

THE MOTHER-IN-LAW.

The poets and punsters have often maligned her.
Her temper and actions they've thoroughly cussed!
With fun-driven heels they've endeavored to grind her
Down into the depths of the ridicule dust.
The air has been hot with the jokes they've fired at her.
You'd think her the worst 'un the world ever saw,
And never a one has as yet deigned to flatter.
That feminine treasure, the mother-in-law.
The angels would envy her sweet disposition,
A motherly smile ever clings to her face;
She's proud of the dignity of her position;
Her temper but rarely gets jarred from its base.
She thinks her dear son is a peach ripe and mellow.
A pure earthly "angel" with never a flaw,
And nine times in ten the affectionate fellow
Is madly in love with his mother-in-law.
Her visits are looked on as sunny oases
To gladden the dreary old desert of life.
Her son-in-law thinks she possesses rare graces,
And loves her for giving him such a sweet wife.
The home is a dreamland of love when she's in it.
No breezes of discord blow chilly and raw;
An hour in its flight seems a bliss-laden minute
When lit with the smiles of the mother-in-law.
In sickness her voice so delightfully soothing
Ort tempers the pangs of the demon of pain;
Her hand when an invalid brow softly smoothes
Cools down the hot fire of the feverish brain.
She's here and she's there where her service is wanted;
A sweeter old angel the world never saw,
And glad is the home that is frequently haunted
With the spirit so kind of the mother-in-law.
Of course there are some that are thoroughbred terrorists,
For there are exceptions to every rule;
They see in their sons-in-law nothing but errors,
And grade them about on a plane with the mule.
Their eyes ever search for a cause for a rumpus,
They're expert of tongue and they're nimble of jaw.
But, though all the wits of newspaperdom jump us,
We're here to stand up for the mother-in-law.
—James Barton Adams, in Denver Evening Post.



By Will N. Harben.

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CHAPTER XIX.—CONTINUED.

As Father Surtees went into the next room Blanche did not rise. She seemed completely stupefied.
"Rowland is anxious for me to make a certain disclosure to you," the priest said, taking her hand. "I must first beg you to be lenient, if you can, with a man who loves you with all his soul. Of that there is no doubt."
"He has lost my fortune?" cried Blanche, sharply. "What do you suppose I care for money when—when he is dying?"
"It is not that, my dear Mrs. Goddard," said the priest, averting his solemn gray eyes. "I am afraid it is even more serious than that."
"What is it? What is wrong, then?" questioned the young wife, laying a trembling hand on the arm of the priest.
"Can you bear a blow from a most unexpected source?" asked Father Surtees, "a revelation which will shake your faith even in the man you love?"
"Hush!" Blanche cried, firing immediately. "Do you dare to speak against him when he is dying? Oh, my God!"
Father Surtees shrank from her an instant, and a look of pain spread over his fine face. He allowed her indignant eyes to rest on him for a moment, then he said:
"He has begged me to make a confession to you of the greatest importance. My poor child, you will have to have great fortitude to listen calmly to what I am going to tell you."
"What do you mean?" Blanche questioned, the fire still kindling in her eyes.
"Would you not be shocked if I were to tell you," Father Surtees began to look about the room as if searching for the gentlest means of conveying his meaning. "If I were to tell you that there was a—a mistake about Mrs. Goddard's death?"
Blanche's eyes grew large.
"You mean that—that she is alive?" she asked, slowly.
"Yes, she is alive,"
Blanche fixed his eyes with a steady stare of incredulity.
"Not dead—not dead?"
The priest nodded.
"And there is something else," he went on, "and to do Maj. Goddard full justice you must make up your mind to believe that he did not love you as

he does now, till—till after he married you. He has told me his full story, and my heart bleeds for him. He says he was trying to confess to you when the accident cut him short."
"He was trying to tell me what?" asked Blanche, her brows wrinkled in perplexity.
"He was trying to confess that he knew that his wife was alive when he married you."
"O-oh!" That exclamation was as sudden and sharp as if it had been caused by a crushing blow.
The priest took her hands and held them tenderly.
"But there were many, many extenuating circumstances," he continued, pleadingly. "He was the tool of a designing woman; he was out of his mind. I had noticed his downfall from the moment he met her and came under her baneful influence. She convinced him beyond doubt that you had a fatal malady which would carry you off in a few months. She wanted your money; he was temporarily insane. For God's sake pity him. I know men as a botanist knows his plants, and I could swear that he has been a man changed for the better since you became his wife. If you could only believe this it would, I know, be a crumb of comfort in your great calamity."

