

SING WHILE YE MAY.

My heart has been singing all the day long,
Of sweetest happiness soundeth the song;
Soon clouds may gather; the night cometh on.

Filled is my heart with the tenderest dreams,
And deeply I quaff of Joy's sparkling streams;
Yet Sorrow stalks behind with soubre mien.

Now I must bask in the bliss that is mine,
Revel in gladness that sparkles like wine;
Misfortunes and grief come to all in time.

I'll list while I may to this song in my heart;
Oh! that its melody ne'er would depart;
Unheeding the stings of Fate's cruel dart.

—Carter's Monthly.

JACK HAY'S RIVAL

THE occupation of telegraph operator at Gillville was of an almost slowly killing kind to a handsome, young and ambitious man like Jack Hay. But the salary was too fair and agreeable to be wilfully relinquished.

"If I had a wife, now," he thought, with a contemplative expression, "it might brighten a fellow's life somewhat. But what chance have I to go a-courting. And where is the girl in these parts, I'd like to know?"

Then an idea struck him; his face brightened.

"I'll try it!" he exclaimed, in sudden determination.

Turning to his instrument, he began ticking off a message of inquiry to the operator at Martin's station, four miles distant.

"Awake over there?"

"All the time!" came the prompt, terse reply.

"Awfully lonely over here. Think of marrying, but no opportunity. Can you help me?"

"Afraid not. No husbands worth having round Martin's, or I might have married myself before this."

Jack opened his eyes at this, exclaiming, after a while:

"The deuce! I am talking to a woman!"

Nevertheless he ticked away again. "Not looking for a husband. Am a man and want a good wife. Salary fair, habits temperate. Want a little house of my own, with a loving woman. Can you put me in the way of it?"

Pretty Hester Fleming, at the other telegraph instrument at Martin's station, murmured:

"Mercy me! I am talking to a man, and somebody told me that the Gillville operator was a woman."

Some time elapsed ere Jack received any response to his last inquiry. At last tick, tick, tick-a-tick came sounding back, and it said:

"Can't tell. Come over and see me in 'off hours.' Bring credentials."

That exchange of messages between the two lonely operators was the beginning of a courtship remarkable as well for its brevity as its novelty.

At his earliest opportunity, Jack was in Martin's. Within a month the post of telegraph operator at Martin's was filled by a successor to Hester Fleming, who had changed her name to Hester Hay.

The wedded couple were very happy. It did not require long to make the mutual discovery that they were admirably mated.

Hester proceeded industriously to the management of the cottage, which Jack had plainly furnished for their home, near the station, and ere the summer had fully set in its little garden, under the magic touch of a woman's hand, was a mass of viny-green and bloom and beds of delicious scent and varying hues.

The swift months that followed strengthened the bond of love between the young husband and wife; and often, as he watched her at her busy tasks, he thought that not all the flowers in the garden were as sweet as a kiss from Hester's lips, nor a color there as beautiful as the bloom of health on her dimpled cheeks.

One day, however, a queer change seemed to have come over the happy wife; the color in her cheeks was not so rosy as usual, the smile did not play upon her lips, and her violet eyes were restlessly thoughtful.

"What is it, Hesty?" asked Jack, solicitously, as he placed his chair at the dinner table near the window, where he could receive all the cool, fragrant air. "Something is worrying you, pet. Chickens been at the flower beds? Cat pulled down the cypress vine?"

She twined her arms round his neck.

"Oh, Jack, will you forgive me for keeping a secret from you?"

"A secret?"

"You were not the only suitor I had, Jack. Don't be angry with me for telling it now."

"Why, there's nothing remarkable about that. A girl as good as you are ought to have had a dozen suitors, for that matter."

"But there was one in particular."

"Was there? Well, you dropped him

and married me," said Jack, in a cheerful, matter-of-fact way.

"True; but I fear he has not dropped me," hastily rejoined the young wife, in a grave tone.

He drew her gently toward him and looked, with a tender smile, up into her pale face.

"Tell me just what troubles you, darling."

"Do you remember Bruce Denver, who was at our wedding?"

"I believe I had an introduction to such a person."

"Bruce was persistent in his importunities for me to marry him, but I had heard so much of his wild doings in the village barrooms that I knew him to be a dissolute if not an actually wicked man. It was only his father's money and influence that enabled him to keep his place at all in the circle of the better citizens at Martin's. The day you and I were married he came to my side and said, only loud enough for my hearing:

"So you've flitted me out and out, have you, Hester? All right. You'll wish you hadn't before a year goes round!"

