THE GAMBLER'S WIFE.

Can a woman hinder fate? And could I hinder or stop the tide of love which came into my heart for Allen Shaye? Did I not know the man as well, better than those who warned me against him? If he was in the wrong, then so much more the need of a love, as strong as death, to set him right. How could I throw from me that which had been sent to save my life, and, above all, how could I turn from him, since every step had so created the distance which might be between us for all eternity?

Once, just once, he doubted me. He thought that friends were trying to make a breach between us, and in the heat of his most passionate love for me. Anger, intense anger, was the impression when in his blazing eyes and the fierce reproach upon his haughty lips, as he faced me the first time he ever frowned upon me in all my life.

"Can you have given me over like [illegible] of them?" I thank you," he said in his haughty tones.

"What do you mean, Allen?"

"I mean that the one who loves you should be one which shall take you [illegible] and he must be brave enough to [illegible] for it will."

I sprang up and covered both his quivering lips with both my hands.

"Don't say it, Allen," I cried; "I can't, I can't. Oh, do keep back those hard words."

He caught me in his arms, and crushed into tears.

"I believe I am a man break [illegible] and I never want [illegible] to see my weakness with [illegible] that I know that how [illegible] I know then.

"When he was quiet he made me promise my faith and with my hand [illegible] heaven, swear I would [illegible] for him. In spite of all that [illegible] might say. I was glad [illegible] and when afterward [illegible] with his hand clasping mine [illegible] said, 'And for by thee, [illegible] is my portion to be my helpmate [illegible] though his terrible earnest [illegible] and my silver a little. I was [illegible] that we were past all [illegible] forever.

We were married soon after and our life began together. I knew well enough what mine would be. I had [illegible] path full of soft, fragrant flowers. It would be a fearful, if not a long struggle, likely both. [illegible] I must turn the current of [illegible] life, or we should go [illegible] together. No earthly power could [illegible] now. But I was happy in the great love I bore him, and he never once faltered.

For a month after our marriage he [illegible] regularly his apparent [illegible] a kind jack in a well [illegible] but I know oh, pity! that his [illegible] was far removed [illegible] as honorable as that [illegible] to return later, on [illegible] charge, and sometimes [illegible] would strike without [illegible] him.

[illegible] I felt that I would [illegible] up until he came, [illegible] that I might thus have more [illegible] him. My business was [illegible] Nothing was too hard [illegible] I might but reach the goal [illegible]

[illegible] I began to return late, [illegible] grew a haggard look [illegible] which was beautiful to [illegible] only too well, what [illegible] I tried to be [illegible] when he came, I was [illegible] make any allusion to [illegible] the hour. It would [illegible] him. We set down to supper [illegible] I persisted in having it [illegible] alone, and though [illegible] his eyes all many and [illegible] who looked at me [illegible] a way of doing, he [illegible] thoughts, and I [illegible] while I [illegible] his words.

[illegible] a cruel thing for a woman [illegible] to be fond of her boys going [illegible] but surely before her [illegible] and she powerless to [illegible] I had endured once, how [illegible] all treated wives, whose [illegible] were scarcely fit to live, [illegible] them; but although Allen was [illegible] and kind with me, [illegible] and now, by my own [illegible] I was day been every [illegible] than separation.

A year went by and no visible change, but the constant anxiety [illegible] upon my face. I wanted to keep [illegible] back, but I could not [illegible] noticed it, and among them [illegible] that had taken my dear [illegible] place. She had never liked my husband, and at the anniversary of [illegible] she came in a solemn [illegible] to inquire into matters, as she termed it.

"You are looking poorly, my child," she said, opening the subject at once. "Your marriage is, perhaps, unhappy."

"There could not be a kinder husband than Allen," my face flushed in [illegible] "He had never spoken a harsh word to me."

"Something has worn you to a shadow, she went on, ignoring my [illegible] and we all know that [illegible] what he ought to be."

"That was once, than any who should know rightly," I rose at once.

"Such wrong must neither be [illegible] to his wife, nor spoken under his roof," I said angrily.

