

BARBARA'S DONATION

The Best of All That Was Offered to the Minister.

By ELIZABETH VAN NEST. (Copyright, 1908, by Associated Literary Press.)

If the young minister had been of a sanguine, easily satisfied temperament he might have accommodated himself to circumstances and drifted along as his predecessors had done. But James Morgan brought the enterprise of a modern theologian to the little hamlet, straggling down either side of a high hill, on a summit of which perched the church, like a snow temple.

As the church occupied the center of the village, the young minister reasoned that it ought to be the center of interest also. But, try as he would, he could not awaken the devotional spirit. His parishioners were niggardly in their offerings, the attendance was small and interest slight. His sermons were lost on the slow thinking worshippers; his musical departures were a failure.

But the Rev. Mr. Morgan did not despair. He had the square jaw that accompanies the aggressive nature. The elasticity of his hopes was phenomenal. He simply would not be discouraged. He had accepted the call in full knowledge of the drawbacks. The score of shabby houses classed under the name of Mayhood represented only a tithe of the church membership. It was the prosperous farmers whose indifference he must change and conquer with his eloquence.

So James Morgan brought to Mayhood a large stock of air castle material with which he beguiled his leisure. He would institute many reforms. The church should escape from an enveloping mortgage and, assuming a paying basis, make many missions glad from its plenty. It should be the main spring, social and ecclesiastical, on which the village turned. He even proposed that the parsonage be let and the proceeds devoted to the county hospital, a proposal that met with unanimous approval, and the minister took up his residence under Widow Fleming's roof.

Until the end of the first quarter things moved smoothly. The new minister found work to do wherever he looked. And, being generous, he forgot to be cautious when need pulled at his purse strings. Hardly realizing it, he at length found his generosity must be governed by his means until he received his first quarter's salary. But at the end of the second quarter the first quarter's salary was still unpaid. With a board bill two weeks in delinquency the minister, blushing and stammering, informed his parishioners of their negligence.

While their profuse excuses satisfied him, he could not see his way clear to satisfy Mrs. Fleming. The fact that wheat was a failure would not recompense her for his board and lodging. Therefore the Rev. Mr. Morgan did the only thing possible from his point of view. He went to the city next day with a mysterious package. Shortly after the doctor drove three miles to borrow his microscope and was informed that he had disposed of it.

"I have no little time for experiments, you know," he explained, with heightened color. "I could use the money to better advantage."

From this emanated a rumor that at length reached Barbara Dean's ears. The new minister was so philanthropic he had given up his pet hobby to aid the poor.

A wee and timid question mark set itself upon her heart. "Perhaps she had been hasty. There was none quite like him—so big, so firm, so brave. It was very singular that he had not asked again—she who in theory scorned defeat. Pretty Barbara did not know that the hope crushed by her laughing was the only inelastic one in his stock of dreams."

As the third quarter drew to a close without remuneration the minister mentioned the fact again, this time with fewer blushes and a graver air. His needs were urgent. Day after day he scanned his mail anxiously for the expected check, only to be disappointed. But, appreciating the hard times, other trips to the city with mysterious packages were made.

Returning from one of these visits one night, Mr. Morgan was surprised to see a motley collection of teams and vehicles around Widow Fleming's gate. Lights shone from every window of the cottage, including his study and bedroom. The minister was tired and in no mood to participate in a surprise party on his landlady. But, knowing her limited space, it would be churlish to demand privacy. He must meet her guests, who had overflowed her apartments into his, with ministerial welcome. Forcing the weariness from his face, he ran lightly up the steps and opened his study door.

Hanged around the wall was a solid row of chairs, from which smiling faces gazed upon him in welcome. Overturning the center table and piled on the floor was a collection that at first seemed to be the stock of a grocery store. He singled out a sack of flour and various stone jugs with corn-cob stoppers as he picked his way to a small oasis of bare floor beyond. But, stumbling against one of the bulging packages, the paper burst and a stream of walnuts poured forth.

"Pardon me!" he gasped, trying to repair the damage on his knees. "Very awkward of me, I'm sure."

