

(CONTINUED FROM TENTH PAGE.)

'Is that you, Young 'Un? Lawd's sakes alive! what yer got there—a sack o' meal?' Then, as she saw what it was, she uttered a screech and nearly dropped the candle. 'Why it's a girl! Is she dead?' 'No, no,' said Neville cheerfully. 'She is worth half a dozen dead ones; aren't you, little one?' She's only tired and frightened. Now, Meth, pull yourself together,' he said, as he carried the child into the hut, 'and let us have some supper.' 'But where's that yere nugget?' demanded Meth, her eyes still on the child. 'That's all right,' Meth, he replied, as cheerfully as before. 'You'll get your share to-morrow. Now, then, little one, and he attempted to loosen her hands from his neck, but she clung close with a little shiver, and he drew a box forward with his foot and sat down, saying: 'All right; we'll wait a bit. Plenty of time. Now, Meth, hurry up with that cake and some milk or tea, or whatever you've got.'

The old woman saw that he didn't mean to be questioned, and began to get some tea.

Neville sat patiently, now and again patting the thin little arm, or stroking the thick dark hair; then, when the tea was ready he spoke to her again: 'How are you now, eh, little one? Not frightened still, eh? You're all safe now, you know. Come, drink a little tea and you'll feel better and more plucky. You're all safe now, you know, You're—your're at home.'

The girl seemed to listen to the musical voice with all her heart as well as her ears, then raised her head, glanced at him with her solemn eyes, and slid down to the floor.

'I do not want any tea, thank you,' she said in a low voice, which, however, startled Neville as much as if it had been a trumpet-blast. It was the voice, not of a digger's child, but of a little lady.

He held her protectingly, encouragingly, for a moment, as she stood beside him and looked at him.

'No?' he said. 'But you'll take some to please me, won't you? By the way, what is your name? Never mind; I won't bother you with questions to-night,' he added, considerably.

She raised her wonderful grey eyes and looked at him.

'My name is Sylvia—Sylvia Bond,' she said.

Neville nodded with his pleasant smile.

'That's awfully pretty,' he said. 'Well, Sylvia, you're not frightened now?' 'No, not now,' she replied, glancing round the dusky hut and drawing a long breath—not now.

'That's all right,' he said. 'And you'll have some tea and get a good night's rest, won't you? A good long sleep is what you want, Sylvia.'

She sunk down in front of the fire her eyes fixed on the blaze, her small hands loosely clasped in the lap of her tattered frock. Neville got up, placed the box so that she could lean against it, and signed to Meth to give her some food putting his hand on his lips to indicate that she was not to bother her with questions. Then he turned to leave her alone; but at the sound of his movements the girl turned quickly and half rose. He went back and laid his hand on her head.

'All right, Sylvia, he said, reassuringly. 'I am only going outside to smoke a pipe. When you have had your tea, you tumble into bed. Don't be afraid; I shall be just outside, you know.'

She sunk back, but as she did so, she put up her hand to his and drew it down to her lips. Neville blushed like a girl, and got outside and lighted his pipe.

He walked up and down for the best part of an hour, thinking and realizing—for at the first blush the whole thing seemed like a ridiculous dream—what he had done; then he went into the hut, knocking first. Mrs. Meth was standing before the fire; she jerked her head toward the inner compartment of the hut, which formed his sleeping-room.

'Asleep?' said Neville.

'Like a blessed top,' replied Meth. 'Be it true what she tells me—that you've got that yere nugget for her, Young 'Un?'

Neville nodded.

'Yes, but we won't say any more about that. Your money's all right, you know.'

'Not say—If I was to die for it, I'd be bound to say yer was a darned young fool, Young 'Un,' she croaked.

'Yes, I know,' he assented, cheerfully. 'Did she say anything else? By the way, I told you not to worry her, you old idiot!'

'No more I did. She let out about the nugget of her own accord. She's English, ain't she, Young 'Un—and a swell as well. Leastways, I judge her so by her talk. She slings it just like yerself, Young 'Un; and you're a swell, you are, yer know.'

'Yes, she's English I think,' said Neville, ignoring the reference to himself.

'An' what are you going to do with her—keep her? Why, that ain't enough for we two, unless that yer claim turns out a payin' one.'

'Never mind,' said Neville, 'we shall manage, I dare say. Is she comfortable? Poor little thing! he added, more to himself than to Meth; 'I wonder who she is and how she came here?'

