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AND COUNTY OF HALTON INTELLIGENCER.

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WESTERN. GOING SOUTH. 5-42 A.M. 3-33 P.M.

VALLEY RAILWAY. GOING EAST. 7-31 A.M. 3-3 P.M. 7.04 P.M.

for Hornby, Drumquin, Omagh, Strabane, &c., at 9 o'clock a.m.

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il, by

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NG GIRL'S WOOING.

BY E. P. ROE.

"His Sombre Rivals," "From st to Earnest," &c., &c.

ey were alone again for a during the ramble, Graydon "I wish to make sure of lence, Madge; I wish you to it my word. I don't think een quite just to me. I am blooded fellow, and, no doubt, impressions and impulses; k constancy is one of my ver wavered in my affection until I misunderstood you im after my return, and then misapprehension kept me perplexed much of the as true to Miss Wildmere as ere was anything to be con and yet for years she was thing more than a fancy, a

Since my return you know she was to me. Nothing is in than that I never loved I not know what the word . There is a chapter in your t I don't know much about, me I could make good my o anything within my power o happiness. I have ima a little management, guided absolute fidelity—"

ay anything more about that, she said, firmly. "Not if my e a thousand times would I or permit him to be sought any such way as you

rstood, then."

settled forever."

that case," he said, with a eus laugh, "there may be a me within the next hundred

e willing to take a woman once given her heart to

know anything about 'a I would take you, Madge; circumstances as that I can

," said Mr. Muir, sad- ering around in the walk, he matter with you? Why and Madge keep with For some reason we are erated all the time. This is ot. Let us sit down here ally party and have a little long to get back home, may sing for us as much

Here she would attract of strangers, and that ends and so I feel as if I had a bird, but never a song. In place no others will hear

What do you wish? I ding."

own choice."

an old song, then, about and with notes rivalling I wish there had been vespers in the dense woods sang a quaint melody, lis ning faint echoes from the rocks. When she came to the she gave Graydon a sh h seemed to signify, "these for you."

then Lucy is a friend for me if that can be— and live unselfishly. et for him a good husband to y foot to trip for me."

ussed she again encountered gaze with a glance which e I had done you justice?"

isfied, and felt that the relatives had secured a wer than might otherwise given—an answer that con could hope for then. ejaculated Mr. Muir, very

an appreciative remark, d Madge, laughing. d it expressed my views," ghter, dryly.

"Come, Mary, ing to supper."

I think the song very pretty," "only there are no such ndsome."

followed with Graydon sho l laughing softly to herself. are not hiding vexation at Graydon asked.

I understand Henry. You am always hiding something. st should have understood my

adge," he said, gravely, "and made it clear that you under-

I am content."

ghed, imitating the ejacula-

's 'humph!' was too rich for It meant volumes. What tal fools he thinks us to be!" could no more understand than sing it," was Gray- what irritable response.

atter. Such men are invaln- he world. My nature is very accord with Henry's, and so has had experience, he is very

your saving clause in mind, I h you perfectly about Henry, About yourself. Your nature, ike your voice, has a wise

CHAPTER XL.

HE END OF THE WOOING.

had often turned wistful eyes High Peak, and on the last before their final return to she said to Graydon, "Dare we it? Perhaps if we give the day mb, and took it leisurely—" e's no 'perhaps' about it. We'll wish. I should like nothing an to get lost with you."

e is no danger of getting lost," ed, hastily. "The hotel must o from the whole line of its and I am told that there is a the top of the mountain."

l be ready in half an hour," he

a lovely day in early Septem- he air was soft, yet cool and enough to make climbing agree- raydon had a lunch basket, e could sling over his shoulder, ed, and ordered a carriage. s no need of our tramping over rveying miles of dusty roads ust be passed before we begin ib," he said, "and the distance will make a pleasant drive for d the children."

and Graydon reached the sum- out any great difficulty, Mary returned with the assurance y would find their own way he hotel.

hours passed, Graydon began more hope than he had dared ce since his shattered theory disheartened him. In spite of his fancied knowledge about Madge, it was hard to believe she was very unhappy that morning.

