

CALISTA'S CHRISTMAS

How a Girl Was Changed From Selfishness to Charity.

By CLARISSA MACKIE.

For twelve long years Calista Thorp had fought against that grim fate which had removed her loved ones within the space of a short twelve-month and left her hopeless and eye-eyed in the midst of an empty house, even now echoing with happy voices stilled forever.

She was a frail little woman, with a bruised heart which she hid behind a cold exterior, defiant blue eyes and a bitter tongue. All the softness of her youth had congealed. She was estranged from happiness.

Twelve times since that awful year had Calista hung the stockings before the fireplace in the sitting room—mother's warm woolen hose, father's large sock, Bobby's two stockings (gaping expectantly), little Ann's white ones and, last of all, her own limp black one.

And twelve times with shining eyes and swelling heart had Calista filled them. Then when Christmas morning dawned and she awoke to the bitterness that awaited her in the silent house and in the sight of the row of bulging stockings hanging before the smoldering fire she would fly down to the sitting room and tear them from the shelf and empty each one of its burden.

The bureau drawers in the slant roofed bedrooms were filled with the little treasures Calista had bought for her loved ones.

Again it was Christmas eve, and Calista had come home from shopping. Her arms were full of parcels, and the snowflakes powdered the dark hair that framed her small pale face—paler than usual, for the young minister had met her at the corner and walked home with her.

At the gate he had timidly relieved himself of a burden that troubled him. He had remonstrated with Calista Thorp because of her selfishness.

Her cheeks burned as she remembered how his spectacles had reflected the moonlight until they seemed like luminous supernatural eyes reading her soul.

He had ventured only a few words, and his concluding sentence still rang in her ears:

"Surely there is room in your heart for others outside your loved ones who have gone! God grant you a nappy Christmas, Miss Calista!"

He was very young and very poor and very much in earnest, and he had a young wife and family at home awaiting him, yet he had found time to concern himself over Calista Thorp, the most skeptical member of his flock.

For the first time a light broke in on Calista's brain. For the first time she saw herself in her true character. She saw that in giving herself up to those who were gone she was hiding her talent in a napkin.

It was not those loved ones she was benefiting; it was the living she was denying. What right had she to keep all for the dead, who could use nothing she would give them?

Was she not in giving it to them hoarding it for herself? All of a sudden a realization of her true position rushed upon her with resistless force.

And how long had she shut herself in this world of her own selfish making? Twelve years.

A shame came in her heart that she had all this while taken no interest in a single living being at Christmas time.

There were the children among her relatives, the children of her friends, but, above all, the children of the poor.

When she thought of the many little ones whom even a penny toy would delight she was seized with a desire on this Christmas to wipe out the stain.

The parcels rattled to the floor—the pipe which her father would never smoke, the soft wools which her mother's fingers would never knit, the toys with which Bobby might not play, the wax doll which could not afford little Ann any delight!

The next morning, when Christmas broke over the world, Calista Thorp was stirring around her house. Two great baskets were filled with gifts from the overflowing drawers in the closed chambers, and Calista's best cloak and hat lay on the sofa.

The poorhouse was three miles away on the highroad, and a snowplow had leveled a broad track to the very door. So Calista, clad in her best, put on her overshoes and started forth, a basket in either hand.

She was quite pale and tired when she turned into the high white gate and advanced up the path, bordered on either side with gloomy cedar trees.

Dr. Keyes was the overseer of the Cloverdale poorhouse, and it was considered the best managed institution of its kind in the state.

Breakfast was being served in the long dining hall when Calista rang the bell, and when the door opened the thin, brown eyed doctor himself stood before her.

"Merry Christmas, Miss Calista! So you are playing Santa Claus this morning? I am glad of that, because some of my old people are feeling very blue today."

He relieved her of the baskets and led the way into the cheery warmth of his comfortable office, where Calista sat down before the glowing stove

and thawed out her frosty fingers. When she spoke her eyes were fastened on the red coals, and the words came hesitatingly.

