

OUR BUTTERMAN.

Nell says I take too much interest in the affairs of the servants, and she is inclined to laugh at me for caring so much about poor Lizzie. But the story seems to me as pathetic as if the heroine sat in silk in the parlor, instead of working in calico in the kitchen.

Before I adopted Nellie Hay, who is my niece, and was left an orphan about six years ago, I had lived alone for several years, and my servants were more to me than mere drudges to do my work. My husband died within one year after our marriage, leaving me independently wealthy, but bitterly lonely. For a long time I rented the house we had fitted up with loving care, to strangers, but when I became a middle-aged woman, I took possession of it again. My brothers and sisters, with whom I had made a home, first with one, then another, were always kind, and made me happy and comfortable, but I was glad to have my own home, even although it was a lonely one until Nellie came.

Nellie is very handsome, very much admired, and has a good income of her own, so we "receive," and go about in the liveliest way, and Nell says I am the younger of the two. She certainly has a grand, stately way with her, that I could never assume, being a chatty old lady, fond of company, and Nell says "far too familiar with the servants."

Lizzie was our second girl, waiting on the door, taking care of the parlors and dining-room, and being with us more than Jane, who is cook. I do not like a manservant about, though Nell has urged me to have one, and we do not require more than two servants. I do not remember exactly when I began to notice that Lizzie always looked particularly nice on Thursday afternoon. She was very pretty, rosy-cheeked, with soft, brown eyes and a profusion of waving, curling, brown hair, that would not be patted or coaxed into smoothness. She was always neat, but on Thursday afternoons I noticed that if she had an especially pretty apron or necktie, she put it on just about the time John Dilmore came.

John Dilmore was the farmer who supplied us with butter and eggs, chickens and country produce of all kinds, and John was young and fine-looking. His father had been my "butterman" for years, and after he died, John began to come in his place. I knew little about him excepting that when I spoke a few words of sympathy about his father's death, he told me they had lived alone since his mother died, but that he had inherited a fine farm, and hoped to make it as profitable as his father had done.

So, when I saw Lizzie lingering at the door when the eggs and butter were under discussion; when I found her eating red apples and chestnuts that I had not purchased, I only smiled to myself and wondered what sort of a farmer's wife my pretty city-bred servant would make.

Nellie, who was fond of sitting at the front-parlor window, was rather inclined to ridicule the whole affair, but I would not let her tease Lizzie.

"He is a handsome fellow," Nellie said to me one day, "but outrageously rude. I never saw a man stare as he does. Probably he does not often see a silk dress, for mine seems to strike him with great admiration."

I would not let Nellie tease Lizzie, but I did let her see that I had noticed John's attentions, and the child was evidently glad to speak about it. She was an innocent girl, not more than nineteen, without any relative but an aunt, who kept a small trimming store, and who had not been kind to her. She shyly admitted that John had told her a great deal about his farm, and had drawn from her the whole history of her own life.

"He'll tell me what pretty lady ways I have, ma'am, and says he supposes I get them a-watching Miss Nellie; and he asks me about the work I can do, and seems pleased when I tell him how good you are to me, and how beautiful Miss Nellie sings, and how we set the kitchen door open to hear her, and how I dress her hair sometimes, and what lovely long hair she's got. John thinks it is nice for me to be with real ladies like Miss Nellie and you, ma'am, though I hope I know how to keep my place."

She "kept her place" well in every detail of her duty, but it was easy to see that there was a little added importance in her manner, as John lingered longer and longer on the door-step and brought an offering of apples or nuts every week.

"Those two will freeze stiff some day," Nell said to me, as she watched them from the window, "and decorate your front-steps with statues from life of the 'Rustic Lover' or 'Kitchen Romance.' Lizzie's nose is the most brilliant crimson, and if her heart is warm, her fingers must be frozen."

Springtime came, and John had not asked Lizzie to be his wife, although I looked every week for some confidence from her of that nature.

