

The Boy Who Kissed His Mother.

She sat on the porch in the sunshine. A woman whose hair was silver. But whose face was blossom sweet; Making me think of a young girl. Where, in spite of the frost and snow of bleak November weather. I had not met her before. I heard a footstep behind me. And I knew the heart it came from. "Would he like a comforting staff. In the time and place of my life. Hopeful and brave and strong. One of the hearts to lean on. When we think that things go wrong. I turned at the click of the gate-latch. And met his manly look; A face like his gives me pleasure. Like the page of a pleasant book. It told of a steadfast purpose. Of a brave and daring will. A face with promise in its lines. That God grant the years fulfill. He went up the pathway singing. I saw the woman's eyes Grow bright with welcome. As sunshine when the person who lay "Back again, sweet mother. He cried, and bent to kiss. The loving face of my mother. For that which some mothers miss. That boy will do to depend on. I hold that this is true. From his love to his mothers. Our breast heaves and throbs. Earth's grandest hearts have been loving hearts Since time and earth began; And the boy who kissed his mother Is every inch a man.

A MAIDEN FAIR.

A Scottish Love Story.

BY CHARLES GIBBON.

CHAPTER VII.

"MERMAID, AHOY!"

Donkey engines rattling bales of goods from the quays aboard ships, or vice versa; barrels, boxes, hampers, all flying in the air and alighting safely in their places amidst a babel of tongues and a great smell of tar. That was the port of Leith. The bantam-like "Mermaid" nestled at its moorings, but panting and puffing as proudly as its neighbors, trying to make itself appear as big as possible, and continuing to assert its claim to equal consideration with any of the persons to whom they were consigned. Thus the credit of Duncan Murray stood high, and he valued it more than his life—truly more than his life, for it was no mere phrase with him, it was a fact. He valued that credit more than his life, more even than his daughter's life, and that made him a great deal more of a man than he looked. It was a fact that it included the "Mermaid," and it came to be a saying, "as safe as though it was with Duncan Murray," and that was as much to him as if he had been made lord high admiral of the fleet.

The fact was remarkable that in the whole course of his trading he had never lost the smallest package entrusted to his care; and as years went on the pride of this fact grew in its proportions in his breast, until it seemed as if one failure would have killed him.

Ann's wear with her sailor's hat and pea-jacket on, stood on the hurricane deck overlooking the bustle on board and on the quays. Her father was moving about everywhere; now scolding, now encouraging, now leading a hand to move some pile.

At length everything was on board, and the two people were waiting to complete the equipment of the "Mermaid" for her trip.

"Where is Mr. Ross?" asked Annie, after long consideration with herself.

"He'll join us on the road," he asked me to let him go out last night and I said, ay, if he would meet us in time. Nae fear o' him."

She had no need to ask where Mr. Cargill, for a cab drove along the wharves as far as it could, and that gentleman appeared in a faultlessly fashionable check coat and top hat. He had only a small hand-bag to carry, for the portmanteau had been put on board the previous night.

His figure was grotesque; imagine a stout man six feet in height, with heavy jaws and sleepy eyes, dressed like a lad of fifteen! This was Mr. Cargill, who had an unbounded faith in the elegance of his figure and the skill of his tailor.

Annie laughed at the sight of him, and the captain felt disposed to bid him "put some class on" as quick as he could. But recognizing in all this the height of aristocratic fashion, he held his tongue and marveled at the conduct of the man who had a great ready wit and opportunity had offered for her had a vast reverence for the "nobility," and deep respect for anything which even remotely represented it. So, with all his absurd airs, "Jeems" Cargill impressed the old man as being something out of the common.

Cargill was impressed, and consequently permitted her money to flow at his command.

He saluted his hosts, but they were too much occupied to give him particular attention, and he had grace enough to recognize that fact. He applied himself to the arrangement of his berth, fitting up in it all the newest contrivances for securing comfort at sea. Having done this he went on deck.

The boat was just casting off. He looked around; Captain Duncan was doing everything and Bob Ross was not there. "Are you going to do without your pilot?" he said to the skipper as he approached him.

"I hae nae time to speak to onybody the-no," was the sharp response, as Captain Duncan hurried to his post on the hurricane deck.

Cargill quickly followed him, because Annie was there.

"We shall have a pleasant day," he said, with as much warmth as if there had been something very particular in the remark.

"It looks pleasant enough at present," she answered, smiling at the weather prophet; "but it is a west wind, and those cloudy yonder may bring us such rain as will spoil the nicest clothes."

He only observed the smile and was unconscious of the playful allusion to his gorgeous raincoat.

"Ah, you are weather-wise, Miss Murray, and I ought not to have dared to say a word on the subject. I ought to have asked you to tell me how it was to be. But we may be happy in the most unpleasant weather when we are with those we like best in the world."

