CHAPTER I.

"I have something to tell you. Mary." Mary Ranley let her work fall into her lap, and looked up at the speaker. She was | And when would he go? And would he be a tall, slim, dark-la red woman of seven or | eight and twenty, with a plain, patient face and wistful eyes. She had not a single claim, in feature or coloring, to any of the acknowledged forms of prettiness, and yet something about her would have compelled a second glance from those who had obtained a first.

"Well, Tom, what is it?" Her face softened as her glance fell on Tom Danvers, handpeople spoke of only to praise. They had | help or comfort her. been playfellows. these two, who were alike years! It is a big slice out of the best part | ing despair : and then one day fact ranged of the allotted threescore and ten, although | itself on faith's side-a letter awaited her as it was only lately that one of this faithful pair had begun to think so. The other had never thought it yet.

"What is it you have to tell me?"

to stroke her hair. The movement was a caress, and then it enabled him to avoid her

"I have been offered an app intment at Rangoon."

"At Rangoon!" She echoed the words | riage for herself. without any intonation of surprise. "That

"In Burmah. As if you did not know that and everything else, my little scholar; | till now. I did not dare ask you to share a and Rangoon is a big place with openings for lots of fellows. Stephens has written, | ed to, and so I held my peace. But at last saying he needs a partner, and so I think, I have attained to what I have honestly covif you don't mind, that I shall go out there | eted so long; at last Armstrong & Co. have in a month or two."

pause that ensued she heard the purring of the cat on the hearth, and smelled the faint odor of the mignonette growing in the window box. She knew quite well that the linnets outside were piping to the roses and that Tom Danvers was waiting for her answer; but she also knew that her pulses were growing fainter and fainter, and that

the weight of a long dreaded blow had fallen. "Are you not getting on here?" she asked after a pause. "I thought you told me that your work was increasing; I thought you expected that we might marry in the Spring."

"It was all a mistake, due to my confounded hopefulness. I got a new case or two when Smithson was away for his holidays, but he holds the patients, and will go on hold ng them. The fact is, Mary, there is not scope here for two medical men, and I knew that, though I settled in the place when you wished it. But I have not made a hundred pounds in the past twelve months and you know that means failure."

"But I make a good deal by my teaching and I thought that, working together, we

might get on."

"That is quite out of the question," he said, fretfully, turning away from the pleading, patient eyes. "I am not going to have my wife drudging all day long that we may not starve. I'll support her myself, or do without her."

The pale hands lying on the piece of needlework pressed each other a little, then the sweet voice spoke softly and firmly.

"I have been thinking often lately, Tom, that you would be wiser to do without me. You see we have known each other for so long that we have really grown to be more friends than lovers, and I am far older than you in reality, though not perhaps in years, and so I cannot help believing at times that our engagement has been a mistake."

"Oh, you do, do you?" wrathfully. "You see it has lasted seven years now, and in seven years, you know, your science teaches that we change completely, and so I think, Tom, dear, that it would be far better if you ilanned your future without letting any thought of me hamper you. 1 am safe enough, you know; the high school pays me a comfortable salary, and I have Mrs. Gillet, and so, dear, I can quite houestly offer to set you free." She was smil . ing at him bravely, and her eyes were very

"You are tired of me, I suppose? You imagine that I am likely to to be a failure, and you women care only for success," he answered bitterly.

her heart was weeping.

clear and bright, but she had an idea that

"I suppose the working ones of us know that success comes some time to the steady and patient," she said, the first hard tone sounding in her voice.

"And have I not been either?" "Dear Tom, don't imagine that I wish to find fault or criticise; I love you far too well for that; there is no one in all the world as dear to me as you are. But do you not think yourself that our engagement has been toc protracted to seem hopoful now? You don't feel it as I do; it seems to take all my strength away to see our life together always

slipping further and further off." "If I make things worse for you, of course that alters matters." His face had lost its smiling softness, his brow was stern

and angry. "You are my youth and my happiness, the end or my dreams," she said passionately; "the want of you will leave my

whole future barren." "Then why need you give me up?" "Because I think you will be freer without me; because you are learning to dread me, and so the love is growing imperfect?"