It was in April when she came to the parlor one afternoon, when John's snowy, covered country-wagon had lumbered down the street. She was blushing brightly and held a note in her fingers, which she handed to Nellie.

From Mr. Dilmore, miss," she said. "Give it to auntie. Here's your butterman's bill, auntie," Nell said, tossing it to me.

"Bill! I never owed him a cent," I said, wonderingly; and then I took up the note with the sudden thought that, perhaps, he considered it respectful to ask our consent before proposing to Lizzie.

The envelope was thick, white and smooth, and directed in a firm, manly hand to—

MISS ELLEN HAY.

"It is yours," I said; and Nellie opened it. She had not read more than half a page when she sprang to her feet in a fury.

"The impudent scoundrel!" she cried. "How dare he address me in that style! He ought to be handed over to the police. Auntie, you had better dismiss a butterman who writes love-letters to your niece!"

Lizzie, who had been listening in wondering consternation, gave a cry, and before I could reach her, fell full length upon the floor in a dead faint.

"Little idiot!" Nellie muttered.

"She is not!" I cried. "Poor child!

She has a heart, and this handsome farmer has broken it. But you do not mean that he has really written you a love-letter?"

"Listen!" Nellie said; and while I worked over poor, unconscious Lizzie, my niece read John Dilmore's letter aloud. It was a manly, straightforward letter, telling her he had watched her at the window and knew from Lizzie what an angel she was—poor Lizzie!—and telling her his income and prospects. He had received a college education and his father had wanted him to study a profession, but he preferred the farm-life and home.

The only wonder was that man who could write such a letter could wish to marry a woman to whom he had never spoken a word.

It was a long time before Lizzie came back to consciousness, and when she could stand she said:

"I will go upstairs, if you please!" and crept away in a listless, broken-hearted way that filled my eyes with tears.

What Nellie wrote to the address John Dilmore gave in his letter, I never saw, but it was effectual in driving him away, if it did not cure his love.

Lizzie moved about, doing her work, her cheeks pale, her eyes heavy, but would accept no sympathy.

"I see now," she said to me, "he always led me to talk about Miss Nellie, but I thought it was because he wanted me to be like her, and more of a lady. He is not just rough, like the grocer man and the butcher, but polite and nice, like the gentlemen who come here to see you and Miss Nellie, and I thought he wanted a lady-like wife. I was just a little fool, and I must get over it the best I can, but if you please, ma'am, I'd rather not talk about it."

The first Thursday afternoon after the delivery of the letter, she asked permission to go out, but when she found John had not made his weekly calls, she seemed relieved and did not try again to avoid him. He never came to the house again, and I do not think Lizzie ever saw him. How he bore his rejection we never knew, but my heart ached for the girl who had loved and trusted him.

I was glad when her aunt was taken ill and sent for her, and I bought all my buttons and pins in the little store in which she took her aunt's place. But she became whiter and thinner, and all her pretty blushes and smiles were lost in a sad, gentle manner that was new to her.

"I have a woman to wait on my aunt," she told me, "while I am in the store, for we must have the money we make here to live on, but I take care of her at night."

In the early winter she began to cough badly, and moved so feebly about her little store that it was evident she would soon be compelled to give up the business.

I went myself to the doctor, who was attending her aunt.

"Overwork!" he said, briefly, "and worry of some kind. You had better talk to the old woman. She has money enough laid by to last the rest of her life, for she cannot see another spring, and she is killing her niece, keeping her busy all day and as busy nearly all night."

"But, Lizzie," I asked, "can I do nothing for her?"

"Not unless you can persuade her aunt to close the store and let the girl get some rest. I see you are interested, so I tell you that the girl's trouble is mental. She drives herself about to forget some sorrow that is wearing on her."

I nodded assent.

"You know that?" he questioned.

"Yes."

"All you can do then is to try to save her strength by making her aunt listen to reason, and when the old woman dies give the girl a change of scene and climate."

