

# 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 sobs 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 Craiglands 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, yes, 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, tearless 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; he was still to her the dearest creature on earth; and yet so great was the agony at thought of his deceit that, had he 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 dose, 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 at least 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 Harborough 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 aught 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' 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 he arrived—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 whilom maid at Craiglands, and her much too clever accomplice, took matters into her own hands and boited 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 Mountherry. 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 its 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—"

"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—this had been done at Jean's suggestion—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.

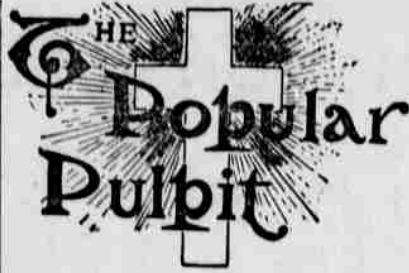
Willie's interview with Sheila was short and to the point; and when he left the room he carried with him her signature and a few words at the bottom of Murray's confession testifying that all the maid had written was true.

(To be continued.)

## Convent.

"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!"—Elegende Blatter.



## GREAT NEED OF WORLD.

By Rev. Henry Marsh Warren.

"Ye shall be witnesses unto Me.—Acts 1:8.

While our Lord was upon earth the disciples were not asked to be witnesses; they were simply to follow their Master, to listen to His marvelous teachings and to observe His wonderful works. "Ye are my witnesses. Hereafter you must stand in my place, take up my work, fight my battles, manifest my love and gather in my jewels." In other words, He then entrusted to His disciples and to His church both the honor of His name and the great work of redeeming the world for God.

A witness for God must live a Christ-like life. It is far easier to stand up and proclaim that Jesus is the light of the world than it is to live exemplifying the saying, "Ye are the light of the world." And by the Christ-like life we mean representing Christ at all times and in all places, not only in the house of God on a Sunday, or in the prayer meeting, but also in the home and in business and social life.

Another way by which we may become faithful witnesses is by direct and zealous labor to help the many unfortunate people about us. I believe the church fails in this respect more than any other. Churches provide well for the comfort of their members, and our preachers are able and consecrated men of God, but individual labor for the individual soul is lacking. It is a wrong idea that personal labor and oral witnessing for God are for ministers only.

One verse in the Bible beautifully describes the life of Christ, viz.: "He went about doing good."

This should characterize the life of His followers. We should "go about doing good."

"But how," some one may ask, "are we to do it?" Let me mention two or three very simple and practical ways by which we may do good and in so doing bring the world to know and follow God, and so prove that we are faithful witnesses.

1. By helping those who need help. There are hundreds and thousands of opportunities in this great city and over the world. What they need is the helping hand. If the church is to give salvation to the masses who are outside and are living lives of sin and sorrow, she must give her attention to ministering to the needy.

2. By sympathizing with those who need sympathy. Jesus was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He had a heart of great sympathy and never failed to express it when occasion afforded. The world's great heart to-day longs for expressions of Christian sympathy. Oh, the opportunities we have of doing good in the way of sympathy with those who need it. If we will put ourselves or our money at His disposal, God will open some portal through which we may enter and tune the heart-strings of some discordant life to play the music of heaven.

And then we may do good by encouraging those who need encouragement. A few years ago a big hotel was burning and a young woman in one of the upper stories would have perished but for the cheers of encouragement that went up from the crowd of lookers-on. When the brave fireman landed his prize safely he said: "You have no idea how near I came returning without her. It was the cries of encouragement that nerved me for the task."

God only knows how many faltering, trembling weak souls there are to-day who need just such a cheer. How many times the clouds hang over us, with no pillar of fire to guide. How many times we stand by the waters of the Red Sea, where the angry waves roll and break, and there seems no way of escape. Oh, that some strong hand were then outstretched to save us, and a kind, gentle voice to encourage and comfort us.

There are so many who could be saved from great mistakes and from falling if the right thing were said and done in the right way and at the right time. God help us to be on the alert for such opportunities of doing good.

## WHAT IS VIRTUE?

By Henry F. Cope.

"Adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue and in your virtue knowledge."—II. Peter 1:5.

Who is the virtuous person? What is the virtuous life? Is he the bearer of no more than spotless life? Is virtue the leaving undone of vice? Is it negation and denial? Then is the polished marble more virtuous than the fairest saint. You cannot be measured by the things you leave undone.

Is virtue, then, the clamorous erec-

tion of some standard of living and the duly advertised attainment thereto? Is it even the secret, modest effort of conformity to a fixed code or rule of daily living—the doing of certain things in certain ways at certain times? Is the virtuous life the one that follows precisely the prescribed rules and schedules of conduct?

The last is the notion most generally entertained. Yet how fallacious it is. It is the secret of priggishness; the standard attained, we have the sin of self-satisfaction. It converts the man into a blind machine; your mechanical moralist is no more virtuous than any other machine. He lacks life and freedom of choice. Virtue is, first of all, vital; it cannot be found with the eyes shut nor with the will atrophied.

Virtue is strength; it is moral and spiritual health. It is not in doing or leaving undone; it is not in feeling either good or bad; it is not in sentiments or doctrines, either false or true. It is that perfect ordering, adjusting, and outflowing of the whole inner life which in its more material and evident aspects we call health and strength. The doing, feeling and thinking flow from this right inner, determining tone.

The morally healthy man will love the things that are good and pure; he will loathe the base and defiling. Only a depraved appetite turns to the garbage can when there is a well spread table waiting. Did we but understand it we would despise and fear still more that vicious inner appetite that turns the whole life toward things corrupt and rotten when there awaits on every hand in this fair world so much that is beautiful and wholesome.

Have you ever thought how largely health and strength depend on tastes and appetites? Who can be healthy with a perverted craving to which he yields? Such tastes depend on training and cultivation. So it is with virtue; strength of the soul, health of the heart lies on the road of the choice of things that are best, is acquired by the deliberate and constant choosing of things that are right, pure, elevating.

Virtue, then, rests on faith, not blind belief in certain dogmatic statements, but the upward look, the noble aspiration, the high-mindedness that lifts up the heart. It takes this spirit, this faith, this confidence in things unseen to enable us to choose the best to cultivate the taste for the true food of life. Otherwise the heart that was meant to feed on the invisible bread snatches the evident husks of earth and it dies.

There is no virtue without this faith in high ideals, in things not seen. A man may be just, he may be honest and upright for policy, because it pays, but he cannot find virtue as a matter of policy. It is not in the market to be bought. It is acquired only as we set the heart on character, as we learn to love the good and true for its own sake.

This healthfulness of soul comes also through struggle. Vice is made to serve virtue as we strive against it. Using moral muscles, we find and harden them. He who flees temptation, who shrinks from the soul searching crises of life, misses the best that life has to give. In the gymnasium of temptation and trials the full strength of character is won. That does not mean that one must seek out vice; it means we must meet every foe to his face.

Count him virtuous whose face is set toward the light; who lives on a grade that leads up; who is strong to serve his fellows, to make a better world, to face and fight all things that spoil and mar; who lives not for meat or money, but for manhood, for truth and beauty. For virtue is that habit of the soul, that health that comes from steadily seeking things good and true, that strength that comes from struggle and service; it is the inner life victorious over the outer temptation.

Short Meter Sermons.

Kindness is a seed that never finds a barren soil.

Virtue for profit will become vice for more profit.

The best friendship is that which brings out the best in us.

What we call destiny often is only a matter of determination.

If you would lose all force think always of your own feelings.

The true man fears the power of sin more than its punishment.

Mending your ways is the best way of mourning over them.

If you cannot hate hypocrisies and evil you are not likely to love virtue.

Many a man who is proud of being wicked is really only weak in the head.

It will not give you wings to have your name on the fly leaf of the Bible.

An abnormal sense of your own rights soon will hide your neighbor's righteousness.

You can never meet the needs of a thirsty world by packing water on both shoulders.

It is a good deal easier to preach things heroic and divine than it is to practice things ordinarily human and decent.