



TWO DECORATION DAYS AND THE TIME BETWEEN

BY KATE M. CLEARY

the heroes of a great conflict hung in State.

For the women of the Relief Corps, who had marched up the street in the rear of the men, had begged the little town of its glowing peonies, its heavy headed snowballs, its pungent southern wood, and starry syringas, and red honey-suckles, and the first white, scented catnip branches to do honor to the occasion. And here again, side by side, were the two men, who, fast fettered by a childhood and youth of friendship, had gone forth to war together.

The services were over at last, and the crowd in the church poured out into the sunshine. Again life and drum made martial music. The brief journey to the cemetery was begun. It was here, after the stiff wreaths and crosses which the women had brought from the church were duly distributed and speeches made by some of the old soldiers, that John Barriston caught a glimpse of the young man who had come late into church. He stared in astonishment—strode towards him.

"What has brought you back?" he demanded.

"A row," replied his son. "I'd a fight with one of the fellows at college. I was in the right, but I did him up a bit worse than I meant to. I thought I'd better come home until it blew over."

The old man choked with rage.

"And it's for this—for this—I've toiled for you, and slaved for you, and all but starved myself for you. How—how dare you?"

"I dare a good deal—somehow," he said.

Just then a girl brushed by them. Her gown caught on the point of a stone. She stumbled. Involuntarily Mark Barriston extended his hand to aid her. She shot him a swift glance. In that look was recognition and a certain startled, pleased surprise. Then she had passed on, and Mark Barriston stood hat in hand staring after her.

"Do you know who that is?"

"It's Edward Thorn's daughter," said John Barriston slowly. The hoarse voice shook over the words. "You must never hold word with him or his, or— He lifted his great rough hand to the dazzling sky, with a mighty oath, 'or else you go your way, penniless and poor, save for my curse!'"

"That's unfair!" flamed Mark Barriston. The old man's blood spoke then. "It's unjust! You read the Bible—and you hate your brother. Tell me why!"

But the passion of his father had spent itself for the time. He looked suddenly gray and stricken. He turned and walked instead of as usual to where the close, sharp spikes of an iron railing kept jealous guard over the narrow mound it enclosed. All other boundaries in that stony little city were of wood, but these John Barriston had deemed too frail to keep the world apart from her—the one woman of his love, whose life had been a brief and unsuspected tragedy.

"Poor father!" The young fellow, looking after the lean old figure—seeing the gaunt fingers clutched hard around the iron spike on top of the railing, felt a fierce ache in his throat. He turned—went away.

When Mark Barriston—straight as a Norway spruce and good to look upon—striding home in the sunset light, came upon the wrecked carriage of Edward Thorn, he was hardly surprised—only most absurdly elated. Obviously, he could not pass on. He might not take the wholly disinterested credit accruing to the stray Samaritan, but mere courtesy demanded that aid be offered. And since Mark Barriston had been away at college he had learned a lesson which prairie people are slow to appreciate—that while kindness, however gruff and sullen, is good, courteous kindness is infinitely to be preferred. And so he uncovered to the ladies in the carriage with a grace that was pleasing as novel to the farmer folk, and offered his services. And when he had gone to the nearest farm to get the pole, and had helped to splice the pole, and all was once more in readiness for the homeward drive, he would have turned away but that Edward Thorn, putting out his hand with a word of thanks, detained him.

"Thank you much, Mr.—Mr.—you are a stranger hereabouts, I judge?"

"My name is Mark Barriston."

"Mark—Barriston—O!" He leaned more heavily over the side of his surrey. Twice the lips set in the blonde beard opened—twice closed without speech. His eager look dwelt hard on the boyish face uplifted in the mellowing light. "I might have known," he muttered. And then he said slowly: "Her eyes—you have your mother's eyes!"

"My mother!" echoed Mark. "You knew her—you knew my mother?"

"Well, my boy, 'better,' he said, and so low his voice now he might have been commending with himself, "better than any one else!"

There was silence. A chill stole up from the draw below. A gopher ran across the road, frightening the horse which had broken the pole. An anxious voice spoke from the rear seat.

"It is late, Edward. We'd better go on."

"Yes—yes. Well," to Mark, "I'm glad to have seen you, I suppose," with some hesitation, "I can't ask you to come to our house?"

"I'm afraid not, sir."

He moved a step backward. The elder man sighed—a wistful sigh it sounded.