"She certainly is the bravest and most unselfish girl I ever imagined," he thought, as they left the highest point after enjoying the view. "With an art so inimitable as to be artless, she has tried to give me enjoyment. Instead of regarding herself as the one to be entertained, she has been pouring forth words, fancies, snatches of song like sparkling wine, and I am exhilarated instead of being wearied."

When at last they found a spring at which to eat their lunch, he told her so, concluding, "This mountain air does you good, Madge."

"So do you," she replied, with a piquant nod. "Don't be conceited when I tell you that you are good company."

"No; but I can't help being happy."

"Oh, indeed! It doesn't seem to take much to make you happy."

"Not very much from you."

"Pass me a biscuit, Graydon; I want something more substantial than fine speeches after our climb. Isn't all this truly Arcadian—this mossy rug on which we have placed our lunch, the trees whispering about us overhead, and the spring there bubbling over with something concerning which it murmurs so contentedly?"

"I wonder what they think of us! I can imagine one thing."

"You are always imagining. The idea of you being a banter! Well, there is a loud whisper from the trees. What was remarked?"

"That yonder little girl doesn't look so very unhappy."

"No, Graydon," she said, earnestly, "you make Saturdays and Sundays very bright to me. No girl ever had a truer friend than you are becoming."

"Have become, Madge."

"Graydon," she said, earnestly, as if hastening from dangerous ground, "the hotel is there just opposite to us. Don't you think we could scramble down the mountain here, and return by Kaaterskill Clove and the Falls? It would be such fun, and save such a very long distance."

"We'll try," he said.

"Come," she resumed, brusquely, "you are spoiling me. You say yes to everything. If you don't think it safe or best you must put humor me."

"We can soon learn whether it's safe and practicable, and there is no danger of losing our way. We have only to return over the mountain in order to strike the path somewhere at right angles."

"Let us hasten, then. I am in the mood to end our sojourn in the Catskills by an hour or two of contact with nature absolutely primitive. The scenes we shall pass through will be so pleasant to think of by a winter fire."

"Winter fire? That's capital! You are not going back to Santa Barbara, Madge?"

"I haven't promised that,—I haven't promised anything."

"Yes; I have done all the promising."

"You did so of your own free will."

"And of my own free will shall keep my promises. No, don't let us leave any remnants of our lunch. Should we get lost you will want something more substantial than fine speeches."

"I shall, indeed."

Graydon filled from the spring the bottle which had contained milk; and then packing his little hamper he led the way downward, over and through obstacles which often involved no little difficulty, and sometimes almost danger.

"May I help you all? I please?" he asked.

"Yes, when I can't help myself."

Then he began to rejoice over the ruggedness of the way, which made it proper to take her hand so often, and at times even to lift her over a fallen tree.

"What fun it is!" cried Madge.

"The best I ever had," he replied, promptly.

But they had not realized the difficulty of their attempt; for when little more than half way to the foot of the mountain they came to a ledge down which there appeared no place for safe descent. As they were skirting this precipice perilously near the edge, he holding Madge's hand, some loose debris gave way beneath his feet.

Instead of instinctively clinging to Madge's hand, even in the act of falling he threw it up and around a small tree, which she grasped, and regained his footing, while he went down and disappeared.

At first she was so appalled that she could do no more than clutch the tree convulsively and look with blank horror at the spot where she had seen him last. Then came the thought, "His life may now depend upon me."

The distance he had fallen would not be necessarily fatal, and below the ledge there were low scrubby trees that might have broken the impetus of his descent. She called in tones that might have evoked an answer even from the lips of death; then, with a resolution in her pallid face which nothing should daunt, she sought to reach his side.

At first Graydon was utterly unconscious. At last, like a dim light entering a darkened room, thought and memory began to revive. He remembered that he had been at Madge's side, and had fallen; he had grasped at branches of trees as he passed through them, and then all had become dark. He tried to speak, to call his companion, but found he could not. He almost doubted whether he was alive in the flesh. If he were he must have received some terrible injury that had caused a strange paralysis.