But the "old woman" would not hear reason until she became so ill that she craved Lizzie's constant presence. Then the store was closed.

It was too late. In February, when I carried some jelly and fruit to the invalid, I found Lizzie had fainted at her post again and again, and been sent to a hospital, a hired nurse taking her place. She lived but a week later.

"It is not the work, ma'am," she said the last time I saw her, "that's killing me, but the shame. I know I ought to stop loving him, and I can't. I gave him all the love of my heart, and it won't come back to me. I'm glad to die, ma'am. In the grave I can forget, but I never can while I live."

"She passed away quietly they told me, the poor little child—woman, whose love was as strong and pure as if she had been the 'lady' she strove to be for the sake of her faithless lover."

Canes Must be in Style.

The fashion of carrying a cane is now so general that it is deemed one of the essentials of a gentleman's outfit. A walking-stick renaissance has taken place within the last decade in this country, although in Europe cane-wearing has been prevalent for many years. There are now spring and fall styles in canes, as in clothing and furnishings. The styles of spring canes are in lighter woods and usually of lesser thickness. The most popular cane of this year is made of English ash mounted with silver cap on end of crook, plain or chased, and horseshoe nail of silver upon the body just below the turn. There is a ruby, pearl, or sapphire set in the nail head. It is a very light, graceful and distinctive walking-stick—more especially so for summer wear. The wood, the bark being left on and unvarnished, is of a gray-mould greenish hue. By use and age it attains a soft finish and becomes rich and dark in color. Another cane novelty is of African dogwood, resembling in beauty of tone a piece of chocolate—a rare and costly wood. The finer examples are of the knob series, have the owner's name in single piece of silver wire entwined round the stick and fastened with invisible rivets. It is strong, practicable and durable.—*Home Journal.*

The Parson Wanted Him.

"You may have your gun about you But I'll come by the evening boat, To knock the devil out you." The old subscriber wrote.

But the editor's head was level. He wrote—and the thing was so— "My mother-in-law knocked the devil Out of me years ago!"

"But I showed your note to the preacher, And he sends this word: 'Come on! He has fifty men in his church, sir, That he wants you to work upon!'" —*Atlanta Constitution.*

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IN THE NICK OF TIME.

"Have you the means to support a wife?" was the question which practical old Mr. Worth asked me when I asked him, somewhat over forty years ago, for his daughter Effie.

I never thought of that, and I'm quite sure Effie hadn't. How to keep the kettle boiling was a problem far too unpoetical to engage the attention of two young people wrapped up in the contemplation of each other.

But the question only needed to be put to prove its pertinence. Mr. Worth's fortune was moderate; mine was nothing. At present, I was barely able to gain my own livelihood. To take a wife under such circumstances, I was at no loss to perceive, would betoken either unpardonable rashness or an indelicate willingness to pension myself on another's bounty.

My resolution was at once taken. Stammering something in reply to Mr. Worth's question, I bowed myself out of his presence and sought his daughter's.

"Your father is right," I said to Effie, when I had told her what had passed. "No man has a right to take a woman from her home till he has another to offer her. Till I am prepared to do so, farewell!"

In the gold mines of California, then lately discovered, I toiled and roughed it with the roughest. Fortune, after many frowns, at length began to smile upon me; and I hoped soon to be able to return and claim, without humiliation, the prize for which, if I had not labored as long, I had at least encountered more of hardship and danger than the young Israelite did to win the choice of his heart.

I carefully abstained from corresponding with Effie. To do so before the conditions were fulfilled which I had prescribed to myself I would have looked upon as a breach of faith.

Through a friend, however, with whom I occasionally interchanged letters, I learned in time that Mr. Worth's affairs had become embarrassed. He had even been forced to borrow money from an unconscionable old usurer on the security of his homestead, and the exacting creditor was threatening to turn him out of doors.

I could easily spare the amount necessary to avert such a calamity, but how to do so without wounding the sensitiveness of Effie and her father was a question of no small delicacy.

