

## NO. 17's Wife.

No. 17 sat in his cell, white and despairing. He had endured two years of prison life uncomplainingly, cheered by the knowledge that he was innocent of the crime with which he had been charged—and cheered also by the visits of his sweet-faced wife Elsie, who came regularly to the gaol as often as the cast-iron regulations of the establishment would permit. But of late Elsie's visits had ceased, and to-day the convict knew the reason for their cessation. She was ill—very ill—and the letter from her sister which lay in his hands told him that the doctors feared the worst. This is how the note ran:—

Dear Arthur,—I have some rather sad tidings to give you, but we must both be brave and hope for the best. Poor Elsie is dangerously ill, and though all that we could possibly do has been done, the medical man holds out small hope of her ultimate recovery. He states that she is suffering from no particular illness, but simply from a general debility, brought about by fretting over your absence. If only you could come to her, it would probably be the means of saving her life; but, alas! that is impossible. She is in God's hands, as we all are. I am praying to him to spare to us the life that we both love—it is for you to pray also. Good-bye, and God bless you. May he give us strength to bear the blow that seems so near.

Your loving sister-in-law—KATE. Arthur Desparde was no coward—no weaking. The humiliation and suffering of penal servitude he had borne like a man, but those few simple words bowed his head to earth and brought the salt tears to his eyes. To feel that his absence was causing Elsie's decline—to feel that one short hour of liberty would in all probability be the means of preserving her, and to know at the same time that the prison walls stood between him and her—to feel and know all this would have maddened any man. The feeling and the knowledge maddened Arthur Desparde now.

"I will go to her," he muttered hoarsely, "come what may! Let them retake me afterwards—let them serve me as they will—but go to her I must, and . . . I will!"

A fly lay at his feet. He had found it the day previous whilst laboring in the yard, and he had secreted it in his clothing, believing that some day he might require its aid. Climbing the narrow wall of his cell, he discovered that the small window thereof was guarded merely by two iron bars of medium thickness. Without an instant's hesitation he proceeded to file these bars, hoping with ardent hope that no warder might intervene to abruptly terminate his labors.

Fortune favored him, and the work was completed without interruption. Two minutes later he was sliding down a pipe which led from the cell to the courtyard, and to scale the low wall of the yard was but the work of an instant. Then with a muttered prayer for the protection of Heaven on his journey he set out for the house where his wife lay between life and death.

"Arthur! Is it possible it can be you? How ever have you contrived to come here?"

It was Elsie's sister who spoke, and she stood, fully dressed, in the doorway, scanning the escaped convict's features with amazement.

"Yes, it is I, and you shall hear afterwards how I managed to make good my flight. . . . But tell me, first of all—how is she?"

There is little change. At times she is unconscious, and during such periods she mentions your name incessantly. When she is conscious she talks of you to me, saying that the one desire left to her is to see you at her side again."

"Thank Heaven," said the convict in a low tone; "thank Heaven she is still alive. I am not too late."

Then he explained to the wondering girl how he had contrived to escape from gaol, adding also that there was every chance of his being retaken in the morning. "But let them come," he said sullenly; "when once I have held my darling in my arms again, and cheered her sickness, I care little what happens. And now, it will be well for you to tell her I am here; but break the news to her as gradually as you can."

Kate nodded, and left the room on tip-toe. Presently she returned, her eyes swimming with tears.

"She knows all, Arthur, and is waiting for you. Pray God that your coming may woo her back to life—"

"Amen!" said the convict, huskily, as he went slowly up the stairs towards his wife's chamber.

She lay very white and very still, but there came a warm glow of joy upon her faded cheek as he entered. She put out her thin hand to him, and a moment later they were clasped in each other's arms.

"I knew you would come to me, darling," she sobbed, "for I have prayed day and night that I might see you once more—and Heaven has heard my prayer. Oh, Arthur, dear, dear Arthur, life has been very hard without you—without your love."

