



a victim to periodical malaria, and resolved to return by ship from St. Augustine to the old sea-coast town. Twenty years had now passed since he left the scenes of his early disappointment. He came back to the old town again a "sallow and withered man, bearded gray." No one knew him. He inquired about Mary, but few knew anything of her except that she had been taken to an institution years ago, and had never recovered her mind.

He inquired for the physician who attended the patients of the Home. He found him. It was the 24th of December.

"Do you have a patient in your Home by the name of Mary Martin," he asked.

"Yes, at the Home—a very remarkable case," said the physician. "Was engaged to be married, and fell sick on her wedding-day, and never recovered her mind. Lost her mind in a long fever. She is ill again. She looks like an old woman now. Her face is emaciated, her hair is white; I never saw hair so white as hers."

"I was a dear friend to her, and I have never ceased to regard her above others. Can I visit her?"

"Yes, yes; or I think you can at the right time—to-morrow perhaps. She

after sleeping in a stable," said the sexton. "An' sure, on a night like this, when all the world is friendly, I might let a gentleman like you sleep in the study. We haven't any rector now, only a supply, and you might stay at my house, or in the study."

"I used to sing in this church," said Marlowe.

"An' how long ago was that?"

"Twenty years. I have been away to Florida, and now that I have come back, there is but the church here that is as it used to be. Let me stay in the study after the service. I love the old church. It stands in the past and my rest in it would be sweet."

How beautiful was the anthem that night—"When all things were in silence"! The people came and went, but he knew not one of them, nor they him. But the peace of the world seemed there. The sexton turned down the lights. The cross faded, the scanty decorations. He went into the little study, where was a bed-lounge, gave a Christmas gift to the sexton, and still wondering at the meaning of this strange life, sank trustfully to sleep.

He was awakened in the morning by a cool draft of air and the chimes. They were the bells of old. He came to the



THE SCOUT.

"Yes, go, I will stay by her for an hour, if the matron be willing. Speak to her."

The servant went to the matron, and the latter came out sturdily, and paused, and said:

"You are an old friend of the family?"

"Yes, madam."

"A stranger in town?"

"I have lived here many years, madam."

"Your name?"

"Marlowe."

"Marlowe; yes, I have heard her aunt mention that name with respect. Marlowe? It sounds familiar. It is all right. Poor soul, there are few who come to see her now. This is her room."

He entered. He approached the bed, which stood opposite the window. He

No; it is white. I am not an old woman. What has happened? It is white. Oh, Owen, look, it is white!" She lifted her locks again from the pillow, and drew them out as if they were the flax of the spinner. "Have I been ill long, Owen?"

"Yes, a very long time."

The western light of the window glimmered across the bed, and she continued to draw out her locks, and to wonder when and how they were changed. "I seem to have been away, Owen. There was no room for me in the inn of this world, and I went away to the cave; and the stars of God shone over me and the camel bells came. But oh, that was all a dream! I hope I am dreaming now."

"Yes, that was a dream, Mary. You are better now."



His beautiful voice came back again and he sang:

"Oh, wert thou in the candid blast,
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry air,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee;

Or did misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blow, around thee blow,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

"Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a paradise
If thou wert there, if thou wert there;

Or were I monarch o' the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

"Owen, you do pity me?"

There is no room for me in the inn. I am going away."

She turned her white face to the sunset light. Over the snowscape the sinking sun blazed like a far gate of heaven, and the tinged clouds seemed gathered around his departure like a shining spot. See lifted her thin hand again in the slanting light.

"Owen, what did they do with my wedding ring? Look into the bureau; it may be there."

It was not there.

"Go ask the people here. Where are they? They may know."

They did not know where it was—that matter was an incident of long-vanished years.

"Owen, find it, and put it on my hand when I am dead. Cross my hands on my breast, with the ring on my wedding



A SMALL FAMILY IN TIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES.

has been sick of a fever and is very much reduced. The fever turned yesterday, and she is out of danger for the present, but she lies sleeping. The sleep is hardly natural. Call at the Home to-morrow, and if she is better you can see her. See her!—yes; there are few who call for her now.

Marlowe went out of the medical office, and passed about the town. The little church was still mantled with ivy, as of old, and young people and children were carrying evergreens into it. He went in and looked up to the choir gallery where he used to sing, then sat down and cried. A child came to him and asked him if he were hurt. He said that he was, and covered his heart with his hand, and the little one moved doubtfully away.

He inquired of the sexton about an inn in the place, for the old inns were gone, and everything seemed changed. There were few ships in the harbor now, but great smoking factories rose like cheerless fortresses on the hills.