Blanche's head sank to the table at which she sat. Father Surtees still held one of her hands. He waited for a moment, but she did not look up or utter a word. He would have thought she had swooned but for the visible shudders passing through her frame.
"He did not find out till this afternoon that she had deceived him about your health, then he came to tell you the whole truth. He would have told you earlier, but Mrs. Goddard had made him believe that the shock would kill you. He kept back the revelation to save your life. He told me he was in a literal hell—a hell of his own creation, but if he dies to-night, dear child, he will be among the redeemed. His soul is as white as snow. The responsibility of his sin all rests on Mrs. Goddard's—"

"Don't—don't call her by that name again!" Blanche suddenly cried, drawing herself up and looking into his face squarely. "She was never his lawful wife. I am the only woman he ever married—really married!"
Father Surtees thought her mind was unsettled, and a look of deeper concern passed over his countenance.
"I—I don't understand—" he stammered.
"I did not know it till to-day—this afternoon," explained Blanche. "Her husband came here looking for her. He told me all about her. She was really married when my guardian met her."
"Then you are really his wife—she is a bigamist!" cried Father Surtees. "Oh, my dear child, this makes it all so different. There is but one Christian course open to you. He has repented more deeply than one man in ten millions. You must forgive him. He never knew what a real, pure and uplifting love meant till he married you. God Himself often puts such ordeals in the way of men to lift them above the world. If you refuse to receive the gold when it has come purified from the fire you deny the wisdom of the Almighty. Forgive your husband. He may not live through the night—remember that."

Father Surtees ceased speaking. Blanche lowered her head to the table again. The priest saw her shudder several times as if she were trying to put certain thoughts from her. At this juncture the door leading into the room where Goddard lay was softly opened. It was Dr. Randall. He advanced with a very grave face to Blanche.
"You must pardon me if I am intruding," he said to her. "But I must do my duty. I am obliged to see that Maj. Goddard is troubled about some misunderstanding with you, and as his life is really in great danger, I must appeal to you to ease his mind if it is possible. All the medical care and skill in the world cannot save him as long as he is in his present excited condition."

"Mrs. Goddard is going to him now," said the priest, speaking for Blanche.
"Yes, let me see him one moment alone," she said, her eyes filling. "I can set his mind at rest; I can and I will."
The two men remained standing where they were, and she went to the major's couch. Kneeling, she put her face against his.
"I am here, dear guardian," she said, "don't—don't worry!"
"Oh, he has not told you!" Goddard said, his eyes roving towards the adjacent room.
"Yes, he has told me everything, darling," she answered, stroking his face.
"And you can forgive me?" he asked.
"You, oh, my God!"
"Fully, dear; it shall never enter my head again."
"But you must not stay here," he said, huskily. "Oh, to think that I am obliged to send you away! Blanche, this will kill me. But now that you know the truth, you must go. God only knows what will become of me, but I deserve even greater punishment."
"I am going to stay, dear guardian. I have something to tell you. I am

your only lawful wife. I found out only this afternoon that when you married her she had a husband alive—Henry Dugdale. He was here looking for her."
She saw him catch his breath. For a moment he lay perfectly still. Then: "Oh, Blanche, is this possible?"
"It is the truth. He told me his whole story. When you are stronger I shall tell you all about it, but in the meantime remember that nothing shall separate you and me."
She saw him close his eyes. His features began to work convulsively. Tears welled up under his eyelids and oozed out on his cheeks.
"It is the blessing of God," she heard him murmur. "He has answered my prayer."
She wiped the tears from his face and kissed him. Then he opened his eyes and smiled.
"The blessing of God, darling," he said, in a louder tone.
"Will you not try to get well, now, for my sake?" Blanche asked.
"Yes, for your sake," he said, and she rose to call the doctor.
This gentleman, when he entered the room, and looked at his patient, remarked:
"He stands a fair chance of pulling through, Mrs. Goddard, and the credit will be yours. Now he must sleep."

CHAPTER XX.