"What is the day to be, father?" she said, turning her head away impervious to this very broad compliment.

"You'll no be fashed wi' heavy seas, any way," answered the captain, busy minding his own business and unconscious of what was going on. Cargill did not feel that slight movement of her head and inattention to his words; for, like all small natures, he was content so long as attention was paid to him, but spiteful always, and wrathful sometimes, when he was treated with the slightest neglect.

"However, as it will come round," was his thought, and the opportunity to bring her round was his now. The father was in his favor, and that bugged, Bob Ross, was not on board. He congratulated himself most cordially on that circumstance. He did not care by what lucky accident it had been brought about. That was the fact, and that was enough for him. It was something more than that the absence of Ross left him free to woo Annie; there had been certain wild thoughts in his head

which made him specially glad that the man was away.

Then he saw a particular piece of gratification. Annie went down to the deck and he accompanied her. They walked up and down, and she listened to his empty chatter about the grand sights and grand people of London and Paris. He tried to make her understand what delights lay before the woman who would be taken to these places by a man who loved her and "knew his way about."

She said little in reply, but she listened, and he felt assured that he was making rapid progress in her good graces. She halted occasionally and looked out to sea or towards the shore soaking the waters with eager eyes; he did not observe their expression, and did not guess what she was looking for. And at such times she would say "Yes" or "No" or "That's fine," in a low voice which filled him with the joy of triumph.

"I'm afraid there is something wrong," "Can you tell me what it is—can I help you in it?"

She stood silent for a while, and the wind whistling round them and the engines panting as the "Mermaid" toiled her way across the water.

"Do you mind that day we were at the gate?" "I shall never forget it."

"Do you mind that when I was saying there was only one time when I wished I might leave father, I did not tell you what that time was?"

"I mind every word you said, for every word was like gold to me."

"I am going to tell you now."

Her voice faltered a little as she spoke, and he listened with his heart thumping against his side. Then came the low, sweet voice like the wind of the sea.

"It was when I thought of you."

His grasp tightened on the handle of the wheel, as if to keep himself from forgetting all sense of duty and turning round to take her in his arms.

"I ken'd that, Annie, and that was what made you take the joy of that minute from me—I hae felt it in my heart ever since, and it has comforted me whenever I thought of the possibility that you might be given away to—somebody else."

"There was again a long silence. They were full of the glory of their love and could not speak. Annie was the first to find voice.

"I doubt my father is against us. He is taken up with that man, and his grand ways and his fortune and his promises, and I doubt he will never hearken to a word from you. That is what is wrong, and I'm sair troubled."

"But you will never give yourself to him?" "Never; that is what I came to tell you—I shall never take him; but I shall never take you either without father's will. And I want to tell you more; that I'm no to be yours, I shall never be anybody else's."

"I am content. I can bide my time, and it will come. Do not you fear."

She scarcely heard the comforting words, for she had turned quickly and hurried away, half ashamed of the confession and the pledge she had given.

Ross felt as if he could have steered the "Mermaid" against the wildest storm that ever blew. He was no mere man now, he was a giant with all a giant's strength.

She had told him that her father had pledged herself to him and the future was safe. Now he knew what he had to do. He had to satisfy her father and he would do it. There might be a little delay, but the time must come when Duncan Murray would be satisfied.

But when he was worthy of his daughter, as Ross for Cargill—poor chap!—if he had any right feeling in him at all he would suffer by the loss. Even if it were only his vanity which was hurt, he would suffer. So, for him there was nothing but kindly pity.

But the happiness that thrilled through the man as he stood at his post, guiding the little "Mermaid" safely to her port.

Cargill, however, had no intention of being a loser in this game he was playing. He, too, could bide his time, and he felt assured that his time was nearer than that of Ross.

It had been his purpose to make his proposal to Annie before they reached Peterhead; but he had soon seen that the time was not fitting, and he did not mean to ask her to marry him until he was pretty sure that she would be ready. And that time would be soon.

It was getting dark when the heavily laden little steamer reached the rugged coast of Buchan, and the pilot, knowing the dangers of the Dun Bay Rock and the Bullers, was keeping well off, but not so well off as he had hoped to be.

When they were about opposite Slains Castle, the lights were up, and there was no one on deck except Ross and the look-out. The captain was below, resting in perfect confidence of his pilot's skill, and Annie was engaged with some papers in the cabin.

Cargill came on deck, lit a cigar, and took a few turns in the cabin, surveying the darkening outlines of the coast. He spoke a few words to the man on the look-out, then he walked slowly aft to Ross, who, confident of his course in such a calm sea, and feeling some sorrow for the man whose disappointment he expected to see, was looking down at the sea.