"I did not tell you about it, then, Jack, because I thought it might make trouble on that happy day. And I had almost forgotten about it after all these months. But a year has now nearly gone by, and—"

"Well?" as she hesitated.

"I saw Bruce Denver to-day. He was here, in front of the house, leaning against the railing, pretending to be looking at the flowers. When he saw that I had noticed him an expression that was like a horrible grin passed

over his face. Then he strode away. I feel, Jack, that he meditates some harm to us—"

"Oh, pshaw! Don't worry about him at all, Hesty. There, now; let me finish my dinner and get back to the office. If Bruce Denver comes prowling around ask him to wait until I can have a talk with him. If I suspect that he means mischief I guess I can deal with him."

Immediately upon Jack's departure Hester went up the stairs to their bedroom.

She drew forth a small, glittering revolver from a drawer.

"I do not feel as confident as Jack does," she muttered, carefully placing the serviceable weapon in her bosom. "I used to keep this little deadly friend with me constantly when I operated at Martin's. Maybe I'll need it if Bruce Denver does mean Jack harm."

The afternoon passed peacefully.

Jack had been home to supper, and left Hester with a smiling kiss and assurance that all was well.

Shortly after 10 o'clock Jack was summoned to his instrument by a call from Martin's.

Tick-tick-a-tick went the message, and it read:

"Stop 10:30 limited express at Gillville. Have telegraphed to end of division for wreckers' car. Track tampered with between here and your station."

He wrote out the dispatch as received, in order to show it in explanation to the conductor when he did the unusual thing of stopping the limited express.

"Every life in that train is imperiled!" he exclaimed, in some excitement. "But I have full ten minutes

to spare, so I will get the signal lanterns ready."

"No, you won't!"

A deep and savage voice uttered the words behind him.

Simultaneously he received a terrible blow from a club which swept him from his seat to the floor in a heap.

Bruce Denver, with a satanic glare in his evil eyes, looked exultantly down upon his unconscious victim.

"You won't stop any trains this night, Jack Hay!" he snarled, with a black scowl. "And after what is about to happen you'll be lucky if you're not shut away from Hester for many a year. My plot has been too well laid to miscarry now."

He shouldered the motionless body and carried it to the woody edge of an eminence not far from the track.

When Jack recovered his senses he found himself gagged and securely bound hand and foot, and his captor was in the act of tying him firm and fast in an upright position to a great tree.

"Got your eyes open again, eh?" remarked Denver, roughly, as he leaned closer in the starry darkness to peer into the tortured face of his prisoner.

The villain had wound a cloth about the lower portion of his face. Only his diabolical eyes were dimly perceptible.

"You've about run your length, Jack Hay," he continued, fiercely. "There will be bloody work to-night, and the operator at Gillville will get the blame. The rails are spread between here and Martin's. I know that, for a chum of mine reported it at Martin's at the hour we agreed upon, and you were telegraphed to save the limited express; in fact, we spread open the rail ourselves. The train will go on to destruction. When it has passed I'll loosen your bonds, and you can release yourself; but—ha! ha!—who will believe the story you will have to tell? They'll say you were neglecting your post. You can't prove anything. Hark! There it comes!"

A locomotive whistle sounded faint and far. Presently could be seen the gleaming headlight along the nearly straight bed of the road.

"Ah, there it comes! A few moments more and the whole community will stand ready to lynch the neglectful operator at Gillville for causing the destruction and death!"

Jack Hay stared at the swiftly coming headlight. His heart was chilled within him, and his tortured brain reeled giddily.

Well he realized what the popular verdict would be. He could not prove the strange tale he would have to tell; he could not even swear to his murderer's identity, though he felt that no man other than Bruce Denver could wish him ill. He would be promptly condemned as the cause of the awful catastrophe.

And on, on that doomed train was coming, while he groaned and writhed in mental agony.

As he struggled to burst his bonds he realized that they were loosening. He might soon wrench himself free, but not—oh, heaven! not in time to save those scores of precious lives!

The rumble grew louder and louder; the ray of the headlight was now nearly abreast on the track!

"They are going to their death, and the world will say I killed them!" poor Jack moaned in his soul.

Then with a deafening, rattling roar the train rushed to the station, rushed past, its whistle piercing the night air in a prolonged note like a mingled wail and shriek.