"It was for your sake I thought of Rangoon." he said sullenly. "Yes,—dear, and it is for your sake, Heaven knows, that I propose to give you

up. I am a drag on you, and what you feel for me is far more friendship than love." "If you think so I have nothing more to say." He rose to go, stiffly, and then the

tender heart in her failed. "Oh, Tom, if it were not best for you, do

you think I would have spoken?"

She wanted him to tell her that it was not best for him; she wanted him to prove to her that all her doubts were needless, but she had hurt him, and at her relenting he hardened himself.

"If it is best for you, that is enough," he said, and took his hat and left her without | and just as there is a prospect of something

looking her again.

When the door had closed behind him Mary Ranley sat five minutes motionless. The airy bubble she had spent seven years blowing was shattered by her own touch. She scarcely realized what had happened yet, but there was a numb aching at her heart, far worse than any keen, comprehending pang. Tom was gone, and Tom was the lover of her whole life; but-and in this gether-married. But still, if you prefer after all, I don't mind so very much."

capacity she would miss him far more-he | me to grab on here, I shall do it, so as you had always been her p t and protegy. What would her motherly nature do now, without any one to plan for or protect?

Would he write to her, she wondered, or would she be left always without tidings? relieved that they had parted after the first

edge of pain had worn off? Six days passed without even an indirect word from him, and the morning's work was acquiring a maddening monotony, and the evening silence a despairing loneliness. Maryhad few girl friends and no confldantes. and so her heart-ache missed the common alleviation of talking it over. If he never came or wrote, if she never heard of him some, blue-eyed, fair haired Tom, whom again; there was no one in all the world to

only in years. They were lovers now, and her with silence forever; he would send her they would be husband and wife one day; | a message one day, and it would be one at least that hope had beautified existence of peace and friendship. That faith grew for both of them during seven years. Seven in her day by day, battling with the growshe returned from the walk she had taken to escape from her thoughts.

But the letter was not from Tom; she saw that as she unfolded it. The writing was Tom crossed the room, and bent over her | bigger, bolder, more legible. She read it all through before she reached the signature. When she had seen that she read the letter again. It was from John Hayward, the man she had always thought Mousie Graham's lover, and it contained an offer of mar-

"I have loved you always, Mary," he wrote, "and I have only refrained from telling you so because I had so little tooffer worse home than you have been accustommade me head of my department, and so I Mary Ranley did not answer. In the dare, after a devotion nearly as protracted as Jacob's, to ask you for my own,'

It was a plain manly statement, and it went to Mary Ranley's sore heart. There | ing. was no gush, no agony of passion, in it; nothing but the simple tale of a man who had known her to be very patient and faithful. Yet his love for her startled her mexpressibly. She had never dreamed of it. There had never seemed anything but the merest good-comradeship in his attitude toward her-but of course his silence and selfrestraint rendered his love all the more flattering, and John would make a good husband. Mary had an idea thas the man who lived straightly and earnestly would love steadfastly, and she felt that the wo man who became John Hayward's wife would have all chances of happiness in her favor. For an instant she wished this offer had come years before. Now, although Tom was not half so fine a character as John Hayward, she loved him, and that made all the difference.

When she came to think of it, it was odd that John made no mention of Tom. Surely he had known she was engaged to him; surely they had always made that patent to every one? Mary Ranley sat thinking over her offer in all its bearings, till the fire

waned and her tea was ice cold. John Hayward's offer was unexpected, but it was very fair and manly. She almost started to find she was considering it, that opposing counsel seemed to be arguing the pros and cons, with herself for judge and jury. On one side were love and ease and pleasure; on the other side was a barren life, holding only the memory of a disappointment. She was not a heroine, and teaching for her bread during a whole lifetime seemed sad and lonely enough.

But then, would not marriage with another than Tom seem almost sacrilege, after all they had planned together? Why their whole future had been mapped out with erch other, and union with John Hayward would be but a dreary deception.

Her letter was written, hurriedly, at last, and when it was finished it was an acceptance. But she told John Hayward the truth. She had loved Tom Danvers honestly for years, but now that they had parted she did not think any memory of him | and more fretful, and so I felt I could not grown accustomed to the routine of life with | would ever rise up between her and the hus- | leave her without a special errand." hand she was prepared to accept and honor. She wrote this all quite calmly, but when it was finished she felt somehow as though she were twenty years older than she had been, and as if life had suddenly become quite humdrum and commonplace. Yet she had no thought of changing her mind. She rang the bell composedly for Bessie, the little maid-of-all-work, and gave her the letter with a hand that never faltered.