His confused thoughts finally centred wholly on Madge. Had she fallen? The thought of her, perhaps injured, possibly lying unconscious or dead near him, and he helpless, caused a dull, vague dread, like a cold tide, to overwhelm his very soul. He tried to move, to spring up, but only his mind appeared free. Then he thought he recognized her voice calling in the distance. Soon, with alternations of hope and fear, he heard her steps and voice draw nearer. She had evidently found a way down the ledge, and was coming along its base toward him—coming swiftly, almost recklessly.

She was at his side. Her low, terror-stricken cry chilled his heart. Was he dead? and was it his soul only, lingering in the body, that was cognizant of all this?

Her hand was on his pulse, then inside his vest against his heart.

"Oh," she implored, "can he be dying or dead? I can't find his pulse, nor does his heart seem to beat. He is so pale, so deathly pale, even to his lips."

He knew that she was lifting him into a different and easier position, and wondered at the muscular power she exerted, even under excitement.

"Why, why," she exclaimed in horror, "he is cold, strangely cold! His hands and brow are almost like ice, and wet with the dew of death."

She was not aware of the fact that extreme coldness and a clammy perspiration would be among the results of such a severe shock.

"Graydon," she gasped, "Graydon!" Then after a moment: "O God, if he should never know!"

She chafed his hands and wrists, opened the lunch basket, and found that the bottle containing water was not broken, for he felt drops dashed on his face, and his lips moistened; but the same stony paralysis enchained him. Then she sent out her voice for help, and there was agony, terror, and heart-break in her cry.

Realizing the futility of this on the lonely mountain-side, she soon ceased, and again sought, with almost desperate energy, to restore him, crying and moaning meanwhile in a way that smote his heart. At last she threw herself on his breast with a bitter cry:

"O Graydon, Graydon, are you dying? Will you never know? O my heart's true love, shall I never have the chance to tell you that it was you I loved—you only! It was for you I went away alone to die, I feared. For you I struggled back to life, and toiled and prayed that I might be your fair ideal; and now you may never know. Graydon, Graydon, I would give you the very blood out of my heart—O God, I can't restore him!" she moaned, in a choking voice, and then he knew from her dead weight upon his breast that she had fainted.

This mental anguish and the effort he put forth to respond to these words caused great beads of sweat to start out upon his face. Suddenly, as if a giant hand was lifted, the effects of the shock resulting from his fall passed away. He opened his eyes, and there was Madge, with her face buried upon his breast, in brief oblivion from fears that threatened to crush at once hope and life.

To his great joy he found that he could move. Feebly, and with great difficulty, he lifted her head and tried to regain his feet. He found this impossible, and soon realized that his leg was broken. He now saw that he must act wisely and carefully, or their plight would be serious indeed; and yet his mind was in such a tumult of immeasurable joy at his discovery that he would not in the least regret the accident, if assured of her safety.

At last, in response to his efforts, she began to survive. The sense of responsibility, the necessity for action on her part, had been so great immediately before she had fainted under the stress of one overwhelming fear, that her mind, even during unconsciousness, may have put forth effort to regain its hold upon sense. She found herself leaning against a prostrate tree, and Graydon sitting near, speaking to her in soothing and encouraging tones.

In response to her bewildered, troubled look of inquiry, he said, cheerfully, and in natural tones, "Don't worry, Madge or be frightened."

"What has happened, Graydon?"

"I'll tell you what I know, and you must supply the rest. We were propriting along that ledge above us, and trying to find a safe place to climb down."

A slow deep color began to take the place of her pallor, showing that her own memory was supplying all that had occurred.

"You know I fell, Madge. Thank God, I did not carry you down with me!"

"Any other man would," she said, almost brusquely, "You threw my hand back around a tree."

"Did I?" exclaimed Graydon, very innocently and gladly. "Well, everything became very confused after that. I must have been unconscious. I do remember grasping at the branches as I passed through these low trees above us—"

"You must have caught one of them, Graydon," she said, eagerly, turning toward him again, "for a large limb had broken off and was lying upon you."

