

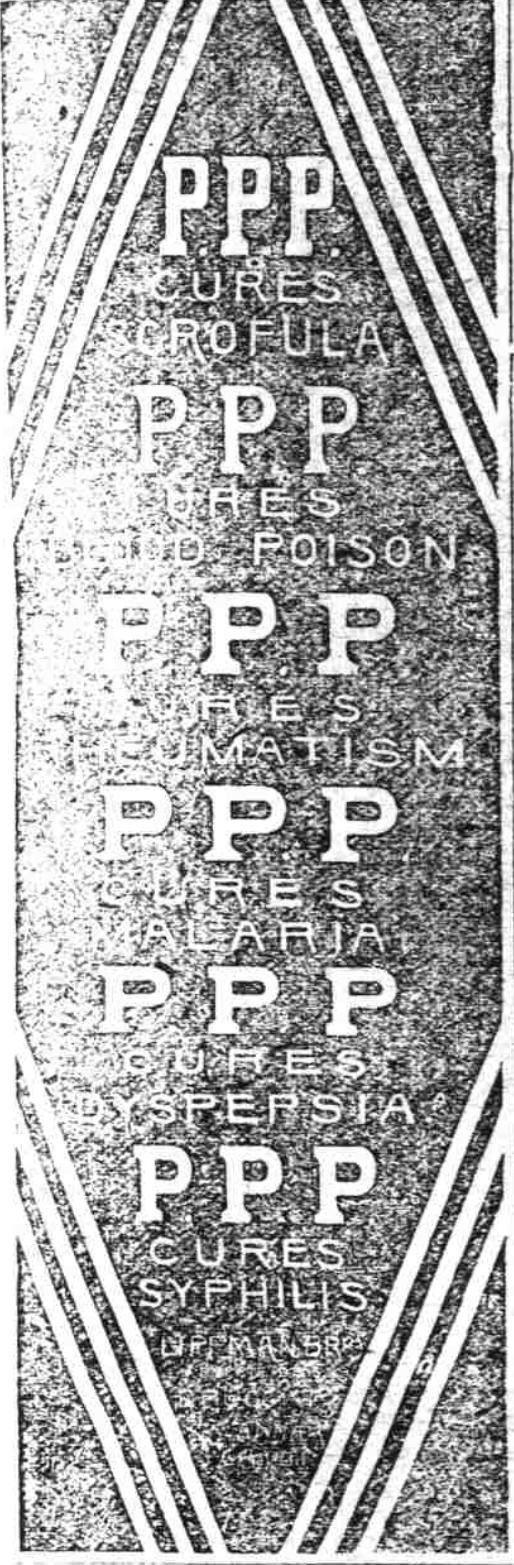
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CHRISTMAS

Will Soon Be Here.

And the time is approaching when the uppermost subject in the minds of all will be, "What can we get for our Father, Brother, Sister, Cousin, or that other nice person who is somebody else's brother or sister, for a Christmas Present?"

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before you decide. While our stock may not be the largest ever brought to Louisburg, yet we have a very nice and varied assortment, suited to the occasion.

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We keep a full line of standard patent medicines, and everything usually found in a first class drug store.

Respectfully,

THOMAS & AYCOCKE.

Circumstantial Evidence

By MARY E. STOKNEY.

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The horses were stopped to rest on the brow of a mighty hill, while, awestruck, Gray and Anita were staring at the changing glory of the sunset.

Anita was weary and dispirited, cramped and tired with the long day's ride, tired above all of Gray. His easy familiarity, with its undertone of languishing tenderness, while it seemed natural enough after their long years of childhood comradeship, yet chafed on her nerves; the joking small talk which he continually interrupted her brooding thoughts filled her with smothered irritation.

"She was beginning to see that expedition but as an impulse of childish folly. What if she succeeded in this scheme of retaliation? cut bono? Would all the jealous anger his heart could hold give her husband back to her so that her faith in him could be made whole again? And what availed anything else?"

"Do you know," said Gray, dreamily watching the dawning twilight about him sifting itself through gold dust in one brilliant spot behind the range, "I think that slang phrase you have here for death—'going over the range'—was born in a poet's brain? Don't it seem as if that range yonder might bound the world—as if, beyond, the full flood of sunlight might be pouring down upon a celestial city? Ah, well, I'm afraid we shall find it all about as much of a tale in when we go climbing up the golden stairs."

"Don't, Gray!" a little choke in her voice. To think that but a moment since she had been calling him timesome in her thoughts, when one could not but guess, seeing his thin, drawn face and too brilliant eyes, how strong the chances were, that before very long he might be proving himself whatever might be in "the great perhaps"—gone "over the range."

"And why not?" his light laugh broken off by his hollow cough. "Because I have a sore throat do you think it behooves me to assume a good-by attitude? It seems to me that about half the show of piety of the world is built up on this basis—the instinctive thrill that would blindly prove against a possible rainy day—half admitting that the enterprise may turn out a lottery-drawing nothing but blanks, yet taking the gamble, since it seems to cost nothing but a little lip service."

