THE BEACON LIGHT.

BY M. T. CALDOR.

INTERNATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION.

CHAPTER VII.—(CONTINUED.)

"Have I told you how I came to fall? You see, I thought I saw a sail off on the water, and I forgot what I was about and lent forward too far. Perhaps I was right, and ye'll all get away to liberty as well as me. Ye'd better light a fire on the cliff at night if you make out the sail. Poor little Ellie, don't cry so. Tom's dreadful sorry to leave ye all so lonesome here, but we mustn't rebel ag'in the Lord, you know."

Immediately he ran off into a rambling, incoherent talk, that showed his mind was away in the little hamlet of his native town. He laughed once, and spoke his sister's name in a quick, glad way, like one who has come to a happy meeting. Only once more he spoke—this time with something of his old cheery heartiness.

"That's comforting," said he. "Oh, Mr. Vernon, how glad I am ye've come to love the Bible better'n them rhyming books. Read that again, please, sir, if ye can see for the dark."

"He thinks we are at our evening reading," whispered the awed, scarcely-breathing Walter.

Mr. Vernon looked piteously at the ashy face, and filmed, unseeing eye, and then conquering his emotion repeated solemnly the psalm "The Lord is my Shepherd." The words seemed to reach the dying ears, for a contented smile played round the pallid lips. Closer and closer drew the sorrowing group. The glassy eye was fixed now; the limbs no longer quivered; only a faint throbbing at the throat told of life. In a few moments that had ceased too. In shuddering horror Walter and Eleanor flung themselves in Mr. Vernon's arms. Folding them closely in his arms he groaned:

"God have mercy upon us—we three are left alone."

The scene that followed is too harrowing to be pictured. Anywhere, at any time, death is sad and awful enough, but there on that lonely island the strongest and stoutest taken from their little number—no tongue can describe the terrible loneliness, the wretched gloom that followed.

They made his grave beyond the spring, beneath the Hibiscus tree, and never was mound more tenderly smoothed or sorrowfully bedewed with tears than the lonely island grave of Tom Harris. It was not until the second dismal day after his death that the suggestion of Tom's came to Mr. Vernon's mind. The sail he had seen—what had become of it? Was it still in view?

Walter had been Tom's pupil in those athletic exercises that become a sailor's second nature, and was, moreover, naturally active and agile. He volunteered at once to ascend the flagstaff, although his cheek blanched and his eye studiously avoided the spot where poor Tom had fallen. Eleanor was nearly frantic at the proposal, but his father, after a few earnest words of caution, consented that he should make the attempt. It was now three days since the accident, and there had been no breeze on shore, and they had cherished the forlorn hope that if a vessel had actually been near them she could not yet have drifted from sight. Walter's face was gloomy enough as he descended. There was a faint speck on the water as far as he could see, but he did not believe it was a ship.

Mr. Vernon suddenly startled to a consciousness of the insecurity of his own life, had become morbidly anxious to leave the island. Without Tom's cheery, self-reliant nature to sustain him, he felt incapable of protecting the youthful beings Providence had left in his charge. Moreover, he had long been aware of an inward malady slowly but certainly eating away his strength. For himself he asked nothing better than a grave beside his faithful companion. For the children's sake the life on the lonesome island seemed intolerable.

"It will do no harm," said he promptly; "let us kindle a fire on the cliff every night for a week or more."

With dismal alacrity Walter and Eleanor gathered the dry underbrush and moss, and reared the pile on their pretty white coral throne, and as soon as dusk arrived, with eyes that burned feverishly enough to have kindled the pyre, Mr. Vernon plied the tinder and flint, and in a few moments the ruddy beam shot up, flashing a yellow path far off into the sea, and a rosy glow against the darkened sky. Those three anxious, terribly earnest faces and striking forms stood out distinctly and wildly in the flaring light. Even in the midst of his own harrowing suspense Walter's artist eye took in the grand sublimity of the scene, and made a mental memoranda that was thereafter to live in undying colors. The tears were silently streaming over Eleanor's cheek; Walter turned and drew her fondly to his side. It was not the time now to think of formal prudence or to refuse the sympathy so much needed.

