed in boyhood." She knew she should never love him except with a sister's love, and though she could not tell him so her next letter lacked the tone of affection with which she was accustomed to write, and was on the whole a rather formal affair. Billy, who readily perceived the change, attributed it to the right cause, and from that time his letters became far less cheerful than usual.

Mary usually cried over them, wishing more than once that Billy would transfer his affection from herself to Jenny, and it was for this reason, perhaps, that without stopping to consider the propriety of the matter, she first asked Jenny to write to him, and then encouraged her in answering his notes, which became gradually longer and longer, until at last his letters were addressed to Jenny, while the notes they contained were directed to Mary!

CHAPTER XIII.

Rapidly the days passed on at Mount Holyoke. Autumn faded into winter, whose icy breath floated for a time over the mountain tops, and then melted away at the approach of spring, which, with its swelling buds and early flowers, gave way in its turn to the long bright days of summer. And now only a few weeks remained ere the annual examination at which Ida was to be graduated.

Neither Rose nor Jenny were to return the next year, and nothing but Mr. Lincoln's firmness and good sense had prevented their being sent for when their mother first heard that they had failed to enter the middle class. Mrs. Lincoln's mortification was undoubtedly greatly increased from the fact that the despised Mary had entered in advance of her daughters. "Things are coming to a pretty pass," said she. "Yes, a pretty pass; but I might have known better than to send my children to such a school."

She insisted upon sending for Rose and Jenny, but Mr. Lincoln promptly replied that they should not come home. Still, as Rose seemed discontented, complaining that so much exercise made her side and shoulder ache, and as Jenny did not wish to remain another year unless Mary did, he consented that they should leave school at the close of the term, on condition that they went somewhere else.

"I shall never make anything of Henry," said he, "but my daughters shall receive every advantage, and perhaps one or the other of them will comfort my old age."

He had spoken truly with regard to Henry, who was studying, or pretending to study, law in the same office with Billy Bender. But his father heard no favorable accounts of him, and from time to time large bills were presented. So it is no wonder the disappointed father sighed, and turned to his daughters for the comfort his only son refused to give.

For the examination at Mount Holyoke great preparations were being made. Rose, knowing she was not to return, seemed to think all further effort on her part unnecessary; and numerous were the reprimands, to say nothing of the black marks which she received. Jenny, on the contrary, said she wished to retrieve her reputation for laziness, and leave behind a good impression. So, never before in

her whole life had she behaved so well, or studied as hard as she did during the last few weeks of her stay at Mount Holyoke. Ida, who was expecting her father, aunt and cousin to be present at the anniversary, was so engrossed with her studies that she did not observe how sad and low-spirited Mary seemed. She had tasted of knowledge and now thirsted for more; but it could not be; the funds were exhausted, and she must leave the school, never perhaps to return again.

"How much I shall miss my music, and how much I shall miss you," she said one day to Ida, who was giving her a lesson. "It's too bad you haven't a piano," returned Ida, "you are so fond of it, and improve so fast!" Then after a moment, she added, "I have a plan to propose, and may as well do it now as at any time. Next winter you must spend with me in Boston. Aunt Martha and I arranged it the last time I was at home, and we even selected your room, which is next to mine, and opposite to Aunt Martha's. Now, what does your ladyship say to it?"

"She says she can't go," answered Mary. "Can't go!" repeated Ida. "Why not? Jenny will be in the city, and you are always happy where she is; besides, you will have a rare chance for taking music lessons of our best teachers; and then, too, you will be in the same house with George, and that alone is worth going to Boston for, I think."

Ida little suspected that her last argument was the strongest objection to Mary's going, for, much as she wished to meet George again, she felt that she would not on any account go to his home, lest he should think she came on purpose to see him. There were other reasons, too, why she did not wish to go. Henry and Rose Lincoln would both be in the city, and she knew that neither of them would scruple to do or say anything which they thought would annoy her. Mrs. Mason, too, missed her, and longed to have her at home; so she resisted all Ida's entreaties, and the next letter which went to Aunt Martha carried her refusal.

In a day or two Mary received two letters, one from Billy and one from Mrs. Mason, the latter of which contained money for the payment of her bills; but, on offering it to the principal, how was she surprised to learn that her bills had not only been regularly paid and receipted, but that ample funds were provided for the defraying of her expenses during the coming year. A faint sickness stole over Mary, for she instantly thought of Billy Bender, and the obligation she would now be under to him forever.

The preceptress was not at liberty to tell, and with a secret suspicion of Aunt Martha, Mary returned to her room to read the other letter, which was still unopened. Her head grew dizzy, and her spirits faint, as she read the passionate outpouring of a heart which had cherished her image for years, and which, though fearful of rejection, would still tell her how much she was beloved. "It is no sudden fancy," said he. "Once, Mary, I believed my affection for you returned, but now you are changed. Your letters are brief and cold, and when I look around for the cause I am led to fear that I was deceived in thinking you ever loved me. If I am mistaken, tell me so; but if I am not, if you can never be my wife, I will school myself to think of you as a brother would think of an only and darling sister."