"Was it so? Perhaps I owe it a good turn, for it may have so broken my fall as to have saved my life. Well, in some way, you, true, brave little girl, you must have reached me, and, finding that you could not restore me, and imagining I was dead or dying, you fainted yourself from the nervous shock of it all. When I recovered the use of my senses I found evidence that you had been trying to revive me. Now, Madge, we must both be brave and sensible. We must regain the full possession of our wits as soon as possible. Can you be very brave and sensible (to use your favorite word) if I tell you something?"

"Yes, Graydon," she said. "I can do anything, now that I know you are going to live."

"I am very much alive, and shall be thoroughly conscious of the fact for some time to come. You must keep perfectly cool and rational, for what has happened is a very serious affair under the circumstances." Her scarlet face was turned from him again. "Madge," he concluded, in quiet tones, "I've broken my leg."

"Is that all?" she said, with a look of intense relief.

"Isn't that enough? I'm helpless."

"I'm not," and she sprang to her feet.

"Why, Graydon, it might have been a hundredfold worse. I thought it was immeasurably worse," she said, suppressing a sob. "You might have been killed. See how far you fell! I feared you might have received some terrible internal injury—"

"I have; but that's a chronic affair, as you know," he interrupted, laughing. His mirth and allusion did more to restore her than all else, for he appeared the same friend she thought she had lost.

"Now that it is so evident that you will survive all your injuries," she resumed, with an answering laugh, "I am myself again. You direct me, what to do."

"I shall, indeed, have to depend on you almost wholly; and the fact that another must look to you in such a strait will do more to keep you up than all cordials and stimulants. I can do very little myself—"

"Forgive me, Graydon. You know I am not indifferent. Are you in much pain?" and her voice was very gentle.

"Not yet. You must act contrary to your instincts for once, and exert all your ingenuity to attract attention. First, we must have a fire; meanwhile I shall light a cigar, which will help me think and banish the impression that we are lost babes in the woods." The smoke, you see, will draw eyes to this spot—the smoke of the fire, I mean. Are I following you correctly?"

"You must have followed me very bravely, heroic little woman that you are! You are indeed unlike other girls, who would never have reached me except by tumbling after."

"Come, no more reminiscences till you are safe at the hotel, and your leg mended."

"Very well. I direct, but you command. As soon as we have a column of smoke ascending from this point, you must try to find an open space near here, and wave something white as a signal of distress."

He had scarcely concluded before she was at the work. The prostrate tree against which he had managed to place her, at such pain to his broken limb, served as a back-log, and soon a column of smoke was ascending. At times she would turn a shy, half-doubting, half-questioning glance at him, but he would smile so naturally and speak so frankly that the suspicion that he had heard her words almost passed from her mind.

"Madge," he said, in finding an outlook toward the hotel or valley, don't go far away, if possible. It makes me awfully nervous to think of you climbing alone."

She found a projecting rock beneath them within calling distance, and on an extemporized pole she fastened the napkins. At his suggestion she waved them only downward and upward, at the same time sending out her powerful voice from time to time in a cry for help.

He, left alone, sometimes groaned from an unusually severe twinge of pain, and again laughed softly to himself over the situation. He knew that the question of their being sought and found was only one of time, and he would have been willing to have had all his bones broken should this have been needful to secure the knowledge which now thrilled his very soul with gladness. The past grew perfectly clear, and the peerless value with every moments thought. "Ah, sweet Madge! I'm the blessed idiot you loved and toiled for at Santa Barbara! I shouldn't have believed that such a thing could have happened in this hum-drum world."

Nor would it seem that the attention of even a fraction of that great world could be obtained. The shadows of evening began to gather, and Madge, at Graydon's call, returned, wearied and somewhat discouraged.

"Cheer up," he said. "It is only a question of time. We shall soon be missed, and our signals will be more effective when it is dark. See, we shall not starve. I have been getting supper for you. Keeping the remnants of our lunch wasn't a bad idea, was it?"

"Keeping up your courage and mine is a better one. Graydon, I fear you are suffering very much."