"I've kept Christmas alone—for twelve years. Somehow I didn't care about seeing anybody. I just wanted to try to bring back things as they used to be—before—"

Dr. Keyes wiped his glasses and replaced them on his fine nose. Had he not stood side by side with little Calista Thorp and fought hopelessly the battle of life and death—and lost? And had not Calista turned on him like a little wild animal and condemned him because he had failed?

She had avoided speaking to him afterward, and this was the first time they had met, and she was talking to him now as if she had forgotten that he had lost the grim battle for her loved ones.

"—before my folks died," went on Calista steadily. "But it can't be done! The minister talked to me about it, and I got to thinking last night maybe the best way to live over happy times is to give them to somebody else that never had any, so I've brought all the presents I've given mother and father and the children ever since—then—and I want the folks here to have them."

Two tears rolled down her cheeks from Calista's overcharged heart, and others followed and fell into the glass of grape juice which Dr. Keyes held at her lips, and perhaps it was that or the large warm hand which rested on her shoulder that revived the little woman to renewed strength.

"You need never be without a family, Miss Calista," said the doctor at last in a husky voice. "I have a family here—forty people—old and young, and little children. They need help and encouragement and comfort. Some may have another chance in the world if they receive a word of womanly sympathy in season. Will you be my right hand here?"

"I'd like to," sobbed Calista thankfully.

Together they distributed the contents of the two baskets, and Calista found her tongue saying soft pleasantries and her cold face responding warmly to grateful smiles.

She saw her mother's kindly look and her father's approving nod in the faces of many of these indigent old people, and the delight of Bobby and little Ann were repeated tenfold by the orphaned poor children of the doctor's household.

"You have been an angel in disguise to them this Christmas day," said the doctor as he carried Calista home in his sleigh that evening, for Calista had stayed to the dinner of pork tenderloin and apple sauce, with vegetables and many dainties contributed by the good overseer from his own scanty pocket.

Calista Thorp's house was empty no longer. There was always room for some broken soul from the poorhouse—some one who drooped in the atmosphere which could never be inseparable from the institution and who needed comfort and encouragement before taking up the burden of life and attaining independence in the end.

The following Christmas Calista was welcomed as an old friend by the inmates of the poorhouse.

At her bidding each one had hung his or her stocking on a line stretched before the dormitory doors, and that evening Calista and Dr. Keyes had filled them all.

Calista's blue eyes were shining with happiness as the doctor drove her home under the Christmas stars.

"We remembered every one," she said contentedly, leaning back among the soft robes.

"Every one?" he repeated doubtfully.

"Why, who have we forgotten?"

"Me," he said gravely.

Calista's heart thumped painfully at the new note in his deep voice.

"You have forgotten me, Calista. I have given you my heart. That is my gift. You have God's gift, too, the love of my poor people and his love in your heart. I, too, want a gift."

There was a hushed silence then until Calista found courage to ask shyly, "What shall I give to you—my best friend?"

"Give me a place in your heart, Calista. I must be there also. We will work together. Surely you have room in your heart for me too!"

He leaned over and looked in her eyes, where joy shone serene.

She gave her hand into his with simple faith.

"There is room in my heart for you, Henry—room for the memory of my dear ones, room for the whole world."

Wisdom of a Great Painter.

We always like to know what a great man has said about his work and how he feels about other things that are of interest to every one. Fortunately, Meissonier left a record of many of his feelings and opinions, published as his "Conversations." Of all the painters Rembrandt was his favorite.

Among his sayings were the following:

"Let well enough alone" is the motto of the lazy.

"The man who leaves good work behind adds to the inheritance of the human race."

"The master is an artist whose works never recall those of some other artist."

"I would have drawing made the basis of education in all schools. It is the universal language."

"No artist would paint if he knew he was never to show his work, if he felt no human eye would ever rest upon it."

"I never sign a picture until my whole soul is satisfied with my work."

"To will is to do" has been my motto. I have always willed. Oh, how I regret the lost time that can never be made up! As I grow older I work harder than ever."—C. L. Barstow, in St. Nicholas.

MEN WHO CAN BARK.

They Can Easily Secure Jobs as Dog Revealers in Paris.

