

AS FORTUNE SMILES.

A TALE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

CHAPTER I.

It was a pretty face.

It was a pretty, smiling girlish face.

The big, blue eyes laughed at him from underneath the pink-flowered cotton sun-bonnet; a smile danced over the dimpled cheeks, and drew apart the kissable lips. A provoking face—he came very nigh saying to himself, a cheeky little face—and yet he was in love with it already.

He was a handsome young fellow, tall and straight. These shoulders of his would, in time, broaden, and that chest would expand hugely, but, just then, he was as thin as a rat and as lithe as a panther.

His dark eyes flashed with conscious pleasure, and he twisted and twirled, with a brown hand, a little moustache in which he seemed to take a youthful pride. His face, dark as a berry with healthful exposure to the sun, wind, and rain, fairly beamed at the girl, and he shook the wavy mane which fell over his shoulders, as in playful chiding.

She had folded her rounded arms across her breast, and, in doing so, the sleeves of her cotton gown had turned up just a trifle, and showed the parts which the sun had not touched, pink and rosy. No corset trammelled that supple form; her limbs had as free play as was accorded to the creatures of earth or heaven.

He, who had been nurtured among the dreary luxuries and the ghastly refinement of society civilization, had never thought woman half as lovely as he now adjudged the free-born daughter of the mountains of the west.

"Then you're not afraid to be here all alone, like that?" he asked.

She looked at him with a mocking puzzled inquiry.

"Afraid?" she asked, "Afraid of what?"

"If your father leaves you here alone like that," the young man continued, "all sorts of things may happen. There are some mighty bad men about this neighborhood, I can tell you, and they might carry you off and make no bones about it."

He looked, at that moment, as if he would have dearly liked to be one of those bad men, and as if he would have made no bones about it, had he not been heartily afraid of that frail beauty.

She burst into a laugh like the ripple of silvery chiming.

"Bad men!" she exclaimed, with her arms akimbo swaying her body by slightly inclining it to the right, and turning up her witching blue eyes at him. "Bad men!" she repeated; "I reckon that's shucks on 'em, an' no small game, neither. That's Yutaw Bill. He blowed the top of a man's head off week after last at the Creek; an' his pardner, Blotface Frenchy, he's bin strung up twice, an' Bill cut him down agin each time. Bad men! I reckon they don't make 'em much badder than them two."

"And aren't you afraid of them?" the young man asked, with just a troubled vibration in his voice.

She laughed again, at her brightest.

"Afraid of 'em?" she exclaimed. "Why, they're afraid of 'em."

If the young lady had read the story of Hercules and Omphale, and had felt herself transported into a mythological age to play the part of the Lydian queen, she could not have more derided the thought of danger coming to her from the wild men whom her fairy beauty enslaved.

"Why, look hear, stranger," she continued, "I can twist 'em around my little finger—jest like that." With that, she twiddled the corner of her apron and tied it into a knot. Then she put her little finger into the round hollow formed underneath the ball of the apron corner, and, holding it up, shook it with its projecting little cotton point at the young man. "That's Yutaw Bill," she exclaimed, "an' that's what I'd do with him if he sarsed me."

With that she snickered the tied apron corner with her finger, and sent it flying.

The whole action had been so full of youthful innocent charm of playful defiance that the young man was smitten by it.

Who, indeed, in that neighborhood—savage, ferocious, unscrupulous and murderous though he were—would have dared to breathe a harsh word to Lucy Maclane, much less to raise a finger against her? A ribald jest, an unkindly word, would have been as a seed of dragon's teeth, from which a horde of pitiless, armed avengers would have sprung, and the injury or insult would not have been more than a day old ere the offender would have swung from the stout limb of some cottonwood tree, or would have lain by the roadside riddled with bullets. Lucy Maclane was the good fairy of that Rocky Mountain side, as she was its queen.