'Don't appear as if she knows,' said Meth. 'Says her father warn't a digger. Seems as if he was just on the tramp after anything that turned up, Young 'Un.'

After a pause, and in a husky, cautious voice: 'She've got something strung around her neck—a small parcel. Seems as if she set mighty store by it, too! Wouldn't let me so much as touch it. Reckon it's valuable—eh, Young 'Un?'

Neville looked up sharply.

'Leave it alone, Meth, whatever it is,' he said, sternly. 'And, as I told you before, don't ask her any questions.'

'Oh, all right,' assented the old woman, sullenly.

Neville got up after another pause, and taking the candle, entered the inner room

and looked at the child. She was sleeping the sleep of exhaustion; but even in her death-like sleep it seemed as if she were conscious of the packet lying on her bosom, for her hands were clasped over it as if to protect and shield it.

Neville looked down at her, all the tenderness and pity in his heart showing in his blue eyes.

'She's right down pretty, ain't she?' whispered old Meth in his ear. 'Never see sich 'air in all my born days; like a—water-fall, ain't it? and soft as silk; and them black lashes! Don't often see them kind o' brows with that colored eye. Reckon she's a born lady, too; but born ladies eat as much as other folks, Young 'Un, and—'

He motioned her to silence, and closing the door, fastened up his pea-jacket.

'I'm going to sleep outside to-night, Meth,' he said.

He stretched himself on the threshold, his revolver at his hand; but it was dawn before he fell asleep. His brain was too full of his new purchase. Did he dream of that little farm in green and smiling England—the farm he had 'swapped' for the orphan of Lorn Hope?

CHAPTER IV.

Neville rose the next morning, had a wash in the river, and resumed work in the hole which yesterday he had said 'Good-bye' to, as he thought, forever.

When he went in to see if any breakfast happened to be about, he found Sylvia making the coffee and old Mother Meth tidying up, but looking over her shoulder now and again at the clean, girlish figure in a kind of wonderment.

Sylvia glanced round at him with her large, expressive eyes as he entered, but she said nothing, and proceeded to lay the breakfast of cold pork, meal-cakes, and coffee on the table of rough deal supported by trestles.

Neville saw that she had been crying, but she had dried her eyes, and was now simply grave and shy.

'Why, you're quite a little housekeeper, Sylvia!' he said. 'What splendid coffee!'

His sally was not very successful. She looked at him intently, her lips moved as if she were about to respond, but no sound came, and he ate his breakfast and got back to the claim as quickly as possible.

After he had been at work half an hour he saw Locket approaching. The two men exchanged nods.

'Get that nugget out o' this, Young 'Un?' said Locket.

'Yes,' replied Neville, cleaning his spade.

'A rare slice of luck, Young 'Un. And you went and planked it down for that girl! Well, I admit your pluck. I do. But, pard, that fellow Lavarick has been at me this morning. You know what we are going to do with the money—the nine hundred?' he broke off.

Neville shook his head.

'No; it doesn't matter to me.'

'Well, we've reckoned to divide it square and fair, share and share alike, all round.'

'All right,' said Neville, indifferently.

'But, Young 'Un, Lavarick has made the boys an offer.'

Neville leaned on his pick, and looked up at the man attentively.

'He's offered a thou—goodness only knows where the nigger got the money—but he's offered it for the girl. Seems to take an interest in her somehow. Says if you'll take his money he'll send her to England to school, and—dashed if I ain't forgot the word!—oh, adopt—adopt her—that's it. What do you say? Strikes me you'd better jump at it. Reckon you were just playin' it off high with that nugget last night, and 'ud be glad to see it back, eh, Young 'Un? Better take the Undertaker's offer.'

Neville's face reddened—that is to say, his tan grew deeper—and his blue eyes darker.

'Give my compliments to Mr. Lavarick,' he said, 'and tell him that I decline his offer. I bought the girl! and she's mine, and—Wait a moment, Locket, for, with a

shrug of the shoulders, the man was departing; 'you can add that I'm practicing revolver shooting, just for amusement and to pass the time, and that I consider it would be dangerous for any one to be mooching about the hut—especially after dark. Lavarick will understand.'