> "This is your evening out, I think, Bessie. You may post this for me on your way through the village," she said, bethinking herself even of the little servant's affairs in

> that crisis of her life. "Yes, Miss, surely," Bessie answered blushing, for she too had a lover, and these evenings out meant the joy of the whole

week. Somehow Miss Ranley felt that she want ed the letter out of her reach, and vacillation out of her power.

CHAPTER II.

"I have come to make things right. can't do without you, Mary; you are my sheet-anchor; I have felt adrift since I lost

you." So Tom Danvers spoke, hurrying after her as ahe came home from afternoon school.

There was a drizzling rain falling, and the landscape was blurred, and the heavy clouds hung low, and the woman knew that the face she turned to her lover was pinched and white,

"I thought you had gone, Tom, it is so

long since I heard of you.' "It is a week, and perhaps you did not ask about me. I never thought of going in any mad hurry like that. There is nothing

decided even yet." "Is there not? I thought—I had an idea there was," she answered, falteringly.

"Oh, no, Stephens only wrote to offer me the appointment, and I went to consult you about it when you took me up so shortly. "I did not mean to hurt you," she pro-

tested, meekly. "Well. perhaps some fellows don't mind being thrown over after seven years' waiting

definite at last." "The prospect seemed very vague to me."

smiling faintly. "Oh, because you would not listen. Stephens offers me either three hundred as salary or a share in the proceeds, whichever I like, and he says the climate is good and living not very high, and I had almost persuaded | better keep the letter," she said, faltering, myself, Mary, that we might go out to- a little. "It was really sent to you, and,

cortique to love me."

She had stopped, and they faced cach other, and he saw now how pale she was. "I would go with you to Rangoon if could; it all seems so easy now, when it is too late," she answered with a break in her

"And why is it too late?" "Because I have promised to marry an-

"I have not."

other man." "You have? Well, certainly, you have not lost any time."

She could have laughed with the dreariest, most dismal mirth. She was so contemptible in her own eyes; all she had done looked so strange and uncalled for. Why, that very morning her senses had returned

But he would not be cruel enough to treat | and she knew that a brave, strong-hearted, successful woman-for she was successful in her own way-has no right to throw herself on any man's charity just because he loves her and because her life story has been mistold. If she had only waited to post her letter next day herself it would never have reached its destination. Now John Hay- it" ward had her promise.

There was no escaping from the position in which she had placed herself : there was no possibility of showing herself even excusable; she certainly had hastened with all

speed from the old love to the new. "I had thought you so different from that," Tom said with bewildered incredulity; "I thought you would have been faithful to me even if we had parted-for a while, at least."

"But I was weaker and meaner, you see. I wanted some one to keep me in idleness and buy me fine dresses and treat me well, and, when you could not do it, I closed with the offer of the first man who could." She seemed to take a certain bitter pleasure in her self-accusation now.

"Oh, Mary, I can't believe it. It's not possible! You who were always so high and far removed from the temptations that beset ordinary women !" he burst forth groan-

"You overrated me : I overrated myself. You see now I am not worth taking to Rangoon, not worth loving or thinking about." "But is it really true? Are you not torturing me with a cruel jest?"

"It is quite true; I have promised to be another man's wife, and I wrote him that no thought of you would ever stand between us," she answered, arraigning herself.

"Then you are a heartless woman, and I shall never forgive you!" he burst forth, pronouncing judgment on the spot, and then he rushed past her and out of her sight. while she continued her solitary way with laggard steps and a heart that lay in her bosom heavy as lead.

What can she do now? She has sown the wind, and the harvest of the whirlwind has been very swift and bitter. She has dallied with temptation, and her momentary unfaithfulness has cost her self-respect, But she will be true to herself at last; she will recall the promise that should never have been given. It will not matter as far as her happiness is concerned, but it will be the first step in the painful process of self-restoration.