But something like a year previously a drunken half-breed had attempted to kiss Lucy Maclane. The girl had boxed his ears, and, being stout of muscle herself, and firmly knit in the limbs, she had sent him staggering into the dust. The drunken man had returned to the assault of defiant maidenly virtue, and had been stretched full length at the girl's feet, senseless and bleeding, by a fierce and swinging blow from the back of a woodsman's axe, which Lucy wielded as scientifically as a man. When he had recovered consciousness, he had crawled away, frowning the air with curses and with threats against Lucy. His words were overheard, and doomed him. The girl pleaded for his life—she tried persuasion, anger, stern command. All were equally unavailing. That half-breed's body swung for weeks from the branch of a red oak, over a chasm many hundreds of feet in depth, while the carrion buzzards tore his clothes into rags and picked every shred of flesh from the bones. Then it dropped down into the canyon, and its pieces lay by the side of the raging mountain torrent for months afterward, until a pack of hungry coyotes, venturing thus far mountainward, one bleak night, made short work of them and crunched them up. That half-breed's fate proved a savage warning, and men whose conversation was habitually studded with adjectives and other interjections of the vilest and filthiest sort became choice and careful in their language when Lucy Maclane was the topic of campfire talk.

She was barely eighteen, that bright-eyed queen of the mountains, and the little vixen knew that she held despotic sway over all the inferior male creation for many miles around. They all petted her, and loaded her with presents; they idolized and spoiled her. Yet she was as good, as simple, as true, as trusty, as homely and as kindly as any country girl brought up within sound of English cathedral chimes. Many an ailing mountaineer her dainty care nursed back to health and strength; dying men had crossed the dark threshold with lighter hearts when "fairy Lucy's" soft fingers smoothed their pillows of skins. Men would ride for miles and miles out of their way to be gladdened by one of Lucy's pretty smiles, and a wonder, in that county where, among a crowd of Sioux squaws loathly half-breeds, and viler unwomanly white women that were dragged by the proxenet's net from the stews of St. Louis or Memphis into the gambling and dancing hells of the frontier traders' stations, she alone represented the holy attributes of pure womanhood.

The young man returned to the girl the tin cup which he had drained of its refreshing contents of mountain water.

"Thank you, my dear," he said, as his hand grazed her rosy finger tips. The contact made his palms tingle, and his speech became a little bolder. He reined in his prancing horse tightly, and raised himself in his stirrups. "Do you know that you are charming, my dear?" he exclaimed, his eyes glistening and flashing at her.

"You bet I do," was the stolid and long drawn reply.

It shocked the young man first of all, and then it made him laugh outright.

"There's nature here," he said to himself. "Glorious, unadulterated nature. She is worth fifty Lady Evelyns. How I'd make them all jump if I brought her into the drawing-room at Chauncey Towers."

"Then it's two miles," he said, "to Dick Ashland's."

"Jest about that," the girl replied; "an' that hoss o' yewrn's got to riggle a bit less, I reckon, or yew'll get to the canyon bottom instead o' Dick Ashland's. The path ain't much more'n a yard wide at Blacknose Corner, an' yew've jest got to keep his nose straight or down ye'll go into the alder bushes."

"Thank you for the warning, my dear," the young man retorted. "Old Sam and I have gone up and down many a bad mountain road before to-day, and I think we'll manage to wriggle round Blacknose Corner. Good bye," he exclaimed, putting spurs to his horse and kissing his hand to her.

Lucy looked after him as he galloped up the mountain path. The sounds of his horse's hoofs and the clatter of his rifle against his powder flask became less and less audible, but she still saw him turn, and turn again, waving his hat back to her. Then he disappeared among the great pines and the stunted cedars, and Lucy, shading her eyes with her hands against the fierce glare of the midday sun, scanned the point beyond the small forest where she knew he would emerge. There a little pale streak seamed the face of the mountain, and opposite the bare and naked edge of the bluish-brown rock the further side of the yawning chasm loomed dark and fierce. Presently a diminutive figure on horseback seemed to crawl out of the deep green of the cedars beyond, and to move like a fly along the precipitous mountain face until it disappeared around the bend.

"He's more hensum than Dave," Lucy said to herself; "an' smarter, an' I guess he looks like good grit."