"O Madge, armies of men have broken their legs! That's nothing but a little disagreeable prose, while this adventure with you is something to talk and laugh over all our lives. I've cut my boot off and bandaged my leg as well as I could, and am now hungry. That's a good sign. I shall be positively hilarious if you make as good a supper as this meagre spread promises. Take a little water, for your throat must be parched. You will have to drink it from the bottle, Pat's fashion, for my rubber cup is broken."

"Indeed, a little water is all I want at present, and I must gather wood for the fire before it is darker."

"Very well," he said, laughing; "supper shall wait for you."

The vicinity appeared as if never before visited, and there was an abundance of dead and decaying wood lying about. When she had secured a large quantity of this she came and sat down by the fire and said, "I will take a little supper now, and then it will be so dark that we can signal in some other way."

"Madge," said Graydon, earnestly, "it has cut me to the heart to lie helplessly here and see you doing work so unsuitable."

"Nothing could be more suitable under the circumstances. You do think we shall be found soon? Oh, I'm so worried about you!"

"More, then, than I am about myself. I shall have to play invalid for some time. Won't you be my nurse occasionally?"

"Yes, Graydon, all I can."

"Why then don't worry about me at all. The prospect makes me fairly happy. Come, now, eat the whole of that sandwich."

She complied, looking thoughtfully into the fire meanwhile. By the light of the flickering blaze he saw the trouble and worry pass from her brow and the expression of her face grow as quiet and contented as that of a child's. At last she said, "Well, this does seem cosey and companionable, in spite of everything. There, forgive me, Graydon; I forgot for the moment that you were in pain."

"Was I? I forgot it, too. Sitting there in the firelight, you suggested the sweetest picture I ever hope to see."

"You can't be *in extremis* when you begin to compliment."

"Don't you wish to know what the picture was?"

"Oh, yes, if it will help you pass the time."

"I saw you sitting by a hearth, and I thought, 'If that hearth were mine it would be the loveliest picture the world had known.' Now you see what an egotist I am. You look so enchanting in that firelight that I cannot resist—I will try so hard to be worthy of you Madge. Make your own terms again, as I said once to you before."

"My own terms?" she repeated, turning a sudden and searching glance upon him. "Then tell me, did you hear what said this afternoon when I first found you?"

He hesitated a moment, and then said, firmly: "Yes, every word; but, Madge, you must not punish me for what I could not help. It would not be right."

"Could you hear me and yet—"

"I could hear you and yet could not move a muscle until you fainted, and then my intense mental excitement and solicitude must have broken the paralysis caused by the shock of my fall. O Madge look at me! Only a false pride can come between us now. My love is not worthy to be compared with yours, but it is genuine, it will—it *will* last as long as I do. I shall bless this accident and all the pain I must suffer if they bring you to me."

She sprung to his side, and putting her arms around his neck said, "Graydon, on the evening after your return I told you I couldn't be your sister. You know why now, and you uttered these words, 'I shall have to take you as you are if I ever find out.' I meant to win you if I could, but only by being such a girl as I thought you would love. Now you know the mystery of the little idiot, and you can bring to me that idiot, who didn't return my love, as often as you choose."

"Thank Heaven for what I escaped! Thank God for what I have won!" he exclaimed.

"Won? Nonsense! You have been won, not I. O Graydon, wouldn't you have been amazed and horrified if you had been told, years ago, that the little ghost would go deliberately to work to woo a man and take him from another girl? Think how dreadful it sounds, but you shall now know the worst."

"It's music that will fill my life with gladness. How exquisitely fine your nature is, that you could do this with such absolute maidenly reserve! Suppose I had become Stella Wildmere's Southern 'fix'?"

"I should have gone back to Santa Barbara, and kept my secret."

"Horrible!"

"I said you knew all, but I am mistaken. Now, don't be shocked back into your kind of unconsciousness again. I did another horrid thing. I listened and learned about the plot by which Arnault meant to bring Miss Wildmere to a decision against you!" and she told him the circumstances, and what had passed between herself and Henry.

His arm tightened around her almost convulsively. "Madge," he cried, "you have not only brought me happiness—you have saved me from a bitter, lifelong self-reproach far worse than poverty. How can I ever show sufficient devotion in return for all this?"