When her recantation was written there was a load off her mind; but she was not in in any fevor of impatience to post this letter-it would keep till she was on her way to school. After the hurried emotions of the last twenty-four hours she was physically tired, and so she sat rocking herself backward and forward in her wicker chair with a faint sensation of relief in the

motion. Twilight was fading and timid little stars were trembling into the sky beyond the uncartained windows, when there came a soft tap to the door, and Mousie Graham's rosy

roguish face peeped in. "Oh, you are not busy-thank goodness for that! I was half afraid I might find you deep in the Differential Calculus, and I did so

want a good long chat." "Come in dear, I am so glad to see you; it is an oge since you were here before.' "Grannie has been worse lately; weaker

"But she is better to day ."

"Oh yes, ever to much better, and then Annt Lizzie came to pay her a little visit, so I left Grannie with her, and ran over to see you."

"That was very good of you my dear." "Oh no, it was not; I came on business." Mousie laughed and flushed a little, then she drew a letter from her pocket. "This came addressed to me yesterday, but it is evidently meant fer you. It is from that booby, John Hayward; he is always in the elouds, or among the cog-wheels of his looms, and so theresult is a blunder." She unfolded the sheet as she spoke, and banded it to Mary, and this is what stood before the latter's as tonished eyes:

DEAR MISS RANLEY .- In the pleasant excursion we had together last Summer I remember your mentioning a book on ferns that you desired to have, but could not get as you had forgotten the author's name. I have just come across a volume by Teakerstone, the opening chapter of which is on the Osmunda regalis. If you think this is the work in question I shall be happy to forward it to you. Sincerely yours,

JOHN HAYWARD. Mary Ranley was sure some complex machinerry in her head had got out of order, so loud and persistent was the whirring in

When she spoke at last her voice sounded faint and far away.

"Is your name Mary?" "Of course it is, or rather Mary Ann, but everyone calls me Mousie except John Hayward. He thought Mousie no name for a girl, and so he always called me Mary-

Miss Mary; it did sound so funny." "Then, Miss Mary, I have an offer of marriage for you; it came to me, and, naturally enough, I took it to myself."

Mousie was so flurried that she did not notice her friend's perturbation. "I fancied," she said, holding the letter

in her hand, but not looking at it, "that he must have been writing to me and had mixed the covers. That is so like your very clever peeple! But how lucky the letter came to an engaged girl !" "Well, I don't see the luck of it, for

wrote yesterday and accepted him." "Oh, Mary! And Tom!"

"Tom and I had quarreled, and John's letter came at my worst moment, so I accepted him."

Poor Mousie's eyes grew dim,

"You are a generous little darling, but there is no necessity for your sacrifice even if Mr. Hayward would permit it. I wrote him my recantation this afteracon. There is the letter; you can send it to him with your own. He will be sure of its genuineness that way."

Then the two girls kissed and cried over each other, and after the exchange of divers confidences Mousie went away, carrying John's letter, still unread, in her hand.

After she had gone Mary took out her needlework, with an undefined feeling that chaos had come again, and that in the midst of it it was well to hold on to some commonplace, every-day employment.

By and by Bessie came in with the teatray, and as she flitted about the table Mary spoke with the feeling of desperation which makes us always want to lay a finger on our wound.

"You posted my letter last night, Bes-

Bessie paused, the picture of consterna-"Oh, Miss, I'm afraid I forgot all about

"You forgot to take it out, I suppose?" speaking in a voice so high and eager that

it scarcely sounded like her own. "Oh, no Miss; I took it and put it in my water-proof pocket, but Peter met me before I reached the office and then I forgot, but I'll run out with it now in a minute.'

"Bring it to me instead, please; I don't want it posted now." Bessie never knew till this hour why Miss Ranley gave her five shillings instead of the scolding she expected, neither does John Hayward understand why letter number

one never reached him.

Tom Danvers went to Rangoon, as he had said, in much disgust and despair. Mary' unfaithfulness had turned the sunlight into darkness for him, but through his pain a certain resolution to be and do something grew daily. He would forget her, he would never speak of her, and if men uttered her name he would turn aside, but he would do so well with his own life that one day she would know him the superior of the man she had married. So, in much wrath and scorn, he sailed away to succeed or fail as might be.

As for Mary, her life was all at the dead level of monotony now. There was always the morning's work, always the evening's enforced idleness, and periodically the long empty holidays in which her loneliness grew

only more assertive. She was growing old, she would soon be 30, and already there where white threads in the glossy smoothness of her hair.