"Oh, Walter, we are fearfully in earnest now. It seems as if we must all perish if no ship is near. Tom's death has made our island life intolerable. Think how horrible it will be to be the last one!" And, shuddering, she clung convulsively to his arm.

He stroked softly the trembling hands.

"You are exhausted with grief and nervous with excitement, Ellie. Things will look more cheerful by-and-bye. Come to the house and hear me sing the hymn my father taught us. I will rock you in my arms, my poor frightened darling, till sleep shall come; and then my father shall sleep in Tom's room, so you need not feel lonely, while I shall keep the fire blazing brightly all night. Will you try and sleep, Ellie?"

He drew her gently down the cliff into the pretty parlor that was called her room, and as he had said, took her in his arms, and sat down in the rocking-chair he himself had made for her, and in his clear, sweet voice began a low hymn. His soothing tones stilled the tumult in Eleanor's heart; the sobs ceased, the tears no longer trickled down her cheek, and presently the weary, swollen eyelids closed softly, and her quiet, regular breathing told him she slept. Laying her carefully upon the couch, Walter went back to his father, who stood with bowed head and folded arms at the foot of the cliff.

"Have you any hope, father?" he asked calmly.

"Yes, my son, the hope that depends upon prayer. Heaven knows how I have poured out my soul in petition that help may come to you. Joyfully, gladly would I propose that the price of your safety might be my own worthless life. I am content if the ship will come to take your two fresh young hearts to human companionship, though I myself may never set foot upon the land of my birth. I have so much hope, Walter."

"You talk so lightly of your life it grieves me deeply. What it has been I know not; you have never told me, but that it is now our greatest consolation and joy, I feel more deeply than words can say."

"Some time, Walter, you shall know all. Perhaps it is selfish in me that I would hide the past till the last moment. It wil not be long before you will understand everything. Go in now, and leave me to tend the fire."

"No, indeed," was Walter's decisive reply. "I am young and strong, fit for night watches. Besides, Eleanor is restless and nervous; when she wakens you can best comfort her."

The last suggestion overruled his determination, and Mr. Vernon went back to the house.

What eager eyes scanned the empty horizon when morning broke over the sea! What dispirited faces gathered round the breakfast table! What listless melancholy pervaded the whole day!

Without a word of explanation, just before nightfall, Walter went to work and gathered a fresh pile of brushwood. Mr. Vernon's head was bowed upon his hands, and he did not notice the movement; but Eleanor followed sadly, and pointing to the charred, blackened rock, said mournfully:

"It is like our hopes, our lives, Walter."

Walter's lips quivered. He would not show the weakness to her, but leaping lightly upon the rock began to arrange the wood. Heedlessly his eye fell upon the distant sea, and lo! a wild transport dashed off his black look of despair; an eager light irradiated his eagle eye.

"Saved! saved!" shouted he, reeling into the arms of the astonished Eleanor, weeping like a girl.

She thought him crazed and shrank back in terror. Recovering himself, he cried earnestly:

"The ship is there—she is coming. Oh, Ellie, we are saved!"

When Eleanor at length comprehended his meaning, she bounded forward to the rock, and satisfied that it was indeed a large ship—masts, hull and all plainly visible—she flew like a frantic creature to Mr. Vernon, and flinging her arms around his neck, sobbed herself in a transport of delight.

Walter had grown more calm, and hastened to state the joyful intelligence clearly. Mr. Vernon took their hands and solemnly lifted his eyes upward. Never came prayer more thrillingly from the innermost soul than rose on the twilight air from that lonely island.

"Now, then, we must work, Walter," said his father quietly. "Night is close at hand, and the reef is dangerous. I think you and I can get poor Tom's canoe out into smooth water and warn them from the sunken rocks. At such a time as this Eleanor will not shrink to be left alone to tend faithfully the beacon light. Our preservers must not suffer for obeying our signal of distress."