Can you bark like a dog? If so—and many people can—you have only to go to France to make reasonably sure of a fairly comfortable living, for you can approach the proper authorities in Paris and get yourself enrolled as an official "dog revealer."

Absurd though it sounds, this newest profession of "barking" is quite a serious one, involving a considerable amount of hard work. The reason for its existence is this: The average Parisian is very fond of dogs, but he is not so fond of the tax collector, the result being that a large number of dog owners contrive to avoid paying the dog tax. The officials of the exchequer have engaged in a spirited campaign to recover the money thus owed them, but have bumped up against the unpleasant truth that you must first find your dog, then tax him.

Accordingly they have employed a number of "men who can bark." Every night the man is allotted a "beat," which may comprise one or more streets. It is then his duty to stand outside each house on his beat and bark as naturally and as vigorously as he can for as long as five minutes if necessary. By the end of that time, the authorities calculate, if there is a dog inside that house he will respond by barking also. The "dog revealer" thereupon writes the number of the house in his official notebook, and the tax collector calls the next day. For this the man who barks receives \$6 a month.—Pearson's Weekly.

THE NEXT OLYMPIC GAMES.

Germany Already Planning to Outdo the World in 1916.

Germany expects to outdo the world in the Olympic games in 1916. It will have a stadium almost as big as that of Athens, where the first revival was held in 1896, and the field proper is likely to be twice the size of that at Stockholm.

The place has been picked, and the next Olympic games will be held at Grunewald, a suburb of Berlin, about ten kilometers from the center of the city. The place is perhaps not the most accessible in the world, but the beauty of location will make up for many other shortcomings.

The most noticeable feature in which it will differ from the stadium at Shepherd's Bush, London, is that the swimming tank will not be inside the running tracks, but in the line of the encircling building. This is intended to give the stadium a more unbroken appearance. The inside track of the two that encircle the German stadium is for running and will be 400 meters (437 yards) long. The outer one is for cycle races and will be 666 2/3 meters (729 yards) in length.

About twenty small bedrooms will be provided for the use of those who do their training either so early in the morning or so late at night that they do not wish to have to make the journey from or to the city. The stadium will seat about 18,000, and there will also be standing room for 12,000. The seats will be open to the sky.—St. Louis Republic.

German Princes' Swords.

Roland had his Durandal, Charlemagne his Joyeuse, twin sisters of glory, heroines of steel. Kaiser Wilhelm II. of Germany is not ignorant of this, and to continue the tradition he has given to his sons arms upon which are engraved glittering mottoes of which he is the author. On the sword which he has given to the crown prince are the words, "Always ready to serve his country;" on that of his favorite, Prince Eitel, "Faithful and without fear;" on that of Prince Adelbert, on one side, "For all proofs" and on the other, "My soul to God and Germany;" on that of Prince Oscar, "Rectitude and integrity." The Princes August Wilhelm and Joachim will have their swords and mottoes when they are promoted to the guards—Cri de Paris.

Eiffel Time Signals in Switzerland.

The time signals sent from the Eiffel tower are received not only in France, but also in Switzerland, where a number of receiving posts are being set up for the purpose. This is especially true in the watchmaking district, where the time signals are useful. The steeple of the Payerne church serves for a post which M. Blankhart has installed, and he uses wires eighty-five feet long stretched from the top of the spire to four points below. He is able to receive the signals from Paris at a distance of 270 miles with a very simple wireless apparatus.—Scientific American.

Australia's Military Hatband.

All Australia's soldiers, no matter to what branch of the service they are attached, will wear a similar uniform. The color of the hatband will form the sole distinction. For example, the light horse will have a white hatband; artillery, scarlet; infantry, green; engineers, dark blue; signallers, royal purple; intelligence, light blue; army service, blue and white; medical, chocolate; veterinary, maroon, and the automobile, brown.—London Globe.

A New White Rose.

Samuel McGredy, a Portadown (Ireland) horticulturist, has perfected a new white rose of wonderful quality and proportions after ten years of close application. Recently at the autumn show of the National Rose society in Westminster one of the judges described the production as "the greatest white rose that has ever been raised." Experts at the show concluded that it surpassed the famous "Frau Karl Druschki."

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