But she was a good teacher, she was success in the high school, and she clung to that poor triumph as her last source o happiness. It was she, the strong one, who would do a small work in a small groove all her life, and Tom who would grow to success and power. But she deserved that for her wrong estimate of both of them. And every one knew that he was doing well and that he had forgotten her. Why, it was only the other day that Mr. Wheelhouse had stopped her to tell her that he had just been asking Tom by letter why he was neglecting Mary Ranley.

"It was very good of you," she had said, going home with another shaft rankling in

her sore heart.

It was dusk as she went wearily down the street. It was very still and empty, and she felt thankful for that and for the coming peace of her solitary parlor. But she stood for an instant on the doorstep to watch the trembling stars, before she rang the bell. Bessie answered it with a beaming face. She was very fond of Miss Ramley, who had always been kind to her.

"There is a visitor for you in the parlor.

"Oh, very well." Mary expected one of the pupil teachers who wanted a certificate; so she went up-stairs and put her out-door things away, and brushed her hair, and then came down to be the school-mistress at home. But it was not Jane Blakeney who rose at her entrance, but a tall, brownbearded man, who looked into her face, and then held out his hands to her without a

"Tom! she said with a little fluttering

sigh; "Tom !" "Yes, it is I. I came back as soon as ever I knew you were free." "I have not deserved it."

"Perhaps not, but then, you see, I could not do without you. I need some one to scold and keep me right, "Oh, no, Tom, never again: old things

and old habits are all ended." "And you threw the other follow over?" "No, not that exactly; it was all a mis-

take—all my pride and his stupidity; but I have been well punished for everything. never thought you would come back." "I did not mean to come back, till found there was no getting on without |

you." sobbing against his shoulder:

"Well, I am here now to take care of you; won't that be reversing the old order

of things?" smiling at her fondly. And so it came about that Mary Ranley, despite her dangerous hesitation between

two stools, found a comfortable seat on one of them, after all.

A Ride for Life,

-

from Montana this week, tells this story which, however we cannot vouch for :- On | are at present in a very disturbed state, owing to the giving out of their rations. From the reserve he was followed by five | The Prime Minister might as well have at-Indians, who fired upon him. He had a good horse, and put the spurs to him, gradually pulling ahead of them. When he thought he had distanced his pursuers, he stopped and took off his saddle, to rest his horse and get something to eat. He had scarcely settled himself when, on looking up, he saw two Indians taking a bird's eye view of him from a butte. As soon as they saw that they were seen, they began pumping the contents of their rifles in his direction. He says he suddeuly came to the conclusion that he was not hungry, and that he had urgent business farther north. He then saddled up and struck out for Macleod, which he reached without further accident.

"In that case, Mary, I suppose you had in the city of Utrecht, which is supplied | bent atmosphere resultant from the expulwith an exceedingly pure water, it has been found necessary to make use of tin service lips engaged in creating it. - Bloomington pipes coated externally with lead.

Uncrowned Heroes.

It is rather a strange thing that most of the heroes of history are made famous by deeds of bravery in war, in which they have sacrificed many lives, and in some instances their own, in support of principles and parties. They fought tangible foes for results that were almost sure to have direct effect upon temporary affairs.

There is another class of heroes which also includes many brave ones of the gentler sex, who do not flinch to go where duty calls them, no matter what the danger may be. They face invisible fees, and their victories are renowned for lives saved instead of lost. It requires a brave heart to enter into a conflict in which hundreds will fall, to oppose armed force with force; but how much more courage and constancy are needed to go into the house where deadly pestilence prevails and fight it day after day, week after week, to comfort the dying with the consolations of religion, give hope to the sick in body and at heart, to be patient and watchful through all, and yet have the fact every moment brought to mind that the nurse is just as vulnerable to the attacks of the mysterious foo as were its victims who are now writhing in its clutches.

There is said to be something inspiring in battle, something that makes the naturally brave man lose sight entirely of self and heed only the conflict. The roar of guns, the clash of arms and the sight of multitudes rushing to the charge draw the soldier onward, as the sound of bugle and the tramp of many hoofs influence the cavalry horse, that has lost the rider, but nevertheless keeps his place in the ranks. No battle cry cheers these other heroes. All is quiet except when broken by the rumble of a hearse or doctor's buggy over the stones, and the sobs and sighs of the bereaved and suffering -the well have fled; the sick and their faithful attendants alone remain.