'He'd be no end of a fool if he didn't,' Young 'Un,' retorted Locket, with a grin. 'I'll tell him, and I'll give the bank agent your share of your own nugget. Here's luck to you, young 'Un,' and he sauntered away.

As he did so, Neville chanced to glance toward the hut. Sylvia was standing in the doorway, and must have heard every word.

When he came in to dinner he found her alone, Mrs. Meth having gone to the camp, ostensibly for supplies, but really to hear full particulars of last evening's proceedings.

The girl sat with her head resting on her small hands, they were clean, though brown as berries; and she sat thus and watched him while he ate in silence for a time. Then she said suddenly and in the clear, musical voice which had startled Neville the night before: 'Why didn't you give me up to that man?'

Neville looked up, but his eyes fell before her intent gray ones, and he colored. 'Why? Do you think I'm such a changeable person, Sylvia? You don't want to go, do you?'

He was sorry he had asked the question almost before he had uttered it, for her face grew pale to whiteness, and her gray eyes distended.

'There, there!' he said soothingly 'Don't you be afraid. I've got you, and I mean to keep you. Aren't you going to eat some dinner?'

She shook her head.

'Not yet,' she said, gravely. 'I can't eat—yet. I will presently—in a little while.'

She was silent for a moment or two, still looking at him, then she said:

'Was that true that you said last night—was it all the money you had, the money you bought me with?'

Neville nodded.

'Look here, little one,' he replied, 'don't let us say any more about it, and don't you think any more about it. There's nothing to trouble you in it. Why?—cheerfully, and as if he had hit upon a bright idea—'you'd have done as much for me, wouldn't you?' and he laughed, as if the matter were a good joke.

She regarded him in silence for a moment, then she drew a long breath.

'Yes,' she said, and got up as she spoke and went to the fire, standing with her back to him.

Neville said nothing more, but went back to his pit, filled up the rest of his dinner-time with his pipe, and then fell to work again.

At tea-time Sylvia came to the pit with a can of tea and some cakes. She set them down and stood beside them, looking down at him.

He nodded cheerfully, wiped his face, and took up the can.

She sat down presently and watched him in profound silence for a time. Then she said:

'What is your name?'

Now, Neville had not uttered his name since he had entered the camp, and he hesitated now.

'What should you say to Jack?' he asked, with a smile.

'Jack? Yes, I like it,' she replied, after consideration.

'All right,' he said; 'call me Jack.'

'What's in a name?'

'A rose by any other name would smell as sweet,' she finished, gravely.

Neville looked up, startled.

'Halloo! That's Shakespeare, little one.'

She nodded.

'My word!' he said; 'you're young to spout Shakespeare. Who taught you?'

He stopped, but too late.

Her lips quivered and her eyes filled, but she kept back the tears bravely as she answered:

'My father. He taught me a great deal; he—' she dashed the tears from her eyes. 'Shall I get you some more tea?'

'No, no,' he said, hastily. In her courage and self-reliance the child seemed years beyond her age, and man-like, boy-like, he felt shy and awkward. It was as if he had captured—nay, bought—a beautiful bird, and did not know what to make of it or how to treat it, lest he should ruffle its feathers or frighten or hurt it. 'No, no,' he said; 'If I want any more, I'll get it. It's too hot for you to run about. Look here, Sylvia, you're not to trouble yourself, you know. Old Mother Meth will see to all that's wanted.'

She shook her head.

'And when you have given so much for me! You bought me; I belong to you. I must do all I can.'

Neville tilted his cap on to the back of his head and hoisted himself on to the top of the pit beside her.

'Put all that nonsense out of your head, little one,' he said. 'If you want to do anything, why, another brilliant idea struck him—why, be my sister. I've never had a sister, and always longed for one, and—why, there you are, you know; and he nodded to her.

'Your sister?' She thought it over for a moment, her soulful eyes resting on his handsome face. 'Very well.'

'That's all right,' he said with immense satisfaction. 'I'm brother Jack, eh, and you're sister Sylvia, or Syl? Do you object to Syl?'

'You can call me what you like. You bought—I mean—yes, Syl will do. I'd like you to call me it. Father always called me—' she stopped again and turned her head away, and he saw the muscles of her delicate neck working as she battled with her tears. 'Yes, call me Syl. And, Jack, with a momentary hesitation, 'do you work all day like this?'

'I do, indeed, and darned monotonous I find it—that is, I did find it; but it won't

PURE BLOODED HORSES.