"By being sensible, and telling me how to make signals, now, that it is as dark as it will be this moonlit night."

"Let me lean on you, as I ever shall, figuratively hereafter. We will go down to the outlook you found, build another fire, and wave burning brands."

This was done. Henry Muir, who had grown very solicitous, saw their signals, and promptly organized a rescuing party. A wood-road led well up to their position, and with the aid of some employes of the house he at last rescued them. Graydon was weak and exhausted from pain by the time he reached the hotel, yet felt that his happiness had been purchased at a very slight cost. The next day he was taken to his city home, and Madge filled the days of his convalescence with such varied entertainment that he threatened to break his leg again. She had so trained her voice that she read or sang with almost tireless ease. To furnish home music, to shine in the light of her own hearth, had been the dream of her ambition; and to the man she had won she made that hearth the centre of the gentle force which controlled and blessed his life.

But little further need be said concerning the other characters of this story. The severe lesson received by Stella Wildmere had a permanent effect upon her character. It did not result in a very high type of womanhood, for the limitations of her nature scarcely permitted this; but it brought about decided changes for the better. She was endowed with fair abilities and a certain hard, practical sense, which enabled her to see the folly of her former scheme of life. She recognized that she could not ignore natural laws and duties and go very far in safety. Therefore, instead of querulousness and repining, or showing useless resentment toward her father for misfortunes which she had done nothing to avert, she stepped bravely and helpfully to his side, and amid all the chaos of the financial storm that was wrecking him he was happier than he had been for years. Her beloved jewelry, and everything that could be legally saved from their dismantled home, was disposed of to the best advantage. Then very modest apartments were taken in a suburb, and both she and her father began again. He obtained a clerkship at a small salary, and she aided her mother in making every dollar go as far as possible.

Arnault had thought, under the impulse of his pride, that he could renounce her forever, but found himself mistaken. She would not depart from such heart he possessed, nor could he break the spell of her fascination. His interest grew so absorbing that he kept himself informed about the changes she was passing through, and her manner of meeting them. As a result, his practical soul was filled with admiration, and he felt that she of all others would be the wife of a man embarked on the uncertain tides of Wall street. At last he wrote to her and renewed his offer. The reply was characteristic.

"Your offer comes too late. If, instead of being one of the principal actors in that humiliating little drama of my life, you had stood by me patiently and faithfully, I would have given you at once my deepest gratitude and, eventually, my love. I did not deserve such constancy, but I would have rewarded it to the extent of my ability. You thought I was mercenary. I was, and have been punished; but you forget that you made my mercenary spirit your ally, and kept me from becoming engaged to the man whom you well knew that I preferred. My regard for him is not so deep, however, but that I shall survive and face my altered fortunes bravely. If you had been kind to me during those bitter days,—if you had kept my father from failure, instead of deserting him after he had done his best for you,—he did do his best for you,—I should have valued you more than your wealth, and proved it by my life. I have since learned that I am not afraid of poverty, and that I must find truer friends."

Arnault, like so many others, turned from what "might have been" to his pursuit of gold, but it had lost its brightness forever.

An old admirer of Stella's, a plain, sturdy business man, to whom she had scarcely given a thought in her palmy days, eventually renewed his attentions, and won as much love as the girl probably could have given to any one. By his aid she restored her father's broken fortunes and established them on a modest but secure basis, and she proved to her husband a sensible wife, always recognizing that in promoting his best interests and happiness she secured her own.

Dr. Sommers is still the genial physician and the Izaak Walton of the Catskills. Mr. and Mrs. Wendall are "plodding toward home" with a resignation that is almost cheerful.

Henry Muir continues devoted to business, and his wife is devoted to him. He rarely permits a suitable opportunity to pass without remarking that the two sisters are the "most sensible women in this world."

[THE END.]

The Parnellites ridicule the letter of Earl Cowper and the speech of Mr. Trevelyan in opposition to Home Rule. They say that either of these gentlemen are likely to have been taken into Mr. Gladstone's confidence.

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