A month later Maj. Goddard was enabled to move about the house and grounds with a cane. He had had the best nursing in the world, and considering the great load which had been removed from his mind it is little wonder that he did recover. The secret of the identity of his assailant was kept by Blanche, Father Surtees and the major from the other members of the household. A report had become current that the attack was made by a robber, whom Blanche and the major had met on the grounds, and who fired on them to make his escape. These three knowing ones thought it was likely Jeanne had given up her murderous plans, but for fear that she might cause further trouble, Father Surtees was making strenuous efforts to find her that he might inform her that they knew of her marriage to Dugdale.

One bright, sunny day Talley, who still lived at Lyndhurst, persuaded the major to go into the city with him to see the new bank, of which Talley was cashier and the major vice president. They had both disposed of their G. N. & W. stock at an enormous increase in value, and had invested part of their earnings in the stock of the new bank.
The major was writing some letters in his office at the bank that afternoon when the office boy announced a lady. And when the visitor entered, despite a long, heavy veil, Goddard recognized Jeanne. As the office boy withdrew she closed the door and stood with her hand on the handle.
"I see you recognize me, Rowland," she began.

"Yes, I recognize you," said the major, grown white with excitement.
"Won't you sit down?"
She took a seat opposite his revolving chair, and threw back her veil, disclosing a white, wasted face.
"I have not come as an enemy, Rowland," she said, softly.
"Oh, you have not?" he said.
"No; for I am completely in your power. I knew I was taking a big



risk; but I could not have any peace of mind till I had seen you. I have met my husband, Henry Dugdale, and he said he had told Blanche about my first marriage. I know you can hand me over to the law as a bigamist, but I don't think you will do so, considering—considering your love for Blanche. My spell over you is broken, Rowland."
"Yes, it is broken, Jeanne. I could look you in the face for a thousand years and only wonder how—"
"Don't say it," she broke in. "Let's part friends."
"After you tried to kill her—poor child?" he asked. "Jeanne, I cannot forgive that."
"I was out of my head," said Jeanne, pleadingly. "I did not intend to shoot at her till I overheard you about to confess. That maddened me. I would not have shot at you even then, if you had not run between me and her, but I have sorely repented. You see I can repent, too, Rowland. You have, and I know there is a sort of light in your face that never was

there before. Do try to pardon me, and let me go away and try to live a better life. I am so, so tired of wrong-doing. It has never led me anywhere. Henry still loves me, and will take me back to Denver, where no one will ever associate my name with yours. He says our child is longing for me. He sent me to you. He wants to feel that we will not be troubled by your preferring charges against me. Will you do this?"
"I shall be glad to, Jeanne," said the major, slowly. "I want to tell Blanche that she need no longer be afraid of you. She is very nervous. Ever since that night she starts at the slightest sound. She seems to feel that her life is constantly in danger."
"Well, tell her we are going away to-morrow. I shall never come to New York again. My husband is a good man, and he has suffered."
Jeanne rose and held out her hand.
"Good-by," she said. "I am very sorry I wounded you. When I heard you were about to die, I came near killing myself. I would have done so if Henry had not saved me. He told me you were recovering."
"Good-by." The major gave her his hand. "I think you had better draw your veil and go at once. Talley is in the counting-room, and might recognize you."
Half an hour later Blanche drove up to the bank in a cab, and remained seated in it while she sent in a message to her husband that she would wait for him outside. He came out ready to go home at once.
"I was afraid to trust you alone with Mr. Talley," she said, with a smile. "I had some shopping to do, and I decided to come by for you."
He got in by her side, and they started for the station.
"Blanche, you are fibbing," he said, seriously. "You were afraid something might happen to me. I see it in your face."
She made no denial as she caught his hand and held it warmly.
"Of what were you afraid, darling?" he asked.
"You know well enough," she answered, abruptly. "I have been nearly crazy all afternoon, thinking—thinking, oh, darling, you said yourself that she is in New York!"
"Yes; but she is going away to-morrow."
"Have you seen her?"
"Only a few minutes ago. She came to ask my forgiveness, and to beg me not to prosecute her. Her husband has taken her back. Blanche, you will never see her again."
"And you pardoned her, dear?"
"As you did me, darling. I am a better man for what I have been through, may she not be a better woman?"
"I suppose so," exclaimed Blanche. "Oh, dear, I am so happy now—that was the only thing left to trouble me."

THE END.