When Mark reached home he found his father sitting reading by lamplight. The book was the Bible, his only literary possession. The deep cut lines of the old face seemed deeper, the stern mouth more inflexible, the keen old eyes more relentlessly penetrating.

"Tell me about your quarrel, lad," he said.

Mark told him, not sparing the other man, but equally outspoken in regard to his part in the affair. There was a long silence when he had finished.

"Well?" he asked at length.

"An eye for an eye," said the hard old voice. "A tooth for a tooth." You'd better take that north farm. Try it until fall. You can go back to college then. The man there needs looking after."

"I hate farming."

"Perhaps," dryly; "but a man must work with his head or his hands. It isn't every one who gets the chance to choose."

The following day Mark Barriston unpacked his books and set himself to study furiously. But how might one study books when day by night nature turned over a fresher and still more enchanting page of her own inimitable volume? But, and as sweet as it was innocent, ran along the creek—a search for the latest flowers—the steady clasp of a hand in abrupt descent or ascent—the discovery of mutual tastes—snatches of song—the flutter of her sash ribbon against his hand—silences embarrassing but delicious, and—that was all.

Only Edward Thorn used to remark to his wife that really that girl was growing too pretty to be useful, and the man on John Barriston's north farm averred he "never seen that kind of a farmer afore."

It was he who blunderingly precipitated the climax of the situation. He had ridden a shipment of cattle.

"You'd better go through to Chicago with the stock, Dan," his master said. "My son can attend to things until you get back."

"He can, if he takes time enough from pickin' posies with Della Thorn."

"What?" screamed John Barriston.

"What?"

"I didn't think, sir!" Dan had shambled up aglance. "I forgot the bad blood atween—"

"Saddle my horse—quick! This minute! Quick!"

Five minutes later he was riding north at breakneck speed.

Mark chanced to meet Della at the abandoned bridge down by the walnut grove, when his father came tearing along. But when that father dropped from his sweating horse, so shaken was he by passion—so racked by rage—he could not utter one syllable.

"What—what is the matter?" Della turned appealingly to Mark. She had never been told of the enmity between the houses.

"Never mind—now. Go home," he said in the tone of authority no man dare use except to one woman, and she that one to whom he is most madly enslaved, most willingly subservient—she who holds his life in her fingers as one may hold a rose.

"Stop!" cried John Barriston.

"He burst out into a storm of abuse of his son—her father—herself. There was no stemming the tide of his fury. It came down in a sweeping flood—a partially incoherent fury, it is true, but none the less overwhelming—resistless. Once Mark strove to speak—twice, in vain. Suddenly he turned—held out his hands to the girl. He had never spoken one word of love to her. He spoke now now, most absurdly elated. Obviously, he could not pass on. He might not take the wholly disinterested credit accruing to the stray Samaritan, but mere courtesy demanded that aid be offered. And since Mark Barriston had been away at college he had learned a lesson which prairie people are slow to appreciate—that while kindness, however gruff and sullen, is good, courteous kindness is infinitely to be preferred. And so he uncovered to the ladies in the carriage with a grace that was pleasing as novel to the farmer folk, and offered his services. And when he had gone to the nearest farm to get the pole, and had helped to splice the pole, and all was once more in readiness for the homeward drive, he would have turned away but that Edward Thorn, putting out his hand with a word of thanks, detained him.

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before the old Grand Army Hall merge in a close, black phalanx. He could see the farm wagons piling down, as he had seen them often before. He even fancied he could hear Kipperton tuning up his fife and see the old man handing his hat to a bystander to be cared for until the drum "was made go like she ought." A sense of serenity came over him as he looked down and away, one hand gripping the iron railing.

Mark Barriston, turning his team into the livery barn, looked around at sound of his name to find Edward Thorn at his elbow.

"How's your father? Where is he?"

"Up there." He motioned towards the hillside.

Thorn turned past the hotel, the lumber yard, and the little lumber office. Around the sweep by the railroad track, across the lines, up the hill opposite—on he went. Through the gateway on the right—and across the worn path to where by the quadrangular iron railing a man sat with bowed head.

"Jack!"

It was the old name that leaped to his lips. The other looked up.

"Ned!" He rose trembling to his feet.

"Let's talk it over, Jack. I never meant to do so. I thought she—she might not wish it. But I think she'd rather we would, than that our children—yours and mine—should suffer."

"Yours and mine?" Then the old Barriston vindictiveness came back in all its strength.