I wrote to my friend, inclosing a sum sufficient to buy in the claim against Mr. Worth, with instructions to take a blank assignment of the bond and mortgage and to forward them to my address, every precaution being taken to conceal my name in the transaction.

My instructions were complied with, and, in due time, I received the papers; and, my good fortune continuing, it was not before I felt that I might present myself to Effie's father, prepared to answer the question which had so disconcerted me at our last meeting.

I was on my way from the mines to San Francisco, whence I expected to sail for home by the next steamer, when, one evening, I was overtaken by a stranger riding in the same direction.

People do not stop for an introduction under such circumstances. I think it one met his "dearest foe," as Hamlet phrases it, in the heart of a wilderness, old feuds would be forgotten, and a friendly chat would spring up.

The interchange of a few questions and answers disclosed that the stranger's destination and my own were the same, and we agreed to bear each other company. Besides the pleasure of companionship, the stranger suggested we should be more secure against an attack from robbers—no uncommon occurrence in that region—than if we travelled singly.

It was some miles to the place at which we proposed camping for the night, and darkness had already begun to set in. My companion and I freely exchanged experiences. He, like myself, had been a miner, and we both brought a little of our successes. The subject was an interesting one to me. It made me think of Effie, and I had fallen into a reverie when I was aroused by the report of a pistol at my side.

I can only remember a sharp sensation of pain, and seeing, as I turned my head, the hand of the assassin—no other than my new companion—extended toward me with the murderous weapon in his grasp.

I returned to consciousness to find myself taken care of by some miners, who had found me and carried me to their tent. It was weeks before I was able to resume my journey, and months before the San Francisco doctor would permit me to embark on my homeward voyage.

My appearance had greatly altered. My face was bronzed by exposure and emaciated by recent illness—to say nothing of the change made in it by a full beard of many months' growth.

Few of my old acquaintances, I thought, would recognize me. I wondered if Effie would. I meant to take her by surprise, and try the experiment, at any rate.

It was evening when I reached my native village. The old innkeeper, whom I had known from boyhood, received me as a stranger. He was an authority on local topics, and I could not forbear putting a few questions touching the matters uppermost in my mind.

"Do you know Mr. Worth, who lives here?" I began.

"John Worth? None knows him better."

"How is he?" I inquired.

"A little broke, latterly," the old man answered.

"And his daughter Effie?" I went on.

"A nice gal, Effie—do you know her?" asked the innkeeper.

"Slightly," I replied.

"She's again to be married to-morrow, said the host. 'You've come to 'tend the wedding,' probably."

"Married!" I exclaimed with a start which must have excited the old man's attention, had his eyes been better—"to whom?"

"Well, he's a stranger lately come to these parts—a Mr. Garth by name—a man of money, they say. Him and old John patched it up, somehow, between them, though they do say Effie was dead ag'in' it at the start. You see it's been whispered she'd sort o' likin' for a young chap that went off to California; but Effie's a good, bidable gal, an' objeet to her father."

I resolved to be present at that wedding. I do not think I contemplated openly upbraiding Effie, or making a scene; but a

strange fascination possessed me to witness the perjury of her on whose faith and truth I would, till now, have staked my life.

The ceremony, I learned, was to take place in the little church in which I had sat so many Sundays, thinking of Effie's pretty face, and forgetting all about the text and sermon. I followed the crowd as it entered. I could not see Effie's face, but observed that she trembled violently.

She and the bridegroom, with their attendants, took their places. The minister advanced to speak the words which were to place an impassable barrier between me and my life's object. A turn of the bridegroom's head enabled me to catch a glimpse of his features. He was the same man who had attempted my life! However faithless Effie had proved, I could not look on and behold her bound to a fate like that.

This must proceed no further!" I exclaimed, advancing and facing the nuptial pair.

The dastardly assassin cowered as though he had seen a ghost. He may have thought me one, for he had left me for dead that night.