Walter was already on his way to the beach. The experience of the last few days had swept away all trace of boyishness. With the firm, elastic tread of confident manhood he dashed down to the boat. A sigh went out to the memory of him whose hand had last secured the rope of bark, but the eagle eye was fixed steadfastly on the outer sea—and this was time for action and not for lamentation. His father, with something of youth's vigor, leaped to his side, carrying a bunch of the knots they had long ago prepared for evening illumination, the flame of one among them streaming up sickly and pale in the waning daylight.

What wild, exultant hopes, what sad, bitter memories stirred those two tumultuous hearts—who shall say? But the oars were plied in silence, and silently, too, when a fresh breeze sprang up, was the little sail raised, and before the dusky wings brooding above them folded the white sails of their hope from sight, they had gained the desired station close beside the treacherous reef, and with their little torch flaring brightly over the gray ridges of leaping water, moored their tiny lighthouse as securely as possible, and waiting, gazed not at the burning stars above, but far over the sea to the flickering gleam where the unknown ship hung out her signal lamp, or back to the cliff where Eleanor tended faithfully the rosy bonfire.

Eleanor was lonely and intensely agitated, but no thrill of fear mingled with her sensations. Vigilantly and steadily she kept the blaze bright throughout the night, now straining her ear to catch a fancied hallo, now turning sadly in the direction of that new-made grave, whose cold, unconscious occupant could hear never more the glad huzza of rescue for which he hoped so long.

CHAPTER VIII.

WITH the first welcome glimpse of daylight to her weary eyes came a sound that brought her heart fluttering to her throat—a cheery shout mingled with the measured dash of oars. Eleanor threw down her torch, and sweeping back the cloud of damp curls that fell heavily over her face as she ran, she flew down the path to the little cove where the boat was kept, which was the natural inlet, since no other was free from surf or convenient for landing. A strange boat, packed closely with men, was aiming steadily for the shore. Her eager eye ran rapidly over the company to find Walter and his father. They were there in the stern, in earnest conversation with a tall officer in the lieutenant's uniform of Her Majesty's service. Eleanor stood on shore, half shy, half dignified, the early morning light playing softly around her graceful figure, the light breeze dallying with her robe of native cloth, and stirring a golden sunshine of their own among her curls.

"A romantic picture, truly," said Lieutenant Harry Ingalls, looking admiringly upon the beautiful girl, half child, half woman, poised there upon the rock as lightly as a bird, fit ideal of the tropic loveliness of the whole scene. "By my sword, one might believe yonder was another Aphrodite freshly risen from the foam. It were worth treble the voyage the 'Hornet' has made to rescue and return so fair a flower to England's generous heart. In truth, young sir, I have done pitying you for this long exile. In faith, I should ask nothing better myself with so fair a companion."

He turned his gay blue eye to Walter merrily, but a frown was on the latter's forehead, and his looks were bent gloomily upon the water, and it was his father who answered quietly, just a little reprovingly:

"We have endeavored to do our duty faithfully toward one so gentle and good, especially never to forget amidst the unavoidable familiarity of circumstances the probable high birth and elevated position of the young lady. The same respect and delicacy, I trust, will be observed by all others, until she is safely under the protection of her own relatives."

The young officer colored a little, and replied frankly:

"You need have no fear of me, my good sir. I trust a British sailor knows what is due to his own character, as well as what is required by a beautiful woman in need of his protection. Our queen herself could not be more honorably dealt with than will this young lady on board our ship. Come, boys, bend to it steadily—a long pull a stron pull, and a pull all together," he added, turning his eyes away from the shore.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HOW IT STARTED.

Another Case of "How Those Girls Do Love One Another."

Pinkey—How lovely! I see you have one of those splendid new Nonesuch bikes.

Ethel—Yes, isn't it a dear? What make do you ride?

Pinkey—Oh, I ride a Scorchem.

Ethel—They're magnificent.

Pinkey—Yes, so light and durable.

Ethel—How much does your wheel weigh?

Pinkey—Twenty-two pounds.

Ethel—Twenty-two pounds? Why, mien only weighs twenty-one.