She rolled up her sleeves and returned to the small, round wash-tub that stood on a block of wood by the door of the log cabin. She dipped her hands into the white and opal foam that glistened with prismatic colors in the sunlight, and soon was busy at her homely work.

From where she stood the rough path led down the jagged mountain face, across the broken and rock-strewn ground, to the vast plains that stretched to the east; brown deserts of sun-dried wilderness, where the semi-tropical heat had scorched the sparse grass to cinders, where even the lazy wind stirred up myriads of little clouds of brown sandy dust, appearing from the distance like so many smoking bonfires. Looking backward, looking to the right, looking to the left, the stupendous mountain solitude of the Rockies rose in rugged chaotic piles of dead browns and blues, against which the blotches of vegetation here and there glowed darkly, while peak on peak, looming more distinctly, became arier and bluer. Until, there beyond, the faintest outlines glistened in the Summer sunshine.

Far away to the north and far away to the south the great mountain chain stretched out giant arms, nearly half encircling the vast tract of prairie that swelled away from the foothills. To the north one peak

lifted its head higher than its peers, like a solemn sentinel guarding the mountain approach. To the south two twin peaks towered, seemingly from the base of the plains, that there stretched arid, sandy and hungry, with but one tiny thread of water gladdening the eye by its refreshing gleam.

Around the mountaineer's hut, however, Nature had been liberal of her gifts. The mountain side was green with pleasant foliage, and the soft, thin mountain grass throve even where the foot of man and beast had done its best to crush it out of existence. Wild flowers and luxuriant ferns intermingled in welcome profusion, and behind every rock and every boulder some tiny, graceful greenery struggled for life.

It was a truly pleasant spot on that glorious blazing Summer day, but it made one shudder to think what it would be like in Winter, when the great pine-clad ridges and the deep gorges would alike become as a home of the hurricane, where it would roar and rage and howl and shriek, filling the air with a hail of broken branches and frozen snow, driving great drifts of the white icy masses against the hillsides and piling them against the trees; while beyond, the great white plain would be as one white sheet, appalling with its frigid monotony, while scattered rocks, uprooted trees and huge jagged pine-stems would shape themselves into one chaotic, treacherous mass underneath the snowy coverlet, while all all traces of road or trail would be effaced, and the intrepid frontiersman would be left to fight with the elements in addition to his natural enemies.

George Maclane was well seasoned in Rocky Mountain experiences. He was one of the first to build a stout and roomy log cabin where previously but trappers' huts and Indian villages had existed, and more than that, year in and year out, Summer sun or Winter snow, he lived there with his child. Frontiersmen, trappers and traders asked themselves in wonderment why George Maclane—"Freckled George," they called him—had chosen such a place for his home when all the country between the Sangre de Christo and Pike's Peak stood open to him, and rumor had it that Freckled George was searching the mountains for gold. Men had looked for the precious metal in those rocky fastnesses before that day, and had come back with heavy hearts and light pouches. When the matter was mentioned to Maclane, he grinned and shook his head, and said "Rot." "Cayn't a man abide whar he likes," he would say, "without a lot o' loafin' hoosiers a tryin' to stick their fingers in his pie?" As George was known to be not slow with his pistol and his knife, the inquiries invariably stopped at that point.

Lucy had finished her task, and was engaged in spreading out the flannels and other articles of household wear upon a piece of smooth green sward that seemed strangely out of place amid its wild surroundings. That being done, she emptied the tub and carried it to the small outhouse by the side of the cabin. Then she wiped the log, and fetching her knitting from within the cabin, she sat herself down.

Lucy's little brain was busy. That handsome, bright-eyed stranger had upset its maiden equilibrium. The knitting made but poor progress, and more than once Lucy had to undo what she had completed and to recommence it. Suddenly she rose and stamped her foot in a petty temper.

"Waal," she exclaimed, in pretty irritation, "it cayn't be that I'm that nuts on him, and on'y seen him jest this once an' know no more about him than about the man in the moon. And don't care to know," she added with another stamp of the tiny foot. "Thar!"