"My house is open to you, never [illegible]," he caught with her keen eyes, which I hated because I feared them upon my face.

"My home is where my heart is," I retorted. "I desire no other," and with that our interview closed.

Allen heard in some way that my aunt had called, and he would not be satisfied until I had told him her errand words.

"She is right," he said bitterly. "You would be far better off under her roof than under mine."

"I know he did it only to try me, for he did not let the shade of a fear that I should choose my home away from him.

"'Do not think it to tell her so,' I quickly replied.

"'But you believe it?' 'You believe it, then?'

His breath seemed to stop with the intensity of his desire to read what was really in my heart, and he would have wrenched the truth from me where ever it had been.

"'No, I did not believe it, Allen,' I responded quietly, pausing and answering the questioning doubt which for the moment had leaped into his eyes. 'Wherever you are taking me to, your own aunt tells you I am your [illegible], and must from choice follow.'

"'You are a good, true angel,' he said, with a [illegible] [illegible] overcome me with a strong man's strength; he did not, alas! love me well enough to leave a gambler's den which was fast drawing him to ruin.

Another year went by, another year of anxious dread and sorrow, and still another year was added to it, and all that love could suggest or ingenuity invent, had failed in accomplishing my purpose. I was forced to acknowledge this and the attitude alone made me tremble. Was I indeed then, to go down with this man to whom I was bound by all the ties which can bind one human heart to another, down to an endless perdition? Or could I break the cord and let him drift on alone? Drift on, out in the lonesome, boundless sea which swallows up its victims so piteously, and leaves no sign?

"No, no," I cried, with my hands clasped over my horror stricken eyes to shut out the picture which my imagination so vividly portrayed.

The fourth year after my marriage four years seems like an eternity to travel such a road as I had been travelling. Allen came home at dusk, and while I wondered what had come over him to bring up the new and astonishing exultation which I saw upon his face, he led me into the library and stopped before a painting of myself, which had been one of my wedding presents from him.

"Four years ago that was an exact likeness of my wife," he said "she has changed since then."

"But little, I trust," I answered.

"She became my wife freely," he went on, "knowing well that I was what the world calls, truly enough, a wicked man."

"Always good to me," I cried, through my tears, laying my hand trustingly in his.

"Always good to you, my love, since he thought more of his chosen one than of your peace and pleasure. But the wife who loved me, thank heaven, and who has stood bravely by me, has conquered at last, for a year I have been a free man, free and honest, and this is my New Year's present to you, love and trust of all women."

I was sobbing in his arms, so thankful and happy I thought heaven itself must have fallen too my fest. Our little child, who is fast getting towards teens, would never believe that his father had been other than the best of men, as, indeed, I hardly would myself.

I am thankful every day of my life I listened to my own heart's prompting, instead of the counsel of those who meant, I know, to help me, but who would have ruined us both, had their wishes been fulfilled.