Pinkey—But then yours, you know, is not so durable.

Ethel—The Nonesuch not durable? Why, that is admitted by everyone.

Pinkey—Nonesuch! A friend of mine bought one and it went to pieces in a month.

Ethel—I don't believe it.

Pinkey — What? You don't believe me?

Ethel—No, I don't. One Nonesuch will outlast a dozen Scorchems. They're the worst looking rattle traps I ever laid eyes on.

Pinkey (furiously)—You're a horrid, contemptible thing, and I hope you'll never speak to me again!

Ethel (complacently)—Don't worry, I wouldn't compromise myself by speaking to anyone who rode a Scorchem.

Worse.

"There's a rumor in the congregation," said the deacon, "that you went slumming when you were in Albany." "It is a cruel slander," replied the parson. "I merely attended one meeting of a legislative investigating committee."—Truth.

Hard Times at Monte Carlo.

Heavy players are scarce at Monte Carlo and profits are decreasing.

THE TWO BRIDALS.

I CAN laugh grimly at the world, wrote Kyrle Harding in his prison dairy. I am leaving it tomorrow. I shall be hanged by the neck till I am dead. Once I would have called the prospect ghastly—in the days when my blood was buoyant and generous, and I was filled with the passion of gallant living. But now the zest of life is gone. It has bored me and left me spiritual nausea. I have lived too much; lived at too high a pitch and strain. I was too high-handed and free-headed for the world. I am sick of it. And I will die contented. Pshaw! I am mad. What of poor Ethel? I write wildly. She makes life still dear.

Life!—I look back upon some brilliant and dashing hours of it. I go back—far back. Down in Kelvin five years ago what a royal rage there was when Mrs. Whymper came amongst us! How she stirred our quiet little seaside place; she was so bold, so bewitching, so unconventional! Ah! how—But wait awhile; let me dwell on the beauty and illusion of the first stage. I wonder how many lovers she had! A score, probably. I was only 18 then, and decidedly, I was the most reckless of any. She was, I admitted, nearly twice my age, but in my fever and fascination that, I think, was only an added charm to a wealth of charms. The pride of winning her, the thought of a mere youth carrying her off from the run of gallantly equipped competitors in the field appealed with a brave force to my conceited boyhood. What a wooing was mine! How my kind aunt and guardian was distracted. What womanly warnings she gave me against the flighty widow! Poor aunt; I believe I drove her to her grave. Mayhap it was well—before she knew the worst.

But I won Mrs. Whymper. The bold sea throbbed in the moonlight that night by the quiet shore, when I listened with enraptured senses to her lovely avowal of love. She was a charming picture there, by the beating and love-murmurous water, whither we had wandered. I can recall the whole picture, the brooding sky beyond the reaches of the sea, the hills at the back, the lights of the little town in the distance, and nearer—and how dearer!—the love-confessing beauty before me. O, mad and memorable night!

Ours was a runaway match—and a sensation it was, beyond all doubt. Our whereabouts were unknown, but that did not spoil the dramatic interest of the situation, it is needless to say. I read in an enterprising paper the whole story of the romance the very evening of our wedding in the distant seaport whither I had proudly borne my bride. What an eve that was! Even yet the glamour of the impression hangs around me, lives within me, and mocks me. The depths of poetry and passion within us are unknowable, but mine was stirred to a wonderful deep that evening. Illusive time!

The spell was soon over. A few days, and my wife was tired of it. The fever had passed. She took little pains then to disguise from me how old and worn in reality she was, and how deeply she had deceived me. I saw that I wearied her, that she thirsted again for the conquering plane she had left. When

"I HAVE COME TO YOUR WEDDING."

she went abroad she was all charm again, and seeming joyous young womanhood, for she was an adept in the arts of deception. The transformation she could accomplish was simply marvelous. In the new town she made another sensation, and won a troop of admirers who made the life of her boy husband intolerable. Wit, coquetry, flash and fascination abroad, weariness, ennui, nausea in the privacy of home—the gods know it was a horrible time for me.