"Neither cold nor dull, Mr. Cargill," was the cheery answer.

"All you like to do that, I suppose, and that makes all the difference."

Cargill seated himself on a coil of rope as he spoke.

"Of course, I like it or I wouldn't be at it."

"I suppose you find it troublesome enough to keep in the cabin, for of course, when Ross was below, Captain Duncan was on deck."

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to fulfill his promise. He threw his cigar overboard and disappeared down the cabin stairs.

Ross felt his throat parched and something fiery flew up to his head, making his eyes start as if they were to come out. What could this be? Surely one glass of whisky could never have such an effect upon him. It must have been very strong whisky, or he must have drunk a great deal of it. What a fool he had been to touch it! Thus he was approaching the Dun Bay Rock and the Bullers, where he should have all his senses about him. But no! his senses were becoming confused, his eyes dim, and everything danced before him—a devil's dance of fishes of fire and black huge rocks. What was the matter? Could he not pull himself together? He had only to hold the wheel as it was and all was right. Steady, now. He set his teeth; he would master this demon that had got possession of him.

He tried to call out, but his tongue was palsied, and he could not become more and more confused, his eyes more and more dazzled. Then a sort of frenzy seemed to come upon him. He would defy these demons. He would hold on and carry the vessel safely by the rocks.

He fell, still holding to the wheel, thus also her nose turned suddenly straight to the Dun Bay Rock.

There was a moment of bewilderment on the part of the look-out. Then he shouted in terror—

"Save us! what's wrong?—we'll be on 'em in five minutes!"

The captain heard the cry and hurried on deck, followed by his daughter and Cargill.

In an instant the captain's quick eyes took in the terrible position. He rushed to the wheel and saw the vessel lying prostrate. "Drum! drum! drum!" he almost screamed as he grasped the wheel, and with a vigorous effort wrenched it round so that he turned the "Mermaid" into safe water again.

All hands were on deck now, Annie standing apart, pale and bewildered.

"Take that drunken villain out o' my sight," he roared, as he stood panting and guiding the vessel.

CHAPTER IX.

ALL FOLLOWS.

The huge rocks called the Bullers' o' Buchan rise high and jagged above the sea, which dashes and churns white against them, but it has made inroads at their feet, forming curious archways, leading to great caverns, the haunts of smugglers. The little rocks stand firm, proud guardians of the coast, and a terror to mariners and fishermen when the winds blow high.

The little "Mermaid" looked like a speck on the water in contrast with these giants of nature. As it steamed slowly and safely by them, there were some on deck whose hearts beat quick at thought of the peril they were so narrowly escaping. All were grateful to the captain, who had come so timely with such skill and strength to their rescue; only one pitied the man who had led them into the danger.

As for Duncan Murray, his breast was full of wrath. The reputation for care and skill which he had earned with a lifetime to be jeopardized at last, and only saved by a miracle! Jeopardized by the man he had trusted as he trusted himself! There was no penalty heavy enough for such a villain.

Except the engineer and Ross, who had been put on the floor of the cabin, all remained on deck. But no word was spoken until they passed the grim Bullers. They were like people petrified, pale and dumb, watching the scowling figure at the wheel of the "Mermaid" as they were safe there was one great breath like a sob of relief, and a silent prayer of wondering thanks. Then the power of motion was restored to them by the loud voice of the captain giving some brief commands.

But when he saw her father's side all the time, so white and calm that she was more like a statue than a living woman. She watched every movement of the vessel, how obediently it answered the helm under the master's hand, until at length it took them out into safe water. But her mind was not resting with a pain in her back caused by kidney trouble, but also by the thought of the man who had been so near to her father's first words she moved swiftly away, down to the cabin.

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A CAPTAIN SAVED.

How a Member of Her Majesty's Service Escaped Destruction—His Graphic Account.

(Hamilton, Ont., Spectator.)

Some little time ago I was occasioned to spend some days in the city of Hamilton, and at the time the matter was a subject of general conversation. In order to ascertain all the facts bearing upon the matter, a representative of this paper was despatched yesterday to interview the gentleman in question with the following result:

Captain W. H. Nicholls, formerly in Her Majesty's service, is a man well advanced in years, and has evidently seen much of the world. Endowed by nature with a strong constitution, he was enabled to endure hardships under which many men would have succumbed. Through all privations and exposure he preserved his constitution unimpaired. A number of years ago, however, he began to feel a strange undermining of his life. He noticed that he had less energy than formerly, and his appetite was uncertain and changing; that he was unaccountably weary at certain times and correspondingly energetic at others; that his head pained him, first in front and then at the base of the brain, and that his heart was unusually irregular in its action. All these troubles he attributed to some increasing disorder, and gave them little attention, but they seemed to increase in violence continually. To the writer he said:

"I never for a moment thought these things amounted to anything serious, and I gave them little, if any, thought; but I felt myself growing weaker and weaker, and could in no way account for it."