Your horse will look twice as well, feel twice as well, do twice as much work, sell for twice as much money, if you tone him up with—

DR. HARVEY'S CONDITION POWDERS

No other condition powder gives the results that this old tried remedy does. If your dealer does not sell it, we will send you a full size package, as sample postpaid, for price 25cts.

HARVEY MEDICINE CO., 424 St. Paul Street, Montreal.

Free BIGGEST OFFER Free

EVERY FARMER WANTS

The Celebrated and Popular work, Entitled

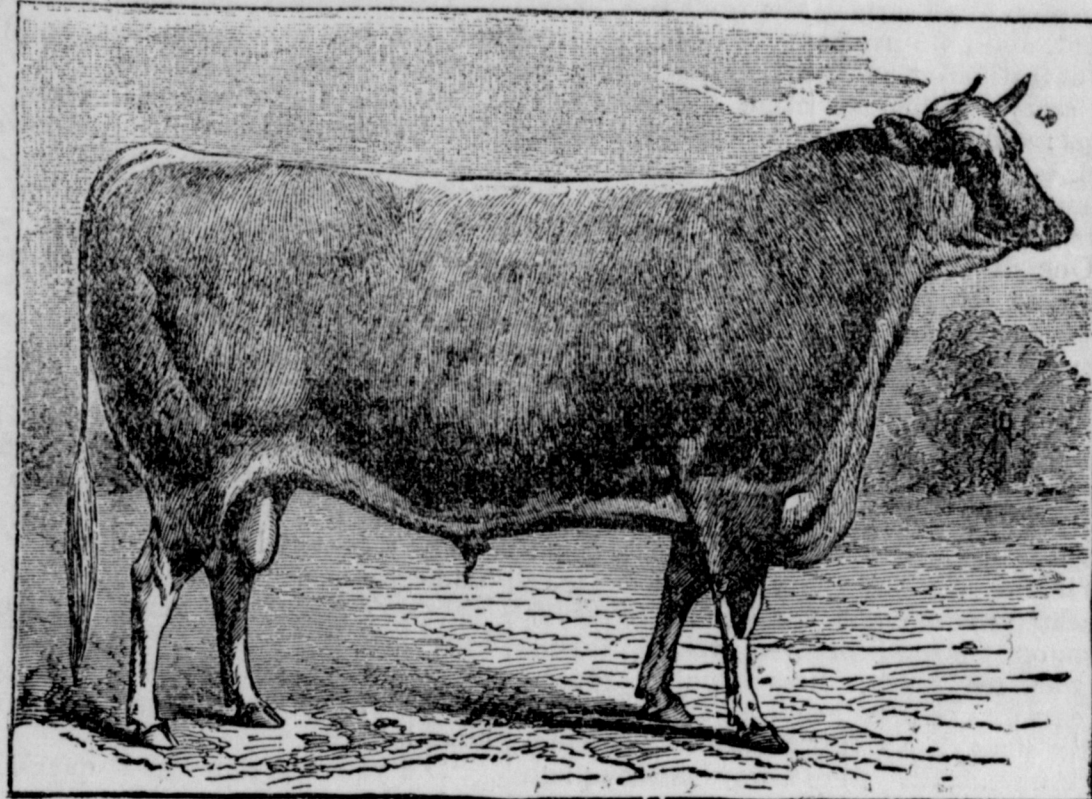
Manning's Illustrated Book

—ON—

Cattle, Sheep and Swine.

300,000 Sold at \$3.00 per Copy

READ OUR GREAT OFFER.



This great work gives all the information concerning the various breeds and their Characteristics, Breeding, Training, Sheltering, Buying, Selling, Profitable Use, and General Care; embracing all the Diseases to which they are subject—the Causes, How to Know and What to Do given in plain, simple language, but scientifically correct; and with Directions that are Easily Understood, Easily Applied, and Remedies that are within the Reach of the People; giving also the Most Approved and Humane Methods for the Care of Stock, the Prevention of Disease, and Restoration to Health. Determined to outdo all others ever yet made, we have secured this celebrated work, the most complete and practical yet produced, heretofore sold at \$3.00 per copy, and offer A Copy Free to every new subscriber to our paper.