To the fact that many such noble characters have existed in all ages, the world itself owes its life. Without them disease would soon ruin life, cities perish and the gardens of the earth become either wildernesses or deserts. During fearful cholera visitations, and whenever and wherever the yellow fever, small pox or plague have broken out with terrible effect, human nature has not proved wanting in pity. Heroes and heroines have sprang up on all sides, ready for the labor of love, whose only earthly rewards may be quiet graves, or in extreme cases in a quick-limed trench beside some of those whom they have been trying to save. The true nobility of character that takes such risks for others can never be described, but their example should be kept in mind and with it the thought that there is something braver than imperilling one's life in sanguinary conflict, and that is putting it at stake that those of others may be saved.—Presbyterian Banner.

Lord Randolph Churchill.

Scarcely above the middle height, of slight build, and apparently delicate constitution, Lord Randolph Churchill has smooth dark brown hair, parted down the middle and thin at the crown. The head is small, the eyes large, the nose short, and the cheek bones somewhat high. His lordship's moustache is, however the most conspicuous object of his personal appearance. It is the large blonde moustache of a Zouave of politics. Once, by mistake, Mr. Jacob Bright alluded to the noble lord as "the member for Woodcock," and the House laughed consumedly. And once a newspaper scribe hit upon a happier title, "The Bantam of Debate." From four o'clock in the afternoon, all through dreary question time, he sits impatiently in his place, gently agitating his left knee, nursing above his right, and affection stely caressing the moustache. Dexter and sinister hands go up alternately to the silky darling of his lips. Fresh with rest, or haggard and pale with late hours, Lord Randolph never ceases to fondle the moustache. It lends an added joy to the unfrequent hour of victory, or while Lord Hartington, sixteen years his senior, attempts, but fails, to wither him with an assumption of patriarchal superiority. Undoubtedly this old-young man prefers politics to what is called pleasure, yet does not ignore the claims of secrety in the world of words. He is of the very few members of Parliament who dress for dinner, So the flowers and songsters of the virgin forest. unseen, unheard of man, are made pleasant to look on; and what nature does for bud and blossom, the barber and the tailor do for the lively leader of the Fourth Party. Lord Randolph's clothes are, however, but the husk of him, the outside part first seen. The kernel within seems sound, and, if carefully preserved, may hereafter become illustrious. His industry is marvellous, his readiness of resource worthy of all praise; and though he speaks frequently, he is on the whole worth listening to. He is not elequent with the elequence of Mr. Glad-And then Mary burst into tears, and stood | stone or Mr. Bright. He has, indeed, a slight lisp, an imperfection of vocal delivery "Oh, Tom, I have missed you so !" she | which spoils his pronunciation of some of the consciants, particularly of the letter S. If, however, he never rises to lofty heights of declamation, he seldom sinks below the safe level of commonplace. His occasional observations are neatly turned, and his set speeches cleverly constructed. He is scarcely ever at a loss for an idea, never for a word. Reverence—what is called veneration-cannot, however, be described as his strong point, Supposed to be subordinate to Sir Stafford Northcote, when it suits him to do so, he defies his chief; and the approv-A man named McCormick, who arrived | ed leaders of the Liberal Party fret under his stinging and unsparing invective. Though not always brilliant, his sallies are the way to Macleod he passed through the often cutting. His daring knows no bounds. South Peigan Agency, where the Indians | Mr. Gladstone once called across the floor that he had utterly smashed, pulverized, and demolished him. That was a mistake,

A Kiss Explained.

tempted to annihilate a Jack-in-the Box by

shutting down the lid.

A kiss is a paroxysmal contact between the labial appendages attached to the superior and inferior maxillaries respectively of a man and woman or two women. The younger the parties are the more paroxysmal will be the paroxysm, and in case it be observed by the fond father of the paroxyzed young lady. there is also likely to be perigree between the paroxyzer's pedalic junction and the phalanged extremities of the metatarsus. and other brica-brac depending from the lower end of the old gentleman's right leg. The kiss itself is not the paroxysm. It It is stated in the Cosmos les Mondes that | is merely the vibrations of the superincumsion of sweetness from each of the pairs of