"Mine shall not suffer. Why should I care for yours? You know what you did, Edward Thorn. Played fast and loose with the woman you loved—the woman I loved!"

"I don't know what you mean," said Edward Thorn.

"I'll tell you then." He was trembling still, but his grip on the railing helped to support him. "The day we marched forth to fight you told me Annie Lester had promised to be your wife when you came back. You know how I loved her—"

"Loved her—then?" Thorn's voice was a husky whisper. "No—no!"

Barriston stared at him a moment. Then he went on.

"That's all right. It doesn't really matter what you say now. But you know how you acted down there in Virginia. The disgraceful scrapes you got into—the dishonor you brought not only upon your own name, but upon that of the woman who has been rash enough to promise to marry you!"

"Yes," Thorn said slowly. "Yes, I did all you say—more. I was young. I'm not urging this in extenuation. But—"

he paused, fumbling in his breast pocket, and extracting one yellow slip from a package. "I wish you'd look at this. It was after I had got this that I— Hold on! Have you finished?"

"Not quite. Then you went home—remember? I staid away. I couldn't go back and see Annie and you—"

"Well, what then?"

"Then—Jack! Do you think I'm imbecile—or delirious yet? Then you jilted her—hung her over as heartlessly as a man flings aside the woman who has loved him. There is no comparison to be made. The whole town was talking of your conduct when I returned. But you had gone. You coward!"

Edward Thorn took one step—then stood quite still.

"Will you listen now?" he asked. "I did love Annie—yes. And I did many things I am ashamed of in those old army days—that is true. But that I ever of my own accord broke faith with Annie—John Barriston—no!"

Barriston laughed—a harsh laugh.

"Go on," he said.

"Perhaps," Thorn rejoined, "it would be better if you were to read this first."

He held the slip of paper toward him. Barriston unfolded it—read it.

"Ned, dear, forgive me. You will, I know. I did encourage you—yes. I did let you speak. I was even so wicked as to answer you as you wished. But I didn't care for you. I have never cared for you to that way. I don't want to make Jack Barriston understand that he—O, I don't know what I wanted him to understand. Anyhow, he never spoke. And now that the war is nearly over and you are coming back you must give me up. I can't give you up, because my father—well, you know how stern he is and how he has set his heart upon our marriage. But I'm afraid to oppose him—and I'll marry no man while Jack lives—so pretend that you couldn't let me go, O, do, Ned. And after awhile—perhaps, Jack—but, no—he doesn't care—"

ANNIE.

It was a long time before either spoke again. The procession had left the church, and one could trace its sinuous progress through the town. In silence Barriston handed back the letter.

"I wish you had known it always, Jack," murmured Thorn.

"The pride of a woman," muttered Barriston.

"The stupidity of a man," said Thorn.

There was the roll of vehicles up the hill—the tramp of feet. The veterans filed in the gate. The little doctor came forward in all his gay regalia. Della Thorn knelt beside Barriston.

She comprehended the broken sounds he made.

"The letter—with you? Yes—you shall have it always."

The band played on. The doctor put a professional forefinger on the pulse of the prostrate man. He rose—spoke. He could not make himself heard.

"Men of the Grand Army of the Republic," he essayed again. "Your comrade—John Barriston."

The music swelled aloft, martial, triumphant. But John Barriston did not hear.

The Grave in My Heart.

They are covering the graves of our heroes
With the loveliest flowers they can bring,
And the tender memories mingle
With the fragrant blossoms of spring.
For the graves belong to the nation;
She claims and makes them known
And she counts among her heroes
He who once was mine alone.
Yes, they cover the graves of the brave
With tender and reverent hand,
And the low and mournful music
Steals soft forth o'er the land.
They cover the graves of our soldiers,
Each one in his place apart;
They cover the graves with the flowers—
What shall cover the grave in my heart?

The faith in his wisdom and kindness,
The knowledge of infinite love,
The trust in the hand that guideeth,
The comfort that comes from above,
The memory of days he was with me,
Ere the pulse of my heart seemed stilled,
The treasure that heaven now holdeth
Because of his law fulfilled—
These blossoms shall sweeten and hallow,
With their silent sweetest art,
And heap up their blessed comfort;
They shall cover the grave in my heart.

Inventions that have been patented in the United States for not more than one year may also be patented in Canada. A patent will be refused in Canada if the United States patent is more than one year old.