"Poor girl. Only too well can I



GIRL'S THREE-QUARTER COAT.  
4 to 12 years.

The three-quarter coat is a conspicuous and deserved favorite for little girls' wear and is adapted to many materials. The smart little model shown is of black taffeta, with stitched edges and an additional collar of cream point de Venice, and is perfectly suited to the season's needs, but cloth or chevot in dark blue, tan, grey or white can be substituted when preferred.

The coat is cut in box style, with a slightly curved back and straight fronts, the fitting being accomplished by means of shoulder and under-arm seams. As illustrated the sleeves are in coat style, but the pattern also provides for the Bishop model shown in the back view. At the neck is a big turn-over collar, that is quite complete without the lace, and pockets are inserted in each front and finished with stitched overlaps. The right front laps over the left, in double-breasted style, and the closing is effected by means of buttonholes and buttons, which, in the original, are of handsome cut steel.

To cut this coat for a girl of 8 years of age 4½ yards of material 21 inches wide, 2 yards 44 inches wide, or 1½ yards 50 inches wide, will be required.

realize what you have felt—knowing what I have endured myself . . . But, come. Let us talk of other things. You have been ill, they tell me, very ill."

"Yes, for I wanted you. Now that you are here I shall soon be well."

A terrible pang shivered through the convict's soul. How was he to tell her the truth? How was he to tell her that before many hours had passed he would in all likelihood be taken back to prison to be separated from her once more? He could not bring himself to confide to her the cruel truth, and he resolved to let her remain in ignorance of his peril. Perchance she believed that he had been released; he would not deceive her.

All through the long night husband and wife went on talking in low, confiding tones, happy in each other's society, desiring no other joy on earth. Through the long night they remained with hands clasped, all-in-all one to the other. Then morning came and Kate entered. She whispered gently to Arthur:—

"The doctor is here, and he must not see you in your prison dress. Come away for a few minutes."

Kissing his wife, and telling her he would return soon, the young man quitted the apartment. The doctor entered, with a cheering "good morning. Well, and how do you find yourself to-day, Mrs. Desparde?" he asked briskly.

"Much, much better, doctor," she replied, gratefully; "in fact, I think I shall soon be off your hands."

"Bravo," cried the good-natured physician, as he felt the patient's pulse. "Do you know, my dear madam, I believe that your prediction is about correct. Your pulse has gone up most wonderfully, and already your eyes seem stronger—more healthy. My physic is doing wonders."

But it was not the physic that had wrought this mighty change in the invalid. It was the presence of a certain figure, clothed in the hideous grey that marks the garb of Her Majesty's prisons. It was the presence of that figure and the sound of his voice that had changed Elsie Desparde from a dying woman into one in whom the will and the ability to live were now predominant.

The doctor took his leave after a short interval, promising to look in on the following day. Then Arthur was allowed to return to the sick room, and once more he took up his position beside his wife. Towards noon Kate entered the apartment, trembling violently. Controlling her voice with an effort so as not to alarm her sister, she said:—

"Arthur, will you come outside for a moment? I want to speak to you."

Arthur Desparde guessed what it was that the white-faced girl had to communicate. He kissed his wife

very tenderly and then turned towards the door.

"They have come for me, have they not? he asked in a whisper, as he followed her out of the room.

"Yes. They are in the parlor. I begged them to behave very quietly, as there was illness in the house."

"Good, brave girl. God will reward you for your devotion. Now listen to me. Elsie must not know that I have been retaken until she is quite strong enough to bear the news—until, in fact, her health is restored. Promise me that she shall not know."

"She shall not know."

"God bless you, Kate."

He wrung her hand, raised it to his lips, and then went downstairs with firm steps. A warder in uniform stood in the sitting-room, and another person was beside him. It was the Governor of the gaol, and with swiftly beating heart the convict wondered why this official had come to the house. It was not usual for the Governor of a prison to accompany his warders on such a mission as the recapture of a runaway convict.