A student of female nature would have had his doubts about Miss Lucy's sincerity in her last assertion. Woman is alike all over the world, and the daughter of the Rockies has most of the attributes of her city sister. To desire an object, and to persist in asserting to herself and to others that she does not care for it a bit, is one of the frailer sex's privileges and idiosyncrasies.

Lucy sat on that log, fitfully dashing away now and then at her knitting; at other times staring in front of her, while her work lay untouched in her lap, and the hours passed and the shadows lengthened without Lucy perceiving the change.

The girl was accustomed to be left alone there for days and nights, too, for that. Bands of Indians could not approach the spot without timely notice reaching her, and against solitary marauders a couple of double-barrelled rifles and a half dozen pistols that always hung ready loaded on the cabin wall afforded her sufficient protection. Not a soul could get near the place without arousing the vigilance and the noisy warning of the watch dogs—huge mongrel English mastiffs—that guarded the cabin, and whose fierce barking re-echoed among the mountains for miles when Lucy took them for a run up the hillside.

The swift dusk was already set in on the mountains when the girl shook herself together, and, fetching a wooden platter from the storehouse, climbed among the wild raspberry bushes that covered the mountain side at the back of the cabin and collected a plentiful supply of the delicious fruit. Then she entered the hut and set the big rough table ready with a joint of roast venison, which she supplemented with corn cake and big-horn fat.

Anon, the distant thump-thump, thump-thump of horses' feet on rough, rocky ground vibrated on the mountain air. It drew nearer, and came clatter clatter up the hill. The girl prepared the three great spouting branches of the huge and ponderous Mexican metal lamp with natural wool wicks and rough oil, and placed it in the centre of the big table.

It grows dark very suddenly in those mountain solitudes, where the sun dips down behind the giant crags, lining their edges with purple and gold, and dying away in a lurid glory, which it leaves to mingle on the horizon arch with the softer hues of topaz and sapphire, and to fade away blue and cold in the far East.

It was nearly night when the clatter of the horses' hoofs ceased directly in front of the cabin, and a ringing "Wagh" echoed on the hillside. Lucy replied with a "Wagh" which had a feminine and cheerful vigor of its own, and a moment afterward a tall, wiry man pushed aside the bearskin hanging which covered the door, and with a hearty "Waal, what cheer, Lucy?" caught the young lady round the waist and kissed her on the forehead.

"Thar," he exclaimed, when the girl disengaged herself, "I reckon it ain't every man that's got a daughter like my Lucy to keep house for him while he's prairie loafin'.

Heyar, Dave!" he shouted, "our meat's out thick and no snakes."

George Maclane was a man whom one would have thought a dangerous customer. Long, gaunt and thin, though his shoulders stood out broad and square. He had a pair of piercing, little grayish brown eyes, the cold glitter of which contrasted curiously with his joviality at that moment. His lips were thin and nearly bloodless, the square jaws betokened dogged determination. His upper lip was clean shaven, but his long hair and tuft of beard had changed from its former indistinct sandy color to an equally indistinct mixture of gray and fawn. One freckled cheek was disfigured by a deep scar, where a knife had cut through the flesh and had left a wound which had never quite healed up. If a man had read that face for its characteristics, he would have found cruelty and greed written plainly there, and he would have wondered how such a man came to be the father of so lovely a girl as Lucy. There were stories abroad of George Maclane's beautiful wife, now long since dead, about whom even Lucy had but the faintest recollections, and whose name was never mentioned by, or in the presence of Freckled George without the mountaineer baring his head. Thus, I once saw a tiger cut lick the face of a dog that had grown up with it. There is no man so vicious that there is not some corner left pure and undefiled in his heart.

The bearskin was raised once again, and a younger man entered. He was nearly as tall as George Maclane and although his cast of features betrayed a family likeness to the elder man, there was less of the cruelty about the lips and less of the obstinate squareness about his jaws. He was dark of skin, which matched curiously with the reddish brown of his hair and beard. Dave Maclane was George's nephew and Lucy's cousin, the son of a frontiersman who had paid the penalty of his peccadillo and fallen under a poisoned Pueblo arrow. People about the mountain stations said that Dave was Lucy's intended husband, and the young man when questioned about the subject never denied the soft impeachment.