OUR OFFER Although the price of one year's subscription to the PROGRESS is only \$2.00 we now offer to send this great work in slightly cheaper binding and for one new yearly subscription to the PROGRESS.

Think MANNING'S BOOK, All for Only Of it? The Progress Former Price, \$3.00 \$2.00

Send by Postal Order or Postage Stamps \$2.00 at once and secure this unrivalled and useful premium.

seem so hard now I've got a sister to bring me my tea and talk to me.'

'And haven't you any brothers?' she asked, after a pause, during which she had not for a second removed her eyes from his face.

Neville's face clouded.

'I've got one,' he replied.

'And is he a digger?' she asked.

Neville kicked the heap of stones at the bottom of the pit.

'No, Syl; he's a gentleman in London.'

She turned this over in her mind for a moment or two; then she asked:

'And why aren't you a gentleman in London, Jack?'

He colored and laughed. Oh—why? Well, because I'm the second son. I'm afraid you won't understand, Syl. You see, the first son has all the tin, and the others, poor devils! have to turn out and earn their own living. That's my case.'

'Then you're here at the diggings because you are poor?'

'For that and several other reasons—yes.'

'And yet you gave—how much was it?—nine hundred pounds for me last night!'

she said in a low far away voice, but with the gray eyes fixed on his face.

'We agreed we'd cut that, you know, Syl,' he said. 'We'll forget it, eh? Suppose you and I pretend that we've been brother and sister, all along, but that we've only just come across each other? How's that? Do you think I shall answer as a brother?'

She took up the strong brown hand in her small paw and turned it over, then nodded at him, and without a word laid it down on the pit again, and getting up walked back to the hut.

(To be continued.)

Mexican Courtesy.

The principal characteristic of the Mexican is his innate courtesy. The extravagant expressions of ordinary politeness which the tourist hears from even a poor peon are reported, and possibly exaggerated, in the following sketch:

'Oh, how deliciously polite!' is a phrase we hear every day from the lips of foreign ladies when they enjoy the most unusual sight of two natives, ragged beyond de-

scription, perhaps, who stop a horse-car in the street, and keep it standing while each insists, with elegant bows and flowing compliments, that the other precede him in going up the steps.

'After you, sir'

'Not at all. I am unworthy of such a high honor.'

'I dare not take precedence, sir.'

'It is only what is due your superiority. Walk up, please.'

'Not for all the world. You are entitled to that preference.'

This goes on for some time, until the car begins to move, and both fling themselves at once on the steps, smashing the corners of another man standing on the platform, an accident that gives rise to new effusions of good breeding.

'Oh, sir, how sorry I am to have trod on your feet! I sincerely entreat you to excuse my oversight.'

'Never mind,' says the victim, gritting his teeth and with tears in his eyes. 'It is an honor to be trod on by you.'

'Thanks for your kindness.'

'I am myself in duty bound to thank you.'

In the Worst Cases it Always Relieves Testimonial of a Well Known Merchant.

Dr. Ed. Morin & Co.

Sirs,

It is with the greatest pleasure I let you know today of the great improvement that I feel in my cough after using Morin's Creso-Phates Wine. For a long time I have been suffering with chronic bronchitis with oppression and very often I felt a sore throat which was very painful. I tried every medicine without the least relief, when I commenced to take Morin's Creso-Phates Wine I felt after few doses great relief. Although I am not entirely cured, I am getting better every day. I sleep well, the cough is nearly gone and I never feel now any sore throat. You may depend on it that I will do all in my power to make Morin's Wine known.

Yours truly

P. H. A. CARON

Grand Metis.

SYRUP OF FIGS



ONE ENJOYS

Both the method and results when Syrup of Figs is taken; it is pleasant and refreshing to the taste, and acts gently yet promptly on the Kidneys, Liver and Bowels, cleanses the system effectually, dispels colds, headaches and fevers and cures habitual constipation. Syrup of Figs is the only remedy of its kind ever produced, pleasing to the taste and acceptable to the stomach, prompt in its action and truly beneficial in its effects, prepared only from the most healthy and agreeable substances, its many excellent qualities commend it to all and have made it the most popular remedy known.

Syrup of Figs is for sale in 50 cent bottles by all leading druggists. Any reliable druggist who may not have it on hand will procure it promptly for any one who wishes to try it. Do not accept any substitute.

CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO.
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.
LOUISVILLE, KY. NEW YORK, N.Y.