Effie's face was as pale as death. Stretching out her hands appealingly:

"Oh, say you have come to save me!" she cried, in tones that stirred my heart to its depths.

"Save you from what?" I asked, sternly. "Are you not here of your own will?"

"I am here to shield my father against one who has the power to drive him forth homeless in his old age," he answered.

A few words sufficed to explain all. My murder, as the reader has surmised, had been attempted for the purpose of robbery. Fortunately I had but little money about me, most of my gains having been previously forwarded to a banking house in San Francisco. I had with me, however, Mr. Worth's bond and mortgage already spoken of, and these fell into the hands of the robber, who having written his name in the blank assignment, presented himself as one who had purchased the claim; and seeing Effie, he had offered to make her hand the price of abstaining from pressing his rights against her father. The villainy had the more readily escaped detection because of the old money-lender's death, and the absence of the friend through whom I had taken up the claim.

I briefly recited the facts within my knowledge, and the would-be bridegroom was conducted from the church to a prison. The little church was the scene of a ceremony not long afterward which went off, I am happy to say, without interruption, and at which I was also present—though not as a spectator this time.



Master Nicholson Johnstone, 14 Elliott row, was the successful competitor in History Competition No. 14. A very large number of correct answers were received, which shows what a great interest the young people take in these competitions. It has been decided to discontinue them until after the holidays, when the boys and girls fresh and bright after their summer's vacation, will again have an opportunity to compete with each other, either in History or some other competition. The following sent correct answers to questions No. 18. Nicholson Johnstone, 14 Elliott row; Iva Thorne, Indiantown; Bertie Hegan, Wright street; Miss Lois Bain, Richmond street; Maud Kavanah, City road; Josie Bostwick, Wellington row; Nellie Flagler, Carmarthen street; Mamie Appleby, Bloomfield; Gertrude Seely, Dorchester street; Agnes Blizard, Orange street; Maud Cline, St. James street; Gladys McLaughlan, Orange street; Mabel Robinson, Union street; Sadie Elliott, Wall street; Edith Peters, Hampton, N. B.; Katie Newham, St. Stephen, N. B.; F. W. Cappers, West End; Mabel Anderson, Princess street; W. F. Benson, Chatham, N. B.; Percy Smith, St. Stephen, N. B.; Pauline Estey, St. James street; Jessie Lawson, West End; Ella Pitts, Brittain street; Walter Bailey, Duke street; Mamie Trites, Petticoat, N. B.; Willie Raymond, Garden street; Louis Barker, German street; Annie Anderson, Milltown, N. B.; Herbert Bingay, Yarmouth, N. S.; Douglas Ghest, Yarmouth, N. S.; Miss Marjorie Belyea, Greenwick, Kings county; H. Sundry, Dorchester, N. B.; Minnie Morris, North End; Nellie Johnson, St. George, N. B.; Miss Nellie Emery, Fairville; Edith Belyea, Greenwick, N. B.; Sandy Murray, Collina, Kent county; Ethel Johnston, West End; Edna Ryan, Erin street; Miss Pauline Johnston, Douglas Avenue, North End.

Answers to History Questions, No. 18.

1. Who was Joan of Arc, and how did she gain the name of "Maid of Orleans?"

Ans.—Joan of Arc was a peasant girl, who lived in one of the villages of France. At the head of the French army, she entered Orleans, drove the English from before the walls, defeated them in several battles, and restored to the French king, the provinces he had lost. It was by these successes that she gained the title of "Maid of Orleans."

2. What was the great ambition of Henry V?

Ans.—It was to obtain possession of France.

3. In whose reign was the woolen manufacture brought into England?

Ans.—During the reign of Henry I. woolen manufacture was first brought into England.

4. What did the Domesday Book contain?

Ans.—It contained an account of every estate in England, with the name of its owner, and an account also of the cultivated land, as well as of the rivers, forests and lakes.

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