For two years I lived in indescribable misery. After the first year the arts of my wife to beautify herself grew vain. She could no longer conceal from the outside world the dreaded story of age, and attraction's death. As the bitter realization of her fate grew upon her, a deadly rage, a hideous spell took possession of her, and a season dragged on when foul days were ours. I became degraded and shamed in my own eyes; a sickliness came between me and all the world's light; ambition, faith, and all things noble died within me.

One night my whole spirit of endurance died. There was a passionate scene, and a struggle over which I draw a veil. I left my wife wounded and I knew beyond hope of recovery. I fled far into the country.

Months passed. I had secured a secretaryship in a growing town by wild and distant but boldly picturesque hills. A winter passed, and spring came, and with its green unfolding my heart lightened and expanded, too. I had got but meager details of my wife's fate from the local papers. She recovered from her wound, but a drink-mania seized her, and her condition became deplorable. She still persisted in her favorite habit of rowing. Even in intoxicated stages she would take her little boat, and put out into the waters. One evening the empty boat was found drifting in the bay. "She carried her daring one stage too far," said the townsfolk, and then with sorry humor, "she was not one that loved water for its own sake; yet it has given her a grave." Then I heard no more news from the old place. I wanted no more. I tried to bury its memory.

With the green unfolding of spring, as I have said, my heart and my life expanded. Up among the mountains, in the prettiest of cottages, I came to know one who brought back all the delightful fever of the fine young world. Ethel Wilson was 18, an only child, and the tenderest flower in that in somewise primitive mountain land. A wild thrill runs through me as I recall our dear, gracious evenings in the little flower-garden fronting the cottage, or on the bold mountain road that ran beside it. The summer grew, and May, and June made a glowing and holy setting to our love. After a lurid, fiend-haunted night I had awakened in the sacred flush of songful morning. Ah, Ethel, Ethel!

Memorable memories arise of the wedding morning when we sped away to the lake country. Lovely memories come of that glorious stroll in the gathering night, and the return to our hotel, like a return into Eden. Hallowed times of tenderness, fringed with peace—though peace, as the stars peeped out in a shining setting to our wedding joys, was a little pensive.

Ethel had gone for a moment to the inner room, and I watched the fair prospect from the window of the other. Ah, I was full of the passion and rapture of a new, full-hearted life.

Suddenly there were heavy steps on the landing, the door was thrown open quickly, and with a rude, accursed laugh Mrs. Whymper—as I always called her—staggered in. Her face told a melancholy story of drink and degradation.

"Ha!" she said, in the malignant note I can never describe; "you see I have come to your wedding."

I have but a vague memory of the ensuing scene, with the blackness and the madness that came over me. One thing only will I say in my own justification. My deepest rage arose at the thought of the position in which I had placed poor Ethel. Heaven knows I was innocent of the shadow of an intent to wrong her. How was I to know that my first wife had been rescued? I had seen no later papers from the old place. I had had no tidings, and wanted none.

As Ethel returned to the room, white-faced and terror stricken, I had struck Mrs. Whymper her death blow. * * * And so I die tomorrow. Dear, dear Ethel, but for you, how gladly I would leave the wounding world! Ha! She comes. It is the hour of our last interview. Now the gods give me true endurance.

* * * * * * *

Kyrle Harding was wrong. The visitor then was not Ethel. It was the messenger with the tidings of reprieve. "Penal servitude for life" was to be his fate.

"They will release you yet—after years, after years!" sobbed Ethel, a few days later, as she sobbed farewell; "but Kyrle, I will watch and wait with a brave heart." * * * That was many a year ago. Today they are pensively happy in distant Australia.

W. P. R.

Some Beresford Stories.

A laborer once wrote to Lord Charles Beresford saying that his wife had just had twins—a boy and a girl—and he wanted to call one "Lord Charles Beresford Brown" and the other "Princess of Wales Brown." Lord Charles gave his permission, and obtained that of the Princess. Four months later the man wrote again: "I am happy to inform you that 'Lord Charles Beresford Brown' is well and strong, and that 'Princess of Wales Brown' died this morning."

