

# BONNIE BESSIE.

"Bonnie Bessie" every one called her, and rightly enough for of all the Highland lassies who gathered at the little Kirk Sabbath mornings not one was half so pretty and winning as Bessie.

Squire Renfrew of the Red Pass was desperately in love with Bessie, and sought to make her his wife in spite of difference in rank. The herds at the Red Pass were the finest and largest in the neighborhood; the barn and storehouses were always well filled. He was a bachelor, something over two score years old. And he wanted "Bonnie Bessie" for his wife.

"If the lassie thinks she can fancy me," he said, addressing Bessie's grandmother, as he stood under the low, brown rafters of the little Black Lynn cottage, a hot flush mounting to the shining crown of his bald head, "if the lassie thinks she can fancy me, the bargain's made. I'm ready and willing to lead her to the kirk to-morrow, and if a good, true husband and some gold and silver will make her happy, she'll be as happy as a queen at the Red Pass."

Bessie listened, with wide, startled eyes, burning cheeks, and quivering lips. She held her peace, standing, tall and slim, in a sort of stunned silence, until her gray-haired lover had taken his leave. Then she burst forth into vehement, passionate protest.

The old grandmother suffered her to storm until her passion was spent.

"Well, 'tis o'er now, and ye'll simmer down and keep quiet, mebbe. I've let ye have your say, and now I'll have mine. Ye're poor folk, me and you. I found it hard to get bread when I had but my own mouth to feed, and since I've been burdened w' you I've gone to bed many a night fit to cry w' hunger. But I've borne it all an' done my best, an' always been willing to gi' you a share o' my last crust."

"But dearest grandma—" "Now, lookie here, my lass," interrupted the old woman, lifting her bony finger and glowering fiercely upon Bessie, "if ye're fule enou' to refuse this good fortin', that ends it 'twixt us two. You pack out o' my house, and ne'er cross the threshold again."

Bessie was silent. The great world beyond the Highland peaks seemed so dim and far away, and the old home scenes were so familiar.

The autumn days drifted on and in the springtime she was going to kirk with Squire Renfrew and he made his wife.

The springtime came and the wedding day was close at hand, when, one evening just before the gloaming, Bessie went to fill her pitcher, as usual, at the rocky spring near by. She had accomplished her task and lifted the pitcher to her shoulder and had started for the cottage, her white, shapely feet twinkling prettily below the short petticoat as she stepped from stone to stone in crossing the little babbling stream, when suddenly she uttered a stifled cry and staggered to a moss-grown boulder, sat down, and put the pitcher hastily on the ground, pressing her hand on her heart and trembling all over.

"It's his ghaist, it's his ghaist," she cried, "and O, how sair he looked at me!"

Whatever she had seen, or fancied she had seen there was nothing in sight when she next looked up; nothing except the overhanging rocks of the glen, the brook shimmering in the evening light, and the white birch trees swaying centrally against the sky. "He has come from his grave," she cried, glancing fearfully around. "I dare na, dare na do it. O! forgive me, Jamie, that I ever thought o' it."

She drew a silken cord which encircled her throat from her bosom as she spoke and kissed the slender hoop of silver which depended from it. "I'll never ha' peace if I marry the squire," she said, "and I ought not to ha' it; I shall feel I am a traitor. And, O! Jamie, Jamie, after all, I love no one but you, and never can."

Suddenly she rose with resolution stamped on every feature.

"I must give the squire his ring back," she said, brushing the last tears from her eye. "It is hard on him, but there is no other way. Then, Jamie, then perhaps you'll forgive me, dear."

Leaving her pitcher there she tossed back her abundant locks as she finished this adjuration and went speeding away through the falling darkness with the light foot of a chamouis.

When she reached the Red Pass the bright glow of the warm ingleside lit the windows. She approached the nearest one and pressed her sad, tired, yet resolute face against the glass.

A minute and she tapped lightly against the glass. The squire turned quickly, stared, and then started to his feet.

"Well, now, well, now, what's the meaning o' this?" he cried, rushing across the room and throwing up the window. "Bessie, my lassie, what's happened?"

"Something that never should ha' happened," she answered, looking at him with a sort of desperate defiance, and drawing the gold ring from her finger as she spoke. "I've come to give this back to you, Squire Renfrew. I was wrong ever to let you put it on."

"Why, child, what do you mean?" "Take your ring," she said. "You've

heard of 'Auld Robin Grey,' maybe, haven't you?" "Yes, I have. But what then?" "Well, I had a Jamie once," she went on, clutching at the little silver ring suspended from her neck, a great throb of pain shaking her; "he gave me this, and I can't ever wear any other ring. He—he went off to seek his fortune," with another repressed sob, "and he was lost at sea. I tried to forget him, but I cannot. I can't keep my promise to you, Squire Renfrew—I—I couldn't feel like she did to 'Auld Robin Grey'—I should hate you—I should—" And here she broke down completely.

He took the ring she offered and paused for a moment. A look of unutterable pain and regret came into his eyes.

"So," he said, slowly, "you have come to tell me this, and to ask for your freedom? And you really think, too, you have seen Jamie's ghost?"

"Yes. And I shall never return to grandmother again. I dare not. So I am going away."