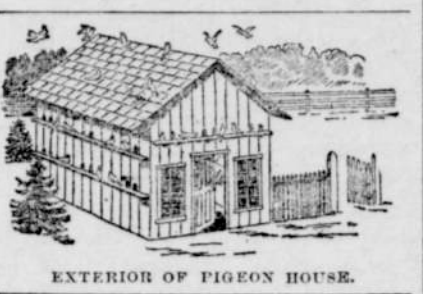
HOUSE FOR PIGEONS.

FLOCKS SHOULD HAVE A HOME OF THEIR OWN.

A Large Number of the Birds May Be Kept in One House if It Is Arranged in the Proper Manner—Cats Their Foe.

Cats are too fond of pigeons to be permitted to get anywhere near them, and in the arrangement of a house for these birds care is to be taken that these animals cannot disturb them. For a small flock a small house may be made round or with eight sides, and with three or four floors. Each side will have a door for the pigeons to enter, and this house is set on a pole firmly placed in the ground and eight feet high or so, and having two cross bars safely fitted to it so that a ladder may be used to get up to the house. This will do for a dozen birds, half males and half females, for pigeons pair, and each pair must have its own nest.

For larger flocks a house may be

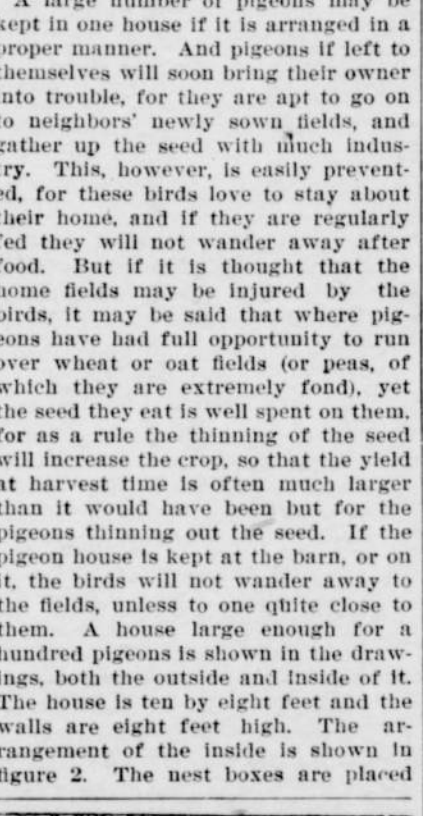


EXTERIOR OF PIGEON HOUSE.

made on the top of a barn, or if the barn has a cupola on top of it, this is the very thing. Twenty, or even forty pigeons may be kept in such a place, but it will be necessary to have a trap door at the bottom which must be carefully closed every time the house is left, after having been visited.

But larger flocks may have to be provided for, and a small flock will soon become a large one, for although these birds have only two young ones in the nest, yet they will nest several times in the year, and the young ones soon go to keeping house for themselves.

A large number of pigeons may be kept in one house if it is arranged in a proper manner. And pigeons if left to themselves will soon bring their own into trouble, for they are apt to go on to neighbors' newly sown fields, and gather up the seed with much industry. This, however, is easily prevented, for these birds love to stay about their home, and if they are regularly fed they will not wander away after food. But if it is thought that the home fields may be injured by the birds, it may be said that where pigeons have had full opportunity to run over wheat or oat fields (or peas, of which they are extremely fond), yet the seed they eat is well spent on them, for as a rule the thinning of the seed will increase the crop, so that the yield at harvest time is often much larger than it would have been but for the pigeons thinning out the seed. If the pigeon house is kept at the barn, or on it, the birds will not wander away to the fields, unless to one quite close to them. A house large enough for a hundred pigeons is shown in the drawings, both the outside and inside of it. The house is ten by eight feet and the walls are eight feet high. The arrangement of the inside is shown in figure 2. The nest boxes are placed



INTERIOR OF PIGEON HOUSE.

on shelves fastened to the sides of the house, and a roosting platform is made in front of the shelves. The shelves are supported by props, and the little doors on the outside open on to them. There is a box in the house in which food is kept for use in stormy weather when the birds do not wish to go out.

To get a good view of the inside of the house, bend one hand so as to make a short tube to look through, and use one eye only, shutting the other. This makes the perspective very plain, and shows just how the house would look if one were in it.