The silence was portentous, and, flushed with confusion, the minister looked up straight into Barbara Dean's eyes. The light in them, tantalizing

Intense Colicky Pains Relieved. "For some years I suffered from intense colicky pains which would come on at times and from which I could find no relief," says I. S. Mason of Beaver Dam, Ky. "Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy was recommended to me by a friend. After taking a few doses of the remedy I was entirely relieved. That was four years ago and there has been no return of the symptoms since that time." This remedy is for sale by all dealers.

amused, was his undoing. The walnuts slipped from his grasp and, striking another bag, liberated a peck of popcorn. He stood up guiltily.

"Please forgive me, Mrs. Fleming," he apologized. "I am sorry if my awkwardness has disclosed your gifts too soon."

"They're not Mrs. Fleming's," corrected Deacon Brown. "They're yours. We thought we'd give you a donation 'stead of money, times are so hard."

The Rev. Mr. Morgan unconsciously backed a step. "For me? But, deacon, I have no use for these—raw commodities. It is very kind of you—but—"

"Besides this, there's a side of meat and a firkin of butter outside," put in Mrs. Fleming proudly. "Now that you've seen them I'd better take the molasses out too. It's so warm in here," picking up two of the jugs.

"By all means," said the minister, wiping his forehead, and in the general commotion that ensued he found himself near Barbara Dean.

"I did not expect to see you," he said in a low voice.

"I am spending a few days with Cousin Bess," she answered. "Are you so devoted to Maywood that you have forgotten your old friends?"

"Only those who wished to forget me," significantly; then, with a despairing glance at the loaded table.

"What shall I do with it?" he asked. "A family of ten could not consume that perishable stuff before it spoils. Why did they bring so much?"

"The unwritten law of a donation party is that none may attend without bringing a present," she said composedly.

"Then what special donation must I thank you for," ironically—"the sack of flour?"

She laughed. His dismay was so comical! She did not know the desperate state of his finances. "I did not bring anything," she said. "I could not—to you."

Something in her voice lent sudden flexibility to his most inelastic hope. With her love to cheer him on he would yet make of Maywood his ideal church.

"Come with me a moment," he said, leading her to the deserted window nearest the church. "I had bright dreams when I came here, Barbara," he went on. "I have learned to love the church and the people. If I go away now my work will be wasted. But I think I shall go when my year is up."

"Where?" she asked quickly.

"Anywhere—to any church that pays a salary," desperately. "That collection represents my work for nine months. It is not enough, Barbara. You said that no one may attend a donation party without a present. I am waiting for yours. If you want me to stay here you must do your part. The deacons and elders have looked after the needs of the material man. You must provide for his spiritual nature."

She played with the widow's best curtains nervously. "You said you would not ask me again," she reminded.

"I have not. You did well to say so," bitterly. "If my work is worth only butter and flour you are justified in forgetting me as quickly as possible. Maywood can keep its donation. I shall leave at once."

A change flashed across her pretty face. The mischief vanished, and in its place stole a tender blush. "Don't be hasty, James," she whispered, with a furtive glance over her shoulder. "Perhaps with my donation we can use the rest. When will the parsonage be empty?"

"I'll give the tenant notice tomorrow," he answered happily. Then, under cover of the widow's voluminous curtains, with the church looking on in solemn witness, he accepted her donation with a kiss.

Using a Life Preserver. "The worst trouble about a life preserver," said an old sailor, "is that few people know what to do with one when it's thrown to them. Many a man would drown in trying to get a life preserver over his head. The average person struggling about in the water would try to lift up the big life ring and put it over his head. That only causes the man to sink deeper and take more water into his lungs."

"The proper way to approach a life preserver in the water is to take hold of the side nearest you and press upon it with all your weight. That causes the farther side to fly up in the air and down over your head, 'ringing' you as neatly as a man ringing a cane at a country fair. After that the drowning man can be rescued."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Some Sayings of Napoleon. You know my army. It is an ulcer that would eat me up if I stopped giving it other food.