But, hark! Another sound breaks in on the whistle's dying scream. Something has happened which brings the heart of Jack Hay in his throat in a lump of joy.

Bang! bang! bang!

Three loud explosions quivered through the night, nearly lifting the great driving wheels from the rails.

Warning torpedoes had been placed on the rails.

The wheels of the car trucks suddenly looked like circles of sparks as the air brakes went down quick and hard.

"Perdition!" burst from astonished Bruce Denver. "I am robbed of my revenge. But I'll know who meddled here before that train can stop and back up!"

He dashed forward to the station, gripping the deadly club. Into the office he ran. The place seemed to be deserted. But as he turned to run out again a sharp voice checked him.

"Halt where you are, Bruce Denver! What have you done with my husband?"

Hester Hay confronted him with leveled revolver, resolutely barring his exit.

"Lower that thing, Hester. I mean you no harm—"

"Halt, I say! Another step, and I fire! Answer me! Where is my husband?"

But by this time the train had backed to the platform, and conductor and flagman, lanterns in hand, came hurrying to the office.

"Secure that man!" Hester cried, pointing to the sullenly cowering form of Denver. "There's been some foul play here, and he is at the bottom of it!"

She showed to the conductor the warning dispatch Jack had hastily

copied off on the slip and left on the operating table.

"I came over to the office to-night to keep Jack company," she said. "He wasn't here, and I couldn't find him. I saw this dispatch. In five minutes I knew the train would pass. I wondered where Jack could be; it was so strange that he shouldn't be anywhere around, you know. I went to the torpedo box, took out three torpedoes, and placed them on the track. Then I went to hunt again for Jack, and I saw that man come running in. Don't let him escape—"

At that juncture there was a sensation on the platform—a cry from the doorway—and Jack himself came reeling in, pitching heavily to the floor. As he fell, he gasped:

"Broken track near Martin's! Don't moyle the train!"

When he recovered and told of the fiendish plot concocted by Denver that scoundrel was strongly bound and placed under guard in the baggage car. He was finally conveyed to the city, where, by some means, the officials shortly found and obtained a confession from his accomplice, and both were safely locked up on the charge of attempted train-wrecking, with an additional indictment against Denver for murderous assault.

Jack's salary was liberally raised by the company. And Hester, the savior heroine, received from the directors of the railroad a grateful letter, accompanied by a delicately tendered sum of money, which enabled her to buy the cozy cottage in which she and Jack now live at Gillville.—New York Weekly.

"SEVEN AGES" UP TO DATE.

Pessimistic Views Ventilated by an Editor Out in Missouri.

Man is born into the world. He is at once attacked by nettle rash, croup, measles and the whooping cough. He has the colic before his first teeth are cut and when he is swindled we say he is getting his eye teeth cut.

If he escapes the scarlet fever and the mumps, he finds directly in his way scarlet rash and the seven-year itch. If he is not carried off in a hearse before he is too large for short pants he still stands a show of cutting off one of his toes, being kicked by a mule or getting shot with a target rifle in the hands of the boy that "didn't know it was loaded."

He gets his feet wet, runs at the nose and is scolded by his parents for going in swimming on Sunday. He goes to the circus, rides on the merry-go-round and hits the dignified old gentleman in the back of the head with a snowball before he is well in his teens.

He now reaches the stage where he gathers watermelons in the light of the moon, eats green apples and lays out of nights. The fuzz begins to grow on his upper lip and he blushes when he sees a girl, until his hair scorchers. He next develops into a "smart Alec," and his parents are undecided whether to shoot him for smoking cigarettes or turn him over to an asylum manager as a confirmed lunatic. Man is subject to typhoid fever, pneumonia, spinal meningitis, smallpox and his own intemperance. He is beset by disease, indebtedness and breach of promise suits until it is a wonder that any of us are able to score three score and ten. If he escapes a famine, pestilence and war, he does his best to shorten his days by keeping his boiler overloaded with inferior booze. He is subject to sick headache, lumbago and inflammatory rheumatism until he cries aloud that his last stage is worse than his first. He wears false hair, false teeth and goes to jail for getting money under false pretenses.

Yet when he has finally run the gantlet and passes off the stage of action, the heavy Ananias for the county paper says: "It is well."—Nevada Post.

He Appealed to His Vanity.