Of course these birds, like all others, must be kept very clean, and the house should be swept and sanded twice a week. It will be the least trouble to do it every day, when a few minutes will suffice to do the work. The floor should be sanded after every sweeping, and the nests should be dusted with a mixture of sand and fine gravel, wood ashes and sulphur. There will be no trouble with vermin if thorough cleanliness is observed and above all things the sweepings of the house should be disposed of safely in the barnyard or away from the house, for there is nothing more likely to harbor lice or fleas and supply a breeding-place for them, than the sweepings of the house.

The nest boxes are each four feet long, nine inches wide, six inches high in the front, and ten inches in the rear. They are divided by partitions into five apartments, each having a separate entrance, which is four and a half inches high, and three wide. The picture shows only one side of the house, the other side is fitted in precisely the same way, and the ends may be occupied by nests as the stock increases. The two sides will hold fifty nests, and if the

ends of the house and the gables are furnished in the same way a hundred and fifty pigeons may be kept in a house of this size.

Pigeons should be fed four times a day if they are expected to stay at home. If not fed they will wander a long distance, staying away the greater part of the day, and returning at night to their homes. There is very little trouble and quite a satisfactory profit in rearing them, for there is always a demand for them in the poultry markets and at the country hotels and boarding houses, so that while much pleasure and amusement may be enjoyed, quite a little money may be made as well. But we may be sure that this result will not happen unless the right attention is given, and this includes regular feeding, and watering, the right kind of food, especial cleanliness in the house, and protection from cats and winged enemies.

A CUBAN BEAUTY.

Senora Abreu Is Rich, Charming, Democratic and a Widow.

Senor Rosa Abreu is the richest and probably the most beautiful woman in Uncle Sam's new possessions. She is the queen of Cuba society and is a "Cuba libre" democrat from the crown of her head to the tip of her pearl-encrusted slipper. And she is a widow. She is possessed of a plantation near Havana covering an area of 20,000 acres under perfect cultivation devoted to coffee growing. Her income, as may be imagined, is enormous. During the Cuban-Spanish war her plantation was idle, most of her 500 workmen having gone to the front. But the patriotic beauty paid every one his wages—all for the good of her country's cause. This charming woman lives in a magnificent mansion at Cerro, a pretty little suburb of Havana. Her drawing-rooms are noted for their splendor and exclusiveness, and officers of the army and navy vie with one another for her favor. But as yet she is heart whole, and, it is freely



SENORA ROSA ABBREU.

she is by no means unwilling to change her condition in life when she can find a man who will realize her ideal. She is especially fond of Americans because, she says, Americans "can achieve great deeds," while Cubans and Spaniards can only sigh and play upon a mandolin or guitar.

He Believes in Horse Sense.

"Experience has convinced me that there is such a thing as horse sense," said a veterinary surgeon who has a shop on the South Side. "A friend of mine had a beautiful chestnut driving mare that was subject to severe spells of colic. About a year ago she got very sick and Jones, the owner, brought her over here for treatment. I cared for her, and she seemed as grateful as a human being might, rubbing her nose against my coat sleeve, and showing her affection in her dumb way.

"One day about six months ago she came to the door of the shop, moaning and evidently suffering acutely. I treated her again and she got better. I found out afterward that there was no one at her home stable that day and that she had worked the halter off and had set out to find the doctor."

"Curious circumstance," said the man who had heard the story.

"But that's not all of it," said the doctor. "Three days ago I came down to my office in the morning about 9 o'clock. There lay the chestnut mare in front of the door—dead. She had been taken sick, and had made her way as before to the shop in the night, and found nobody there to give her medicines, and she had died. Now, if this story isn't proof that a horse can reason I will like to hear something to beat it!"—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Wanted God to Hear Both Sides.

The family were at their devotions the other morning in the home of a West End clergyman. Master 6-year-old thought his papa's prayer was rather long when breakfast was waiting, and he undertook to beat a quiet retreat to the kitchen. Suddenly there was a crash, and a table with its contents fell to the floor with the young deserter from the family altar beneath it. Prayers were interrupted temporarily, and when they were resumed the father prayed for the naughty boy. A short time later the lad's mamma found him in a closet upstairs. He was sobbing bitterly.

"Oh, mamma!" he exclaimed indignantly, "papa tells God of all the bad things I do, but never tells Him a word about the good that's in me."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Smokin' by Boys.

The Japanese House of Representatives has passed a proposal to prohibit boys below the age of 20 from smoking.

When a man is on his honeymoon trip other men are puzzled as to what he would appreciate in their efforts to give him a good time.