For several days Mary had not been well, and the excitement produced by Billy's letter tended to increase her illness. During the hours in which she was alone that day she had ample time for reflection, and before night she wrote a letter to Billy, in which she told him how impossible it was for her to be the wife of one whom she had always loved as an own and dear brother. This letter caused Mary so much effort, and so many bitter tears, that for several days she continued worse, and at last gave up all hope of being present at the examination.

"Oh, it's too bad!" said Ida, "for I do want you to see Cousin George, and I know he'll be disappointed, too, for I never saw anything like the interest he takes in you."

A few days afterward, as Mary was lying thinking of Billy, and wondering if she had done right in writing to him as she did, Jenny came rushing in, wild with delight.

Her father was downstairs, together with Ida's father, George and Aunt Martha. "Most the first thing I did," said she, "was to inquire after Billy Bender! I guess Aunt Martha was shocked, for she looked so queer. George laughed, and Mr. Selden said he was doing well, and was one of the finest young men in Boston."

During the whole of George's stay at Mount Holyoke Rose managed to keep him at her side, entertaining him occasionally with unkind remarks concerning Mary, who, she said, was undoubtedly feigning her sickness so as not to appear in her classes where she knew she could do herself no credit; "but," said she, "as soon as the examination is over she'll get well fast enough and bother us with her company at Chicopee."

In this Rose was mistaken, for when the exercises closed Mary was still too ill to ride, and it was decided that she should remain a few days until Mrs. Mason could come for her. With many tears Ida and Jenny bade their young friend good-by, but Rose, when asked to go up and see her, turned away disdainfully, amusing herself during their absence by talking and laughing with George Moreland.

The room in which Mary lay commanded a view of the yard and gateway; and after Aunt Martha, Ida and Jenny had left, she arose, and stealing to the window, looked out upon the company as they departed. She could readily divine which was George Moreland, for Rose Lincoln's shawl and satchel were thrown over his arm, while Rose herself walked close to his elbow, apparently engrossing his whole attention. Once he turned around, but fearful of being observed, Mary drew back behind the window curtain, and thus lost a view of his face.

(To be continued.)

DEATH IN THE FIRE

SEVENTEEN BURNED IN A NEW YORK TENEMENT.

Explosion of Fireworks Wrecked the Building and Started the Fire—Many Were Stunned and Then Suffocated Before They Recovered Consciousness—Several Firemen Injured by Falling Debris.

New York, June 24.—Seventeen persons are believed to have been killed and a number injured today as the result of a fire following an explosion among a quantity of fireworks in the store of Abraham M. Rittenberg, at Paterson, N. J. The store was on the ground floor of a tenement building. The cause of the explosion is not known, and the property loss will not exceed \$35,000.

The building in which the fire occurred was a frame tenement four stories high, with stores on the ground floor. The middle store was occupied by Rittenberg. Ten families occupied flats in the building. So great was the force of the explosion that a boy playing in the street half a block away was lifted from his feet and hurled against an iron fence, one of his legs being broken. A trolley car was directly in front of the building when the explosion occurred. The burst of flame out into the street scorched the sides of the car and singed the hair of the passengers.

A number of those who were on the upper floors of the building when the explosion took place were either stunned and then burned to death, or found escape cut off and were suffocated. After the first explosion there was a succession of smaller ones, and then came a second big explosion, which was muffled and deadened, and probably occurred in the cellar.

Every window seemed to be emitting flames within a minute after the first explosion. A woman with her clothing on fire leaped out of one of the windows and fell to the yard below. Her dead body was dragged out of reach of the flames, but the flesh was roasted and dropped from the bones. Some of the occupants of the rooms dropped from the windows and were bruised. Others hung from the windows until the firemen came, and 20 persons were taken down in this way through the fire and smoke by the firemen, while others dropped into life nets.

While the rescues were going on the firemen were fighting the flames. Captain Allen led with a hose line in an effort to keep the fire from the upper floors, where it was said many were penned in. The men had hardly taken their positions and began on the sidewalk to throw water into the upper floors when, without any warning, the whole upper part of the building above them sagged outward and fell. The captain and two of his men were buried under the blazing debris. One of the men is badly hurt. The building in which the explosion occurred was destroyed.

IRRIGATION DISCUSSED.

Engineers, Senators and Representatives at Cheyenne.

Cheyenne, Wyo., June 22.—State engineers and representatives and senators from Western states met in Cheyenne yesterday to discuss irrigation, government aid and the best methods of reclaiming arid lands.