ST JOHN, N B, BURNED OUT

St John, N B, June 20 This afternoon, at half past two, a fire broke out in McLoughlin's boiler shop, Portland A strong north westerly wind was blowing at the time, and in an incredibly short space of time the flames burst out, carrying with them hundreds of houses, stores and lumber yards The fire spread rapidly toward the business portion of St John, leaving a clear area of two streets of buildings Dock street, Market Square, the whole of Prince William street Water street, south side, and Park, north side, King street, King's Square, Germain, Canterbury, Princess, Duke, Leinster, Charlotte, Orange street, the whole of the lower ends Hazelet, Sydney and Carmarthen streets, portions of Wentworth and Pitt streets in fact the entire city south of King street, including wharves and shipping. Among the public buildings destroyed are the new Post Office, valued at $300,000, Custom House, Victoria Hotel, Academy of Music, Dramatic Lyceum, Royal Hotel, Bank of New Brunswick, Maritime Bank, agencies of Banks of Montreal and Nova Scotia, Savings' Bank, Victoria School house, Grammar School, Trinity Church, St Andrew's Church, Centenary Church, German street Methodist Church, City Hall, Water Commissioners' Office, banking houses of Simeon Jones & Co, Geo Phelps and Macmillan & Co, Western Union Telegraph offices, *Daily Telegraph* newspaper, offices of *Daily News*, *Globe*, *Freeman* and *Watchman* newspapers, news room, all insurance offices, Ritchie's building, law offices. Among the leading business houses destroyed are those of Daniel & Boyd, Richard Thompson, John W Nicholson, Jas Domville & Co, George F Smith, Everitt & Butler, J & W G Harrison, Hall & Fairweather, Turnbull & Co, Magee Bros, Stewart & White, Jas Manson, J & J Hogan & Co, Watts & Turner, Eastern Express Office, H Chubb & Co, Thos Furlong, Harrington Bros, George S Deforest, George Stewart, jr, Logan & Lindsay, Thos H Hall, Landry & Co, Wm Thomson & Co, Andre, Cushing & Co, Guy Stewart & Co, Scammell Bros, E D Stewart & Co, police office. In fact every wholesale and nearly all the retail houses were destroyed The only bank saved was the Bank of British North America. The Western Union Telegraph Office only saved the instruments and books. Several schooners and large vessels were burnt to the water, refugees with goods and household wares readily sought the flames and were consumed The fierce wind drove the flames to the south and east and destroyed everything they met until they reached the edge of the water Five men and two infants are now known to have lost their lives, and many are missing. The loss is estimated at from ten to fifteen million dollars, and the insurance will not, it is thought, exceed six millions. Thousands of people wander about the streets homeless in despair. The destruction of provisions of all kinds seems to point to famine, and relief must come in specdily, or many must perish from want. Few saved even their clothes. The fire is still raging, and no hope is entertained of extinguishing it until it has exhausted itself for want of material to keep it alive. The wind has died down, but the fire still burns fiercely. The gas works are destroyed, and the remainder of the city is in darkness. The area burned is nearly two hundred acres.

THE INSURANCES.

In the absence of definite information, the insurance companies can give no idea of the amount of their losses. The Chinese admiral losing heavily, and if the telegrams so far received be correct, they estimate their losses to approximate 500,000. The Royal Canadian is a heavy loser, but for what amount is not known. The National and Stadacona also are heavy losers. The Kingston companies are said to have very heavy losses at St. John, but they cannot give even an estimate of the amount of their losses. The Quebec and Montreal companies are also

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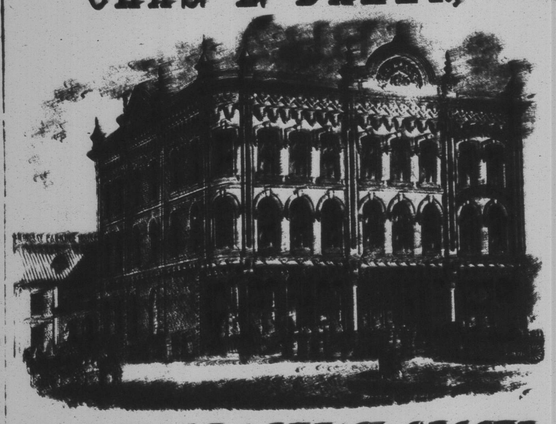

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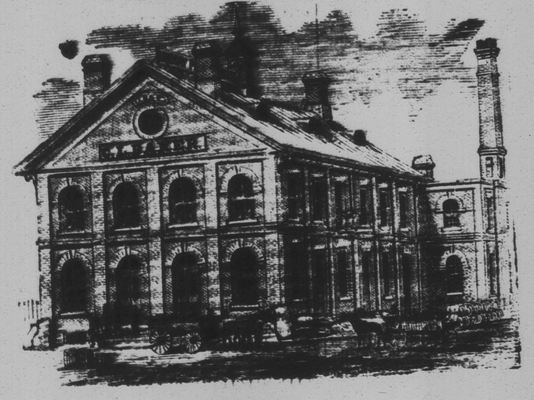

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