You have made great use of algebra in all your campaigns. I seem to recollect that you had strength in it and that you could understand how minus multiplied by minus gives plus. I have applied this rule fairly well—Germany minus, Austria minus, Prussia minus, Italy minus—but you must allow that I make a fine plus.

Our text book told you and me that mass multiplied by velocity gives force in action. I have what makes mass; I shall not fall in velocity, and all will be over before the sunset. The days are long in Russia when the sun shines. I shall fight two or three battles if he will stop to meet me.—"Baron de Courcey's Memorials."

A Strange Case. Beacon—Fusser doesn't anticipate his vacation.

Hill—No; says he can't enjoy the thoughts of some one else doing his work.—Boston Globe.

Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy Never Known to Fail.

"I have used Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy since it was first introduced to the public in 1872 and have never found one instance where a cure was not speedily effected by its use. I have been a commercial traveler for eighteen years, and never start out on a trip without this, my faithful friend," says H. S. Nichols of Oakland, Ind. Ter. For sale by all dealers.

And All With Company There. "Now, children," said the mother as a whole roomful of company had come in, "suppose you run off and play by yourselves."

"All right, mother," replied Edith. "Can we go up and play Hamlet and Ophelia?"

"Certainly," smiled the mother, while her guests looked on at the tableau.

"Good!" replied Edith. Then, turning to her sister, she said, "Now, Maude, you run up to mamma's room and get all her false hair that you can find."—Ladies' Home Journal.

What is Best for Indigestion? Mr. A. Robinson of Drumman, Ontario, has been troubled for years with indigestion, and recommends Chamberlain's Stomach and Liver Tablets as "the best medicine I ever used." If troubled with indigestion or constipation give them a trial. They are easy to take and pleasant in effect. Price 25 cents. Samples free at all dealers.

The Intricacies of It. "Why don't you study the time table, and then you wouldn't have missed your train?"

"That was the trouble. While I was trying to translate the time table the train pulled out."—New York Herald.

The Crime of Idleness. Idleness means trouble for any one. Its same with a lazy liver. It causes constipation, headache, jaundice, salivary complexion, pimples and blotches, loss of appetite, nausea, but Dr. King's New Life Pills soon banish liver troubles and build up your health. 25c at Chas. N. Clarke's.

At His Best. Bobbs—The doctor told Guzzler drinking was the very worst thing he could do. Slobbs—I guess that doctor didn't know Guzzler or he would have realized that drinking is the best thing he does.—Philadelphia Record.

Granulated Sore Eyes Cured. "For twenty years I suffered from a bad case of granulated sore eyes," says Martin Boyd of Henrietta, Ky. "In February, 1905, a gentleman asked me to try Chamberlain's Salve. I bought one box and used about two-thirds of it and my eyes have not given me any trouble since." This salve is for sale by all dealers.

Strong Proof. "Sued for a breach of promise, eh?"

"Yep."

"Any defense?"

"Temporary insanity, and I expect to prove it by the love letters I wrote."—Washington Herald.

Utter Contempt. "I s'pose you wouldn't marry me if I were the only man on earth?"

"I wouldn't even be engaged to you," responded the girl. "If you were the only man at a summer resort."—Kansas City Journal.

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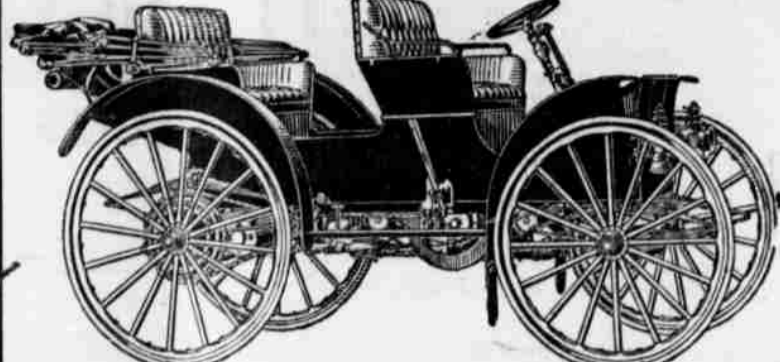
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