"Bessie, my darling," cried a voice, as his strong arm clasped her. The next moment she was on the breast of her lover, who had come back alive and safe.

A few days after there was a happy marriage at the kirk, Squire Renfrew himself giving away the bride, our "Bonnie Bessie."

## A SOLDIER'S LIFE.

Only Veterans Can Realize the Sufferings of Army Life.

Strong Men Made Helpless Invalids - The Story of One Who Suffered Day and Night for Twenty Years.

From the Chatham Banner.

Everyone living in and around the village of Wheatley knows Mr. Peter Sippe, who has been a resident of the place for upwards of twenty years, and who during the whole of that period up to last year was a constant sufferer from acute rheumatism complicated by other troubles until he was worn almost to a shadow. At the age of twenty he joined the 21st New York Volunteers, and after being a member of that organization for three years, he joined the New York Cavalry and served through the war of the rebellion. He took part in the historic battles of Bull's Run, Fredericksburg, Culpepper, etc., and at one time rode eighty miles at a stretch, carrying dispatches through the enemy's lines. On another occasion, he was on horseback for four days and five nights and it is little wonder that such hardships left him, as they did thousands of others, with a wrecked constitution. While in the army as a result of poor food, and often worse water, he was attacked with diarrhoea, which assumed a chronic form. This of course greatly weakened him, and he fell an easy prey to the pains and terrors of rheumatism. To a correspondent of the Banner he said:

"I never expected to be any better in this world, as I had tried scores of medicines which brought me no relief at all. Sometimes for weeks at a time I could not lie down, or sleep, and could eat but little. I was not only troubled with rheumatism, but at times was subject to fainting spells, and at other times everything appeared to turn black before my eyes. I would often feel sick at my stomach, at which times food would prove loathsome to me. My kidneys also troubled me greatly, and my nervous system seemed completely shattered. Tongue can scarcely tell how much I endured during those long and weary years. About a year ago I was advised to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and it was a grand day for me that I began their use. After I had used a few boxes my pains had decreased and I was considerably better. Later, through a continued use of the pills, I could eat, sleep and felt as able to work as I had done twenty years ago. I now feel well and strong and if any of my old comrades see this and are afflicted I would urge them to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills."

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There was no infallible remedy for seasickness, he said. It could be relieved, and even prevented, in persons who were not of a squeamish disposition. Persons of different temperament required different treatment. What was good for a bilious patient might not be good for one who was not bilious. Acid and effervescent drinks were remedial, and a bandage on the abdomen also helped. But the surgeon finally said, the time was near when there would be no seasickness, when the 800-foot ship, with lots of beam and deep bilge keels, would make voyaging in the most tumultuous weather almost as comfortable as staying on shore in your parlor.

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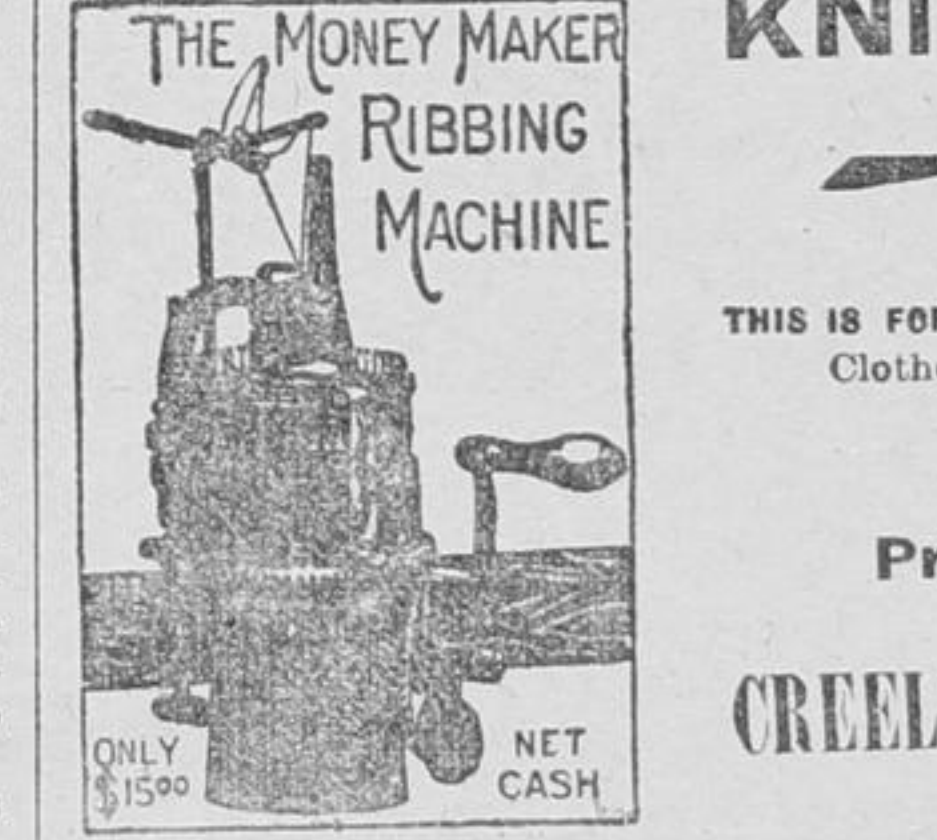
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