"The inn; was it the inn you said? Well I am sorry for ye, but there isn't any room in the inn."

"Then let me sleep in the stable. I am all alone in the world."

"You do not look like a man to be

communion fasting, and, after the service, went to the inn for refreshment, and then went to the Retreat.

"Mary Martin?" he asked at the door.

The kilted servant stood in silence.

"Mary Martin," she said at last. "Don't you know?"

"Yes, all, I knew her years ago. I wish to see her. I have come a thousand miles, and the doctor set the hour."

"You can see her," said the woman, "if it will be a satisfaction to you. It won't make any difference to her. She has not yet come out of her long sleep, but one visitor can do her no harm or good. Go in, if you wish. In that apartment." She pointed. Marlowe walked away towards the room. It was afternoon. O how changed from that afternoon twenty years ago! The woman followed him to the door. A white bed and a white face in a drift of white hair lay in one corner of the room. The place was silent.

"A brother it may be?"

"As near as that."

"Will you stay with her awhile," asked the servant, "and let me go out? I haven't been out to-day. It is very lonesome, sir."



A BLENHEIM SPANIEL.

slowly stepped towards the white face, which seemed as unconscious as of one dead. Opposite the bed on the side of the door was a long mirror, and on the counterpane was a single spray of ivy.

He sat down in a chair close to the bed and passed an hour in silence. Then he spoke: "Mary!"

The sleeper started, and opened her eyes, and looked around.

"Mary!"

The blue eyes gleamed.

"Owen!"

"As near as that."

"What Mary?"

"Where am I?"

"What did they do with my dress and veil? Open the bureau, Owen, and see if they are there." She saw the ivy spray on the white counterpane. "There is some ivy," she said. "Who brought it? Where are the orange blossoms?"

A merry peal of bells from the church tower fell on the crystal air. She started up. "I will hurry. Those are our wedding-bells." She turned her face towards the glass and saw herself once more. "Owen!"

"Mary?"

"Is that I?"

"Yes, Mary."

"I can't help it, Owen. I couldn't



THE DRILL.

"Yes, God knows I pity you, and love you."

"He knows it all."

"Yes, Mary."

"Let us leave it all with Him. You have been true."

The gold of the mid-afternoon burned along the snow clouds in the west, and Mary Martin turned towards the light. It was a changing day. The air was mild, and one live robin came and sang a rift of belated song in the gnarled bow of an apple tree near.

"Owen, there is no room for us in the inn. I am going away again. The camels will come with their bells, and the stars of God will shine where I am going. I am going away, and I will wait for you there. I am happy—my soul is happy. I am glad to have lived to be loved by one true heart. It is better, all, beyond

finger, and stand by me when the prayer is said, just as you were going to do. You will, if you find it?"

"Yes, just as I was going to do."

"And the minister will say something from the text that tells how Mary was turned away from the inn in her sorrow. I pity her."

She lay dreaming for a time; then spoke again. "Owen, you said that you pitied me?"

"Yes, Mary, and I love you."

"Mary!" How beautiful that word sounds to me! He said that some god was born out of every virtuous sorrow—he—the rector—so long ago. The room was still again.

"Owen!"

"My Mary!"

"I love to hear you speak that word. Owen, I wonder if any god will be born out of my sorrow?"



SCENT.



OLD NURSE'S TEACHING.

"Will you stay with her awhile," asked the servant, "and let me go out? I haven't been out to-day. It is very lonesome, sir."

She lifted her thin hands from the sheet. "Owen, look, do you see? These are not my hands, Owen—these are not mine. They are not mine, are they, Owen?"

"You have been ill, Mary."

"Where is my ring gone? That is not my hand, Owen; say no."

"You have been ill, dear, ill for a long time. You are better now."

She brushed her hair from her face. "Owen"—there was a long silence—"this is not my hair." She lifted her white locks slowly and spread them out on the pillow.

"This is the hair of an old woman, Owen. It is gray; look at it—it is gray.

help it—I couldn't help it. Owen, I was beautiful, wasn't I?"

"Yes, Mary."

"I was beautiful. Do you love me still?"

"Yes, I have never ceased to love you in all the changes of years."

"Years! Have I been ill for years? Owen, you have changed. You are growing white. Look into the mirror, Owen. Look! O God, what a picture! Look, look! We will both look. Heaven pity us both! What does it mean?"

The two gazed in silence, the poor invalid wringing her hands.

"Owen, I want to hear you sing again—that song I loved—Burns's. Let me rest while you sing it."



TASK.