"Gentlemen," he cried, in a low voice, "I surrender myself to you freely. I have only one request to make. Let me be taken away quietly so that my wife who lies ill upstairs may not know of my departure."

The Governor smiled. "No, 17," he said, gently, "it is certainly my duty to have you taken back to the gaol, but at the same time it is my duty also to give you some very pleasant news."

There was a pause. Desparde stood rooted to the floor, his eyes on fire. What was coming next? What was the news that the Governor had come to communicate?

"My tidings," continued the latter, "are simply these. A man named Charles Morrison died last night in Chilton Gaol. Before he passed away he sent for the chaplain and made a confession. He confessed that the forgery for which you were condemned was committed by himself, and that he alone was guilty. The confession was sent by special messenger to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with the result that a telegram reached me two hours ago authorizing your release as soon as the necessary papers can be made out. You will return with me to the gaol, but not as a prisoner—and I think you may take it from me that before the week is out you will be a free man."

Then very simply and very courteously the white-haired Governor held out his hand and Desparde grasped it with a mighty grip of gratitude, whilst from his lips there came the choking words:—

"At last—at last—thank God—thank God!"

Three days later there arrived at the gaol an important-looking document bearing at the top the magic letters, "V. R.," and beneath those letters it was written that Her Majesty had been pleased to grant a free pardon to Arthur Desparde from that day forward. And within a little space he who had been known as "No 17" stood once more upon the threshold of his home.

Kate met him at the door—a smile upon her bonnie face. "Elsie has heard all," she said, gently; "and she is nearly well. The good news has saved her life. She is asking for you at this moment."

Desparde waited to hear no more. An instant later Elsie's face was pressed close to his own; and husband and wife were re-united after their bitter separation.

"God has been very good to me," she whispered through her sobs, "and He has given you back to me."

"Yes," said Desparde, gently—"to remain together till death shall part us."

"And afterwards," whispered Elsie; "God willing."

PAYING FOR A PLEASANTRY.

It was a prisoner of great activity of speech who recently faced the magistrate in the Philadelphia Central Police Court.

"What is your name?" asked the magistrate.

"Michael O'Halloran," was the reply.

"What is your occupation?"

"Phwat's that?"

"What is your occupation? What work do you do?"

"O'im a sailor."

The magistrate looked incredulous. "I don't believe you ever saw a ship," he said.

"Didn't Oi, thin?" said the prisoner. "An' phwat do yez t'ink Oi come over in—a hack?"

The Philadelphia Record says that it went hard with Michael O'Halloran after that.

PERTINENT IMPERTINENCE.

A certain Sunday school superintendent always conducts the lesson review in his school. He spends about five minutes in explaining the lesson, and then asks:

"Now, has anyone a question to ask?"

A member of the boys' junior class raised his hand.

"Well, what is your question?" asked the superintendent.

"Please, sir, are we going to have a pic-nic this summer?"

Out of every 100 pounds of paper manufactured in the world, only six pounds is made into books.

Kangaroo have been known to jump a height of 11 feet. A deer's best record is 9 feet, 6 inches.

## FARM-FIELD AND GARDEN

### EARLY PLOWING OF STUBBLE.

Whether stubble land is to be sown to a crop this fall or next spring we believe it should be plowed as early as possible. We have observed that early-plowed land grows better wheat than land plowed just before sowing, though as a matter of fact much depends upon the kind of soil.

