

Saturday's Story

A Woman's Prayer.

God grant thee strength, sweetheart,
today,
To bear thy pain.
I do not for tomorrow pray—
Each day is gain.

It is not much for which I ask,
Nor selfish prayer,
Just life itself, a single day,
Oh, Father, spare!

And yet—my woman's heart rebels
Against the word,
And silenced not by fear or shame
Will yet be heard.

Not for one day, Thou Pitiful,
But all the years
Grant him renewed rejoicing strength
To mock my fears.

Nor this alone I ask for him,
But every day,
All blessings that Thy love may hold—
For this I pray.

—D. G.

AGAINST THE TIDE.

In Three Parts. Part II.

[Summary of Part I. "Baby Dick," a homely, fragile, peculiar child, grows up to an eccentric young manhood, full of half-formed noble ideals toward whose realization he often starts, only to be soon diverted to some other line of thought and action. The daughter of the village "oil king" falls in love with him, but finding her affection unrequited, turns against him, and with her father's assistance seeks through the latter's newspaper to make life a burden to the irresponsible youth.]

For our Baby Dick, despising as he did the great ones of the earth, yet found himself one of them for a brief space. He discovered a thing at last which seemed worth doing with the enthusiastic impulse of his fiery, young spirit. No halting midway after he had once thought of the plan. No stopping to consider whether it were quite worth while! Humanity is the evident aim of the world. All forces of nature and mind culminate in the glorious creature, man, and efforts made toward raising his condition could not be without avail. At last Richard had found an end worthy of himself. He felt the genius force warm and glow in his veins, he felt the power rise within him to lead men in wonderful new paths of right-living. John and I, listening, never doubted that he would succeed, although we were uncertain regarding the simply justice of the plan.

The last two years Richard was in school he studied a good deal of philosophy and social questions generally. Strangely enough, he found the solution offered for his observation quite unsatisfactory. He had gone to the college to learn, not to find other

upon him that filled his thoughts waking and dreaming. He would take these great thinkers by the hand and learners. A mighty ambition came lead them into the paths of learning. Abstract theory may be all very well in its way, but it leads absolutely nowhere. The bottomless wells of wisdom are deep and great, but they do not refresh the wearied traveler. Great wrongs existed, that crime flourished was proof of these wrongs. The mould upon the fair branches of learning must be cut off by the pruning knife. The tottering structure of society must be pulled down and a fair new edifice erected. But since he could not find a body of helpers to work together upon this new plan, since each insisted on building his own little house of blocks and any attempt to reach heaven only brought forth the confusion of Babel, he, too, would work alone upon his project.

A few years more he studied at the school, no longer to learn how to build, but how not to build. He would profit by the failure of others. John allowed him to do as he pleased; after all, this folly of his was a harmless one and who could tell but it would lead to something. And, sure enough, he was offered a chair in one of the new branches that people make so much of nowadays. But he refused it.

There were plenty to teach, he said, and few to following the teaching. Too many captains and too few soldiers. Let others talk, he would work. And so he worked steadily toward his plan. He wrote a book about it. Not in the delightfully careless style of that summer romance long ago, but steadily, fiercely inflexible.

He toiled by day and far into the night, not only over his books filled with dead men's hopes and failures, but among living people as well. He went down across the river in the college city and studied their habits. Oh, it was a fascinating search, no doubt, and baffling to his scientific investigation. Whoever starts out to study mankind ends by giving this subject a deeper interest than ever a student gives in any other field. He started out to coolly study misery, he ended by pitying the sufferer, and he was not content to stop without relieving him. He gained a certain amount of toleration from the people among whom he worked—a great advance to make in the affections of the poor. But the final point of his intuition was not the poor. No, not the poor, for many were working in their behalf. The philosophers, the state, the church, and even God himself were on the side of the poor. But every man's hand was raised against the criminal. They could not be killed off, civilization would not permit it, therefore they must be educated. This was not the work of one generation, perhaps, but it must be taken up at once. A herculean task, but he never shrank. He depended upon the Plan, which was briefly thus:

Criminals do not come, as a rule, from long lines of educated ancestors. Heredity, then, is something. But environment, he held, to be more. Shall those, therefore, with heredity against them, have environment against them, too. Society may not cut off the drags upon it,—perhaps this would be best,—but it can take the children of criminals and educate them in a state institution, for the loss of moral sense is as pitiful as the loss of physical sense. A simple enough plan, but as Richard told it you saw visions of shining cities, and happy homes, and heard a song of perfect concord arising over the land. He was a first-rate talker and could have made his fortune lecturing.

But he made a mistake. He did not lay the Plan before the learned professors who would have listened amicably and doubted. Instead he went down across the river into the hot-bed of anarchists and told the people there. And such was the personality of the boy that they hung upon his words in bitter silence. They hated the truth, but they accepted it.

You may not believe me, but he wrought great reforms among those people. He was a little cautious about revealing the full plan at first. He lectured on music and art and only occasionally upon social reforms, and he said nothing at all about killing off the obnoxious growth of criminals. The daily papers derided him, but they had no tangible accusation to bring against him as yet. He had done no positive harm worth mentioning. The good results they overlooked. News-

papers are for the sake of reforming evils, anything in the nature of advertising must be paid for.