Justin McCarthy tells the following story of a New York bootblack in his book of reminiscences. "I was standing on the bridge one day studying the crowd, as was my wont, and wholly absorbed in the study, when a shrill, youthful voice accosted me with the words, 'Cap'n, shine yer boots?' At that time the great Civil War was not long over, and the chance distribution of military titles was ready and liberal. I paid no attention to the invitation, although it was many times repeated in tones of increasing earnestness, and sometimes emphasized with an admonitory tap on the boots which my young friend was anxious to shine. At last a rival little boy seemed to imagine that he saw where the cause of my indifference was to be found, and, pushing aside the unsuccessful claimant, he gave a military salute, and appealed to me with the captivating words, 'Brigadier General, shine yer boots?'"

It is easier to be the father of a 6-year-old girl than of a 16-year-old one; the former's only wish is that her father keep a candy store, and the latter's bitter sorrow is that he is not a king.



The Girl I Loved in Sunny Tennessee. On a morning bright and clear To my old home I drew near, Just a village down in sunny Tennessee.

I was speeding on a train, That would bring me back again To my sweetheart who was waiting there for me.

It was but a few short years Since I kissed away her tears, As I left her at my dear old mother's side.

And each day we've been apart She's grown dearer to my heart Than the night I asked of her to be my bride.

As the train drew up at last Old familiar scenes I passed As I kissed my mother at the station door.

And as old friends gathered 'round Tears on every face I found, But I missed the dear one I'd been longing for to see.

And I whispered: "Mother, dear, Where is Mary; she's not here?" All the world seemed lost and sadness came to me.

For she pointed to a spot In the churchyard's little lot, Where my sweetheart sleeps in sunny Tennessee.

Chorus— I could hear the darkies singing As she bade farewell to me, Far across the fields of cotton My old homestead I could see.

And the moon shone in its glory, As I told life's sweetest story To the girl I loved in sunny Tennessee.

Song. He that is down needs fear no fall; He that is low, no pride; He that is humble ever shall Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have, Little be it or much; And, Lord, contentment still I crave, Because thou savest such.

Fullness to such a burden is That go on pilgrimage; Here little, and hereafter bliss, Is best from age to age. —John Bunyan.

"GIVING IN."

Many of Our Greatest Victories Are Won by Just That.

"But don't you think," Dr. Meredith said, gently, "that we sometimes win our greatest victories just by—giving in?"

"It's the principle of the thing," Miss Mary insisted. "That woman means to be disagreeable. If I let her ride over me in little things—"

"Maybe she's only tired—too tired to take the longer way round the grass to the well. And as for having picked that daffodil—did you never feel hungry for a flower, or the sight and touch of some beautiful thing?"

"But I wouldn't steal it!"

"Steal it?" repeated the old man, his eyes on the wind-tossed blossoms beyond the gravel walk. "Steal it from whom? It was God's earth and air God's rain and sunshine that brought it into being. That daffodil may have meant much to your neighbor—"

"But it's the principle of the thing Surely you don't advocate—"

"Miss Mary," the doctor interposed gently, "I've lived almost twice as long as you have, and I've come to believe that there is only one indispensable principle—and that is love. We can never really know the pain and weariness of another's life. Only love can understand—a little."

It was the next afternoon, when Miss Mary was weeding near the whitewashed fence, that voices sounded on the other side. Was it Dr. Meredith's? Yes, and "that woman's."

"It has done her a world of good—just that one blossom. They used to grow in our old home, and it's been years since she's even smelled one. I meant to ask the lady for it, but she seemed so kind of—hard—"

"But she isn't, when you really know her," the doctor said, and tears of gratitude sprang to Miss Mary's eyes.

"Well," the other returned, "we'd had some words about the path, and I'd made up my mind not to speak to her again, and—"

"And you wouldn't give in?" The doctor shook his head with a wistful smile in his kind eyes.

"My sister said I was wrong," the other returned. "She says as we near the border-land, things like that don't seem worth noticing. Oh, if you knew how that flower has helped the time to pass to my sister! It has almost made me want to go to the lady and thank her, but of course she wouldn't understand; she'd only think I was giving in to get more, and so—"

On the other side of the fence Miss Mary was gathering a great cluster of golden bloom. There was a new light in her eyes. Was it from the brightness of the blossoms before her or the radiance of the joy of "giving in?"



"EVERY LIFE IN THAT TRAIN IS IMPERILED."