A Splendid Bluff.
One Jew and four reputed Christians were playing poker on an Atlantic liner. The pool was piled with 50 sovereigns. The Jew asked for two cards, and one of them was turned—the queen of diamonds. "I won't take it," he protested. "But you must," said the dealer. "I won't," said the Jew. The players all supported the dealer. "It's not fair," persisted the Jew. "I'll take my £10 out of the pool and leave the game." "You can't leave the game, but you must leave your money," was the reply. So he gave in and took the card. Only two were betting, one of whom was the Jew, who raised and raised his adversary. "But, my dear fellow, I know your hand can't be worth much—it isn't fair," said the Christian. "Well, I'll see you," was the reply. The Christian laid down four knaves. The Jew showed four queens. "But what on earth—why did you refuse the queen of diamonds?" asked the loser. "The Jew smiled pleasantly as he emptied the pool. "That is my business," he replied.—London Chronicle.

Mere Mutterings.

Character is sometimes lost before a reputation is attained.
Knowledge is what we learn. Wisdom is what we remember.
Poems and babies are alike. Their parents always think they are clever.
"Children and fools speak the truth." Is not this an attempt to put an age limit on lying?
We always look so pleasant when being photographed that it seems a shame to get the bill for the pictures.
The tender-hearted coal dealer weeps at the high price of coal. He grieves that it was so cheap last summer.
A genius never has to tell anyone he is a genius, unless he is bald. Otherwise his hair will proclaim his gifts.—Baltimore American.

From a Modern Standpoint.

A lady said the other day that she once asked her small nephew what was his duty to his neighbor. "To call upon him," was the precocious answer. On another occasion she showed the same child a picture representing the widow and her mite; the small coin was being dropped into a long hole, such as would now be called a slot. "I suppose," said the urchin, "she's got some chocolate."—Little Chronicle.



FANCY PIGEON LORE.

In England the Pouter and Fantail Breeds Are in Great Demand for the Show Rooms.

The extreme of artificial development in the pigeon family is represented in the Pouter and Fantail breeds. Although little valued in the food market, they are great favorites in the show rooms, and quite popular as pets. In some sections the interest is so great that the pigeon entries form one of the most prominent features of important poultry shows. Good strains of the fancy breeds are often very profitable on account of the steady demand for breeding stock.

The stately Pouter cock, as portrayed, was sketched from a winning bird shown in England by the well-known Scotchman and writer on pigeons, Robert Fulton. These birds have in their show cases a pedestal on which to stand that they may pose erect, this being the ideal carriage for Pouters, as the length of their tails prevents the bird from standing straight when shown on the floor of the show cage. Length and slenderness of girth are properties quite as much looked for in these birds as in the large, roundly inflated crop. The fullness in the back of the crop in this



A STATELY POUTER COCK.

Pouter was a point to which Mr. Fulton especially called my attention as being much coveted and prized by fanciers.

These birds measure from 18 to 20 inches from top of beak to tip of tail. The legs should also be long—6 to 7 inches being expected on a good bird—and to stand well up a bird requires good length of limb. It was my good fortune to see the model of the portrait of the Fantail in the lofts of his breeder, not long before the exportation to this country. The precaution which the owner took in handling this specimen while showing it to me was only a sample of the great care taken by the British fanciers in rearing the birds and training them for show purposes. The way in which the show Fantail is picked up means almost as much for the development of a well-formed and well-carried tail as does the bird's very breeding. Not a feather must be twisted or displaced, not a movement of the head restrained—for the carriage of these birds' heads is a valued point if correct, and very offensive to a judge of them if the bird is deficient in this respect. I have seen these birds so proud and strutting, so high on tiptoe, that their gait, if so it might be called, was but dancing and apparently as many steps were taken backward as forward, while scarcely a half dozen in succession were performed either way.—Franklane L. Sewall, in Farm and Home.

AMONG THE POULTRY.

The season is at hand when large broilers will be demanded. Every chick that will dress 20 or 30 ounces now should be marketed.
As warm weather approaches it is well to discard all sloppy foods, and feed only sound, dry grain, either whole or coarsely ground.
May is the season to hatch the bulk of the stock to be retained for next season's breeding or laying. Eggs are low in price and the weather is mild.
Corn meal, broken rice, milk and eggs made into mush or custards by the thrifty poultry keeper will put the finishing touches on the young birds now ripening for the spring broiler trade.
Young broods on high and dry ground are not liable to have gapes. Board floors in coops and a generous sprinkle of lime on the floor are good preventives. To cure birds already affected, place them in a box and blow amongst them so they must inhale it a powder composed of equal parts of pyrethrum and powdered gum camphor.—Farm Journal.