Lord Charles is a man of few words, and those very much to the point. In the house of commons one day, speaking in reference to the Arab slave dealers, he said, with great emphasis: "Mr. Speaker, we ought to catch these men, give them a fair trial and then hang 'em."

Unconventional Lord Charles has always been. Receivng an invitation to dinner at Marlborough House one evening, he replied by wire:

"Sorry can't come. Lie follows by post."—Strand Magazine.

A Diplomat of Ability.

Young Bankclerk—"Mr. Richman, I have called to tell you that I have taken the liberty to——"

Mr. Richman (interrupting)—"Yes, yes; I know! You have taken the liberty to fall in love with my daughter and now you've come for my consent to marry her. Well, you can't have her! You'll have to excuse me now, I'm busy."

Young Bankclerk—"Excuse me, sir, but you're mistaken. I wanted to say that I took the liberty to keep up the margin on that D., L. & X. stock, which you bought yesterday. It dropped eight points about an hour ago, but it has recovered since and is now four points above the figure at which you bought it. I'd advise you to sell."

Old Richman—"My boy, I've intended my daughter for you all along. Now close that deal. Take a month's vacation and whenever you happen to need money draw on me."

Young Bankclerk (outside)—"Good thing he never reads the papers and pretends that he doesn't speculate. Otherwise he'd be sure to find out that that stock never dropped a point."—Cleveland Leader.

A large aerolite recently exploded above the city of Madrid at 9:30 a. m. "There was a vivid glare of light and a loud report," says Science. "Buildings were shaken and many windows were shattered. According to the officials of the Madrid observatory, the explosion occurred twenty miles above the earth."

Mackerel a la Italiene.

An Italian fashion for cooking fresh mackerel is to make a dressing from a tablespoonful of butter, mixed with a little minced shallots, parsley and the green tops of young onions. Spread this on the fish, wrap them well in strong white paper, saturated with olive oil, and boil or bake them in a quick oven. Garnish them with lemon and parsley. Sweet peas, seasoned with shallot and minced parsley, are also sometimes served with fresh mackerel. Salt mackerel is very good cooked after the English fashion, that is, by immersing it half an hour in water containing a handful of fennel and dash of vinegar. Drain and serve with hot gooseberry sauce.

Too Late to Mend.

There is a point beyond which medication cannot go. Before it is too late to mend, persons of a rheumatic tendency, inherited or acquired, should use that benignant defense against the further progress of the super-tenacious malady—rheumatism. The name of this proven rescuer is Hostetter's Stomach Bitters, which, it should also be recollected, cures dyspepsia, liver complaint, fever and ague, debility and nervousness.

To Suit Any Weather.

A pretty, yet servicable gown, which was imported lately, would suit any kind of ordinary weather. It was mad in moss-green canvas, lined with a bright shade of pink. The tight-fitting basque bodice had long, square revers of white satin, over which fell cascades of coffee-colored lace, and the vest, of white chiffon, was also veiled with lace. Pink ribbon encircled the waist and the neck, which was finished with pointed motifs of lace.

Hall's Catarrh Cure

Is a constitutional cure. Price, 75c.

The Reason Why.

Party with Demijohn—Why don't you lay in a stock of whisky for Sunday on Saturday night, the same as I do?

Other Party—Man alive, do you suppose I would be able to sleep if I knew there was whisky in the house? I'd be walking the floor the whole night.—Truth.

Hegeman's Camphor Ice with Glycerine. The original and only genuine. Cures Chapped Hands and Face, Cold Sores, &c. C. G. Clark Co., N. Haven, Ct.

An Eloquent speech.

A pretty little story is told about Mrs. A. A. Johnson, the dean of Oberlin college. It is said she never leaves American soil without carrying with her a silken American flag. At a dinner party in Germany on one occasion the host asked each of the ladies present what in her country she was most proud of. Mrs. Johnson could not speak German very fluently, but a happy thought striking her she left the table for a moment and returned with an American flag, which she waved while all applauded.

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