"Did you take no steps to check these symptoms?"

"Very little, if any. I thought they were only temporary in their nature and would soon pass away. But they did not pass away, and after more than a year had passed I noticed that my feet and ankles were beginning to swell and that my face under the eyes appeared puffy. This indication increased until my body began to fill with water, and finally swelled to enormous proportions, and was attended with acute rheumatic pains, and was fearful at times that it would attack my heart. I consulted one of our most prominent physicians, but he gave me no hope of ever recovering. He said that I might live several months, but my condition was such that neither myself nor my family had the slightest hope of my recovery. In this condition a number of months passed by, during which time I had to rest constantly in an easy chair, not being able to lie down, lest I should choke to death. The slight pains I had at first experienced increased to such a degree that I was unable to get up, and I was wholly unconscious. When I did recover my senses I suffered so severely that my cries could be heard for nearly a mile. No one can have any idea of the agony I endured. I was unable to eat or drink, and my strength was entirely deserted and I was exhausted. I prayed day and night for death. The doctors could not relieve me and I was left in a condition to die, and that, too, of Bright's disease of the kidneys in its most terrible form. I think I should have died had I not learned of a gentleman who had suffered very much as I had, and I resolved to pursue the same course of treatment which entirely cured him. I accordingly began and at once felt a change for the better going on in my system. In the course of a week the swelling subsided, my body and I felt like another man. I continued the treatment and am happy to say that I was entirely cured through the wonderful, almost miraculous power of Warner's Safe Cure, which I consider the most valuable remedy for such a case."

"And you feel apparently well now?"

"Yes, indeed. I am in good health, eat heartily, and both the doctors and my friends are greatly surprised and gratified at my remarkable restoration, after I was virtually in the grave. My daughter, who has been troubled with a pain in her back caused by kidney trouble, has also been cured by means of the same great remedy, and my family and myself have constituted ourselves a kind of missionary society for supplying the poor of our neighborhood with the remedy which has so wonderfully benefited us."

As the writer was returning home he reflected upon the statements of the noble old man with whom he had conversed, and was impressed not only with the truth of his assertions, but also with the sincerity of all his acts. As he could not but wish that the thousands who are suffering with minor troubles which become so serious unless taken in time might know of Captain Nicholls' experiences and the manner in which he was saved. And that is the cause of this article.

One of Artemus' Best.

Of the countless good stories attributed to Artemus, the best one, perhaps, is one which tells of the advice he gave to a Southern railroad conductor soon after the war. The road was in a wretched condition, and the trains, consequently, were run at a phenomenally low rate of speed. When the conductor was purchasing his iron of the engine and hitch it to the rear of the train; for you see we were not liable to advice, if they do so in a respectful manner?" The conductor replied in gruff tones that he guessed so. "Well," Artemus went on, "it occurred to me that it would be well to detach the cow-catcher from the front of the engine and hitch it to the rear of the train; for you see we were not liable to advice, if they do so in a respectful manner?" The conductor replied in gruff tones that he guessed so. "Well," Artemus went on, "it occurred to me that it would be well to detach the cow-catcher from the front of the engine and hitch it to the rear of the train; for you see we were not liable to advice, if they do so in a respectful manner?" The conductor replied in gruff tones that he guessed so. "Well," Artemus went on, "it occurred to me that it would be well to detach the cow-catcher from the front of the engine and hitch it to the rear of the train; for you see we were not liable to advice, if they do so in a respectful manner?" The conductor replied in gruff tones that he guessed so. "Well," Artemus went on, "it occurred to me that it would be well to detach the cow-catcher from the front of the engine and hitch it to the rear of the train; for you see we were not liable to advice, if they do so in a respectful manner?" The conductor replied in gruff tones that he guessed so. "Well," Artemus went on, "it occurred to me that it would be well to detach the cow-catcher from the front of the engine and hitch it to the rear of the train; for you see we were not liable to advice, if they do so in a respectful manner?" The conductor replied in gruff tones that he guessed so. "Well," Artemus went on, "it occurred to me that it would be well to detach the cow-catcher from the front of the engine and hitch it to the rear of the train; for you see we were not liable to advice, if they do so in a respectful manner?" The conductor replied in gruff tones that he guessed so. "Well," Artemus went on, "it occurred to me that it would be well to detach the cow-catcher from the front of the engine and hitch it to the rear of the train; for you see we were not liable to advice, if they do so in a respectful manner?" The conductor replied in gruff tones that he guessed so. "Well," Artemus went on,