The two men fell upon the food that stood ready for them with appetites sharpened by a long journey. They had come all the way from Hatcher's Hole, the nearest trading station, a distance of full thirty miles, having gone there to obtain a fresh supply of powder and other necessities. The girl stood by while they cut great slices from the joint and spread them upon their corn-cakes, dipping the two together into the salt and biting off the pieces without further ado.

The hearty meal was washed down with draughts of the fiery Tocs whisky, tempered, in minute proportion, with mountain water. That over the two men went out side and set themselves down on the log-stumps, which stood ready there, to smoke their sasafraz-rood pipes. The conversation was made up of the banalities of the time and place, and Lucy, who had resumed her knitting, joined in it but little.

On a sudden George jumped up and walked along the path that led up hill, with his eyes fixed intently on the moonlit ground in front of him.

"There's bin somebody heyar," he said with quiet intensity. "Who's bin heyar?" he asked turning to Lucy. "Who's gone to Dick Ashland's?"

"A stranger," the girl replied, casually. "I guess I know who it is," George continued. "I guessed he was bound for Dick's when he was that soft and soapy at Hatcher's. I might a known he was going to Dick Ashland's."

"Waal, an' what o' that?" Lucy asked. "Yer mind yew'r pot, my girl," the elder Maclane retorted, "an' jist look that yew fat don't burn. That's what yew've got to do I reckon. It wur a tall stranger—dark, youngish, wur it not?"

"That's him," Lucy answered. "I told yew, Dave," the elder man continued, turning to his nephew, "I wur sure of it. I were that sure of it that I'd bet a hundred-dollar bill on it. I tell yew, Dick Ashland's jumped gold. He's got ahead o' me, an' that thar stranger's come to help him get it. Damnation he shan't git ahead of me! This is my country! He'd a never come heyar if it hadn't a-bin to follow my clew."

His hand wandered instinctively to the big knife in his belt, and half unheeded it bit.

"Dave," he said, with a savage quiet, "come along o' me. I reckon I've got something to say to yew."

The two men strolled away into the night. The girl, still sitting on the log, dropped her knitting on her lap and listened, with a confused throbbing at her heart, to the sound of the steps as they died away among the cedars beyond.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

AMENITIES OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

They Are Occasionally Absurd and Show Proliferous Lack of Logic.

Archibald Forbes says the abstract theory of the "amenities of war" is preposterous. You strain every effort to reduce your adversary to impotence; he falls wounded whereupon, should he come into your hands, you promptly devote all your exertions to saving his life and restoring him to health and vigor, in order that he may go home and swell the ranks of your enemy. This is, no doubt, humanity, but it is supremely illogical.

Marbot recounts in his memoirs perhaps the most absurd application ever made of the theory of the "amenities." In the battle of Austerlitz a body of beaten Russians, about 5,000 strong, strove to escape across the ice on the Satchan Lake. Napoleon ordered his artillery to fire on the ice, which was shattered, and men and horses slowly settled down into the depths, only a few escaping by means of poles and ropes thrust out from shore by the French. Next morning Napoleon, riding around the positions, saw a wounded Russian officer clinging to an ice floe a hundred yards out and entreating help. The Emperor became intensely interested in the sufferer of the man. After many failures, Marbot and another officer stripped and swam out, gradually brought the ice floe toward the shore, and laid the Russian at Napoleon's feet. The Emperor evinced more delight at this rescue than he had manifested when assured of the victory of Austerlitz. He had no compunction as to the fate of the unfortunates whom his artillery practice of the day before had sent to their death.

THE VORACITY OF BLACK BASS.

The More They Are Fed the Hungrier They Seem to Become.

A writer in the Forest and Stream chats as follows:—The voracity and pugnacity of the black bass have been favorite themes with fishermen for years, but the charges brought against the fish in these respects have been general rather than specific, as a rule, and doubtless many charges have been brought without foundation in fact. The last report of the United States Fish Commissioner for 1892, just at hand, adds to our knowledge of the qualities referred to in the black bass.