Let us take oat stubble first. According to our way of thinking it should be plowed immediately after the oats are off the ground and sown to cowpeas, rape, Kafir corn, early sorghum or other forage crop which will afford excellent feed for farm stock until frost comes. If the oat stubble land is desired for wheat it will make no difference with the crops mentioned, except that you would get very little, if any, feeding value from them. Their value under such circumstances would lie in the addition of humus to the soil. If the seed were expensive it would not be profitable to adopt this method, though we prefer to have some kind of growth on the land after it is plowed until ready to seed, and any one of the forage crops indicated would make considerable growth from the middle of July to the first or middle of September, when wheat-sowing time is at hand. We have known oats to be sown on such land with good results. The success of the forage crops, however, sown at the time of the year soon after wheat and oats are cut will depend upon the amount of

prevented heading an immense amount of green feed can be secured. Hay cannot be secured the first year from seed sown on fall grains. The only way to get a hay crop the first season is to sow timothy or clover or both on a field especially prepared for this purpose. The seeding should be done in early spring, just as soon as the ground can be worked. It may be necessary to delay the seeding of clover until all danger of frost is past. See that the seed is covered to a depth of one to 1½ inches. If the season is at all favorable, a fairly good crop can be cut the first year. Where clover is needed alone sow 10 to 12 lbs. per acre. Where they are mixed say 6 lbs. of clover and six lbs of timothy. This may seem a little heavy, for some localities, but it is much better to put on a heavy seeding than to get only a part of a catch.

ENSILAGE FROM OLD CORN.

I usually let the ear form and the blades begin to die, writes Mr. Dillwyn Stratton. One cannot always have the grain glaze. Frost or drouth may interfere, but if nothing prevents let it ripen beyond the roasting ear stage. Filling every other day gives advantage in packing and consequently silage may keep a little better. With a blower cutter very nice ensilage resulted from filling one day without anyone in silo save to direct the swiftly flowing torrents around the walls of pit.

I use a corn binder and find it best to be a little ahead so corn will wilt somewhat in bundle before handling. I have filled silos with corn that has lain in bundle two weeks and had satisfactory results, but with rain and warm weather would fear mold. Some years ago a neighbor ran short of ensilage corn and hauled field corn that had been in shock for several weeks to finish filling. From the tank for engine we ran hose to carrier running ½ in. stream in elevator sending a sprinkle all over pit, disagreeable enough for the men tramping, but resulting in satisfactory feed for the cows.

When I have had a surplus of southern ensilage corn I have set a waggon load of the bundles in a shock. I feed from silo until room was obtained for the remainder, to which I added nearly one barrel of water to the load. All of our experience with fodder partly dried, goes to show that when well wet and well tramped it makes fair ensilage. So to the many who decide at the last moment this fall to build silos, if frost kills the corn before you are ready to fill, do not be scared but fill and wet down.

THIRTEEN AT TABLE.

"Ever sit down at table where there was just thirteen?" asked the man in the shabby ulster.

"Once," replied the man with the white spot in his moustache.

"Well, you never observed that any bad luck followed it, did you?"

"Well—haw—yes. Bad luck for most of the thirteen."

"Any of them die?"

"Not that I know of. Never heard of any of them dying."

"Not enough victuals to go around?" queried the man with the snub nose.

"Who's talking about victuals? There wasn't any victuals."

"I thought you said you sat down to a table where there were thirteen persons?"

"That's what I said. The table was in a lawyer's office. It was a meeting of creditors. There were twelve of them. I was the other man."

There was a long pause and then the man with the baggy trousers inquired:—

"In what way did the meeting prove unlucky, if I may ask?"

"None of 'em ever got a brass button out of me," answered the man with the white spot on his moustache, heaving a deep sigh.

GOOD OLD SCOTCHMAN.

A Scotchman went to London for a holiday. Walking along one of the streets, he noticed a bald-headed chemist standing at his shop door, and inquired if he had any hair restorer.

"Yes sir," said the chemist. "Step inside, please. There's an article I can recommend. Testimonials from great men who have used it. It makes the hair grow in twenty-four hours."

"Aweel," said the Scot, "ye can gie the top o' yer head a rub wi' it, and I'll look back the morn and see if ye're tellin' the truth."

The chemist returned the bottle to the shelf and kicked the errand boy for laughing.

England uses annually 33,000 tons of hops, but grows only 27,000 tons.



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