Once, when I was in the city on a visit, I went to hear him lecture. Down past the gas factory—it was a sickening place, I do not know how people can believe in heaven when they live across the street from a gas factory, perhaps they do not—past the neat cottages of the workingmen who labored from choice on to the tumbled down shanties of those who worked from necessity; and then I came to the high, narrow buildings, essentially foreign.

Children with smallpox marks on their faces ran out to meet me and cry, "hello," and when I responded with the same popular salutation, they ran swiftly back to the house as if they had met an adventure. The sidewalks, where there were any, lacked half their planks. The streets were muddy and the houses grimy. The faces of the children were dirty, their clothing torn. And this was where Richard worked, our Baby Dick, who had never gone a day without his bath. And he loved these people! I held my skirts higher. Smallpox was a nasty thing, I shouldn't like to sweep up any germs.

When I reached the hall and saw Richard high on the platform, his face aglow with excitement and answering sympathy in the upturned faces around in the great hall, I liked them better. They had souls, after all. Perhaps they even had a moral code of their own. I wished my linen collar were not so glaringly clean. And after several hundred pairs of eyes had looked me over in several hundred ways, and remarks had been made about me in various foreign tongues, I began to wish I had not worn any collar at all. I should have felt more at home in that crowd without one.

Richard took those people right to his heart. He told them how people were influenced by their surroundings. He said that on the wild stormy evenings when the bare trees bent and shivered and the wind whistled across the bridge and down the long streets, then he could write the best—at those times his heart cried out for his people, some of them cold and homeless, and he sent forth his appeals for them among mankind. So environment, he said, was all powerful. Especially when there was black blood to begin with, when the force of heredity had already brought impulses of crime to the baby heart; then children must be torn from their environment, torn from the breasts which nourished them and carried away from the daily struggle with the waves onto the shores of safety.

"There is no place now," said he, "but shall we not demand this school, even a home of luxury where children with the taint of criminal blood shall be transformed into the most cultured in the land?"

There was a little grumbling among the crowd, a few went away, thus branding themselves, in the eyes of the rest, as criminals. In the corner was a slender blue-eyed girl who wrapped her ragged shawl more closely about her baby and shrank farther back into the corner. She gazed with frightened, fascinated eyes upon the speaker. He made his final appeal. He, who was not even sure of heaven, made use of its holy name in so convincing a manner that some in that hardened audience turned away paled visibly.

"I call down the God of judgment upon you," he cried out, with his hands raised on high, "if you shall let the child of the criminal grow up to be a curse to society and a torment to himself. Death, as he sleeps innocently in his little cradle today, would be a thousand times less fearful than the life that lies before him."

The blue-eyed girl turned toward the door. Never until the day of judgment shall I forget the look of terror in her face. She threw back her shawl and silently held out the baby for me to see, the prettiest creamy-skinned baby imaginable, with dark lashes falling on his round cheeks—then she turned sobbing away.

I told Richard of her as we walked home together. He laughed a little and said that she haunted the meetings. Several women came, but he thought they shouldn't. It was rather a place for men, especially when social questions were under discussion. I spoke of the girl's resemblance to Amy. They would have probably been even more alike under similar conditions. Their stations in life were or-

iginally much the same, no doubt, but Amy's father had moved into a bigger house and hired a music teacher for his children.

Richard was tired out the next day and slept late. He went out about noon, but soon returned, carrying a paper to his room, where he remained until late in the evening. He went out hurriedly, I knew he was to speak before a crowd of workingmen at one of the suburbs, but I could see no reason for the excitement of his manner. His audience would be composed of workingmen of the more conservative sort, who would listen calmly to his views.

I called after him to know what was the matter. He turned around quietly and answered me.

"A man insulted me this morning, and I don't know but he was right."

Then he walked away straight and defiant into the outer world. That was always the way with out family, we could meet opposition better than praise.

I went up and got the paper. Then I knew what was the matter. There it was in glaring headlines. It was that girl. She had killed her baby. She took it out to the penitentiary for her husband to see in the afternoon. People said he was not a bad sort of fellow; he had killed his man openly and lives are not held high in the Italian quarter. His wife was an American girl of the more emotional type. And she had killed her baby. It made me turn sick for a minute as I thought of how close she had held the child the day before. When she went home from the penitentiary she sang to the baby and rocked it gently to sleep, and then, they said, she must have smothered it as it lay sleeping. "He would have grown up bad," she said, simply.

And she seemed surprised when the police came and arrested her.

CLARA M. GLOVER.
(To be Continued.)

Social Life of the Army and Navy.

The army and navy constitute a distinctive element of American society, and the wives and daughters of the officers, whether from the homage due to arms or on account of their personal attractions, everywhere elicit attention and admiration. Their lives, however, are not altogether enviable; in the navy separations are long and frequent, and in both branches of the service there is the ever-present danger of death or injury to loved ones. Waldon Fawcett, in an article in *The Delineator for March*, describes at length the social life of the army and navy, and the illustrations, showing well-known officers and their wives, and scenes and events familiar to the men of the army and navy are a delightful accompaniment to the paper.

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