Generally new waters are stocked, or old waters restocked, by the introduction of adult black bass, but the United States has inaugurated the cultivation of young bass, not, however, as the young of the salmonidae are cultivated, but by the selection and separation of adult bass at spawning time, and the removal of the young after they are hatched naturally. Of a lot of black bass sent on to Washington from the Neosho station many died shortly after arrival, and an examination disclosed the fact that the fish had been injured by close contact in the cans, broken points of fins being found in their bodies, these wounds causing inflammation and death.

Fifteen bass were sent to Wytheville station where they spawned, and as soon as "the young were seen for the first time their innate voracity was shown by their attacks on tadpoles and other animal life that came within their reach."

At first food was furnished in the shape of frog and toad spawn, later in that of chopped and live fish, twenty to thirty pounds being supplied to them daily. Their appetite was unappeasable, apparently; the more they were fed the hungrier they seemed to become.

As they grew older their voracity knew no bounds, and in the absence of other food they hesitated not to devour one another. The report does not say how many of the bass were females, but say that eight were of that sex, and it must be assumed that only the young were left in the pond to be fed, and if the young of eight black bass consume from twenty to thirty pounds of food per day it will be understood that the question of food for fishes is not one to be lightly considered. I am fully aware that I may be accused of riding the hobby of fish food, but if it had been ridden more than it has been in the past there would have been fewer failures in fish culture and fish planting. If fish are to thrive deep water they must have food and plenty of it.

Last season I went with a car load of fingerling land-locked salmon to plant them. A number of the fish died in the car, and upon opening them they were found gorged with chopped liver. I suggested that the next car load should not be fed for twenty-four hours before they were placed in the car. They were not fed for thirty-six hours before shipment, and were two days on the road. They came through with scarcely any loss, but where turned into the streams, then instant search for food was an object lesson. The turning into the water, the presence of men, the long journey on the cars, all gave way to a scramble for something to eat that was amusing to the spectator, showing that a hungry fish is very like a hungry man, and must be treated accordingly.

ANCIENT GLASSBLLOWERS.

The Priests of Ptah at Memphis Were Skilled in the Beautiful Art.

The glassblowers of ancient Thebes are known to have been as proficient in the particular art as is the most scientific craftsman of the same trade of the present day, after a lapse of forty centuries of so-called "progress." They were well acquainted with the art of staining glass, and are known to have produced that commodity in great profusion and perfection. Rossellini gives an illustration of a piece of stained glass known to be 3,000 years old, which displayed artistic taste of high order, both in tint and design. In this case the color is struck through the vitrified structure, and he mentions designs struck entirely in pieces from one-half to three-quarters of an inch thick, the color being perfectly incorporated with the structure of the piece, and exactly the same on both the obverse and reverse sides. The priests of Ptah at Memphis were adepts in glassmakers' art, and not only did they have factories for manufacturing the common variety, but they had learned the vitrifying of the different colors and the imitating of precious stones to perfection. Their imitations of the amethyst and of the various other colored gems were so true to nature that even now, after they have laid in the desert sands from 2,000 to 4,000 years, it takes an expert to distinguish the genuine articles from the spurious. It has been shown that, besides being experts in glassmaking and glass coloring, they used the diamond in cutting and engraving glass. In the British museum there is a beautiful piece of stained glass, with an engraved emblemment of the monarch Thothmes III., who lived 3,400 years ago.

THE ELECTRIC CANE.

A Handy Article for Use on a Dark Night.

A Vienna electric supply house has just introduced a cane containing an electric incandescent lamp. It is made of ebonite. The upper half can be taken off, and contains in the head of cut glass the lamp, connected by wires with three small platinum elements. The strength of current is four amperes, tension six volts. To fill the battery the lower part is filled with a fluid patented by the inventor, and the two parts are then firmly joined. When the head of the cane is lowered or inclined the lamp emits a brilliant white light, which may be kept up for about two hours. While the cane is carried upright no material is wasted. The fluid can easily be replaced, and anybody can fill the reservoir. The weight of the cane is a trifle more than a pound.

Folks are sometimes sorry to get what they pray for.