State Engineer Fred Bond, of Wyoming, presided over the engineers' meeting, and Hon. H. E. Burkett, of Lincoln, Neb., was elected chairman of the congressional meeting. George E. Tobey, of Lincoln, acted as secretary. Both meetings were more or less informal, but some energetic discussions were held, principally on irrigation and the position of the federal government towards the same. Resolutions were presented and a plan outlined for action at the next session of congress. It is understood that Western congressmen and senators will work together on this important question as they never have before, with the result that the arid West may come in for its share of government appropriations.

At a joint meeting of engineers and congressmen last night, an exhaustive bill was drafted covering all points involved in the irrigation question in its relation to congress. Owing, however, to the small number of congressmen present, no action was taken on the engineers' bill, but a committee was appointed to call a meeting in Washington just prior to the meeting of congress.

Windstorm in Kansas.

Independence, Kan., June 24.—A strong wind storm that came up this morning from the south and veered later to the southeast, created considerable havoc at Independence. Trees were uprooted, outbuildings overturned and small houses and barns moved from their foundations. The fronts of several business houses and windows of dwellings were smashed in. The roof of the mill building was partly blown off, a large ice house unroofed and the Santa Fe depot was damaged.

APPOINTMENT OF TAFT.

Will Be the First Civil Governor of the Philippines.

Washington, June 24.—Secretary today issued the order of the president establishing civil government in the Philippines. The order follows:

"On and after the 4th day of July, 1901, unless it shall be otherwise ordered, the president of the Philippine commission will exercise the executive authority in all civil affairs in the government of the Philippine islands heretofore exercised in such affairs by the military governor of the Philippines, and to that end, William H. Taft, president of the said commission, is hereby appointed civil governor of the Philippine islands. Such executive authority will be exercised under and in conformity to the instructions of the Philippine commission, dated April 7, 1900, and subject to the approval and control of the secretary of war of the United States.

"The municipal and provincial civil governments which have been or shall hereafter be established in said islands, and all persons performing duties appertaining to the offices of civil government in said islands, will, in respect to such duties, report to the said civil governor. The power to appoint civil officers heretofore vested in the Philippine commission and the military governor will be exercised by the civil governor, with the advice and consent of the commission.

"The military governor of the Philippines is hereby relieved from the performance, on and after the said 4th day of July, 1901, of the civil duties hereinbefore described, but his authority will continue to be exercised as heretofore in those districts in which insurrection against the authority of the United States continues to exist, or in which public order is not sufficiently restored to enable provincial civil governments to be established under the instructions to the commission, dated April 7, 1900.

"By the president.

"ELIHU ROOT,
Secretary of War."

NAVIGATED HELL GATE.

Big Battle-Ship Massachusetts Successfully Passed the Narrows.

New York, June 22.—Without the assistance of a pilot and to demonstrate that a first class battle ship could be navigated through Hell Gate successfully, Captain Henry M. Manney took the big battle ship Massachusetts through the narrows today. It was the first time in the history of the navy that any commander of a war vessel of this class ever dared attempt the feat, and river craft and the shores were filled today to witness the trip of the Massachusetts. The passing of the mammoth fighting machine through the dangerous waters of Hell Gate successfully proves that in case of hostilities with a foreign power, a battle ship of the same draft as the Massachusetts, if she passed the fortifications of Wilet's Point and Fort Schuyler, could repeat the performance of the Massachusetts. Secretary Long has taken official notice of Captain Manney's feat, and issued orders that no naval vessel the size of the Massachusetts shall use the Hell Gate narrows except in cases of great emergency.

STRIKERS FIRED UPON.

Three Men Shot While Trying to Enter a West Virginia Mine.

Matewan, W. Va., June 22.—Strained relations between the union and non-union miners here has resulted in bloodshed. Yesterday several hundred union miners who are on strike marched in a body against the Maritime mines of this place, where non-union men were at work. They tried to effect an entrance, but the operators, with 20 guards armed with Winchesters, blocked the entrance. The non-union miners were headed by Superintendent Lambert, and when the union men persisted in their attempt he gave the order to fire. Fully 50 shots were fired. Two union miners were fatally shot and another dangerously wounded. The union men did not return the fire, but dispersed.

All the union miners throughout Mingo are collecting, and serious trouble is expected tomorrow, when they will again try to effect an entrance to the Maritime mines. Sheriff Hatfield is on the scene with 50 deputies.

Will Move Headquarters.

Denver, June 24.—George Estes, president of the Brotherhood of Railway employes, announces that the headquarters of the brotherhood will be moved from San Francisco to Denver in the near future. This organization admits all railway employes without reference to their particular line of work. It is a comparatively new order, but is said to have a large membership among the railway employes of the West.