"How can you be so cynical—so unjust! in shocked exproclamation. "And life is so wretchedly short!"

"You mean we ought to make hay while the sun shines, so to speak, and swallow orthodox while we have time. I can't, Nita. I think a man must be happy to be religious—to feel that he has something to thank God for. But for me, I am not happy. Arno you, Nita?"

"Ah, who is?" "You are, Anita, sentimentally. "It is not necessary."

"No, but very desirable. And when some of us can see so clearly just what is lacking to give us perfect happiness—when it seems as if one might almost reach out his hand and take it—it seems a little rough, don't you think?"

"None of us know what is good for us," returned Anita sagely, with a shrug of her shoulders.

"But we suffer just as much from baffled desire if we only think we know," persisted Gray, touching up the horses. "And in that connection I have often wondered and now I want to know," turning to her determinedly, "if you had been left to make up your mind alone, would you have married me?"

"Oh, Gray," in distressful embarrassment, "what is the use of racking up that old affair?"

"And what is the harm, since it is an old affair, past and done with? Call it an idle curiosity if you like. I don't see why you should mind telling me now."

"I wish you would put on your overcoat, Gray. It is growing cold," nervously buttoning her jacket.

"That is not answering my question." "Which you have no right to ask."

"I know that," humbly, "but I have so longed to know. One thing, searching her face eagerly, "you do not say you would not."

"No, because—stopping with a swift blush as she saw whether her words tended.

"You would!" cried Gray, his face aglow.

a cat and dog life we would have led together. "It would have been heaven," he passionately retorted. "You would not have married me if you had not been a little fond of me, money or no money. I know you better."

"I wish you would put on your overcoat," she abruptly interposed.

"Both the overcoat with an unsteady laugh; "but of course you must have your way."

"We are almost there," she remarked, thinking to bring the conversation to safer ground, as he stopped the team to find the garment and put it on. "From the top of this hill we shall look down directly upon the park; and, do you know, I am beginning to think it is rather a poor place after all! I am almost sorry we came."

"Well, my anticipations were copious to start with," he coolly returned, lifting the reins as if to turn the horses around. "Let's go back."

"Go back now!" cried Anita sharply, laying a remonstrant hand upon his arm. "What an idea!"

"The time to go back is when you discover that you don't want to go ahead, wherever you are or whatever the enterprise. Life is too short to fool it away going one way when inclination pulls you another. There was a world of meaning in his tones, freighted with passionate tenderness, his eyes glowing into hers. "Come, Nita, can't we go back?"

"Of course not," brusquely, reaching for the whip in her impatience, to touch the horses herself. "Don't be a goose, Gray."

"Would you like to drive?" with sulky courtesy offering the reins.

Opportunistly at that moment, from a bridge trail emerging upon the road ahead, appeared three horseback riders—Mrs. Rogers, her husband and a clerical looking stranger. The lady and the doctor, after a glance of recognition, stopped to let the carriage overtake them.

"Can it be actually you?" cried the vivacious little lady, all smiles and dimples, reining up beside them. Anita was glad for even this interruption, greeting her with unvoiced cordiality.

"And did you meet Don?"

"Donald—has he gone?" faltered Anita, dismayed.

"Actually done gone—could not live without you for another day," in her tone of laughing raillery. "And here you are! What a joke on him!"

"But when did he go? I don't understand," looking puzzled.

"He started this morning; but he said he should take the blazed trail over the hills, so of course you would not have met him," explained the doctor.

"He must take the shortest cut in his uncontrollable patience, you see. Ah, nobody could doubt that his heart was true to Poll—you know the song," showing all her pretty white teeth in a laughing side glance at Gray, who was appreciatively regarding her. "I presume you will be obliged to curb your impatience to turn around and follow him until tomorrow at least; so we will see you again," with a laughing nod as she rode on ahead. And as she swiftly passed from sight beyond the brow of the hill they could hear her singing, her little lilted voice as full of joyous abandon as a child's.

"His art was true to Poll. His art was true to Poll. No matter what you do. If you art be true. Anita's art was true to Poll."

"And who is her ladyship?" queried Gray, when his fixed gaze had led sight of the dainty figure in its trim-fitting habit. Anita did not hear him.

"She called him Don!—to my face—my husband?" she exclaimed, in a white heat of anger. "What a vulgar, ill bred little wretch she is! To think of being compelled to know such a person!"

It was disappointing to come into the oppressive loneliness of the silent house, but the explanation of the servant seemed perfectly simple and satisfactory. It was quite to be expected that Anita should have gone on to the park to meet him, according to his plan, and he was amply pleased that the opportune visit of her cousin had arranged the trip so agreeably for her.

Not to miss a mail he roused himself at daylight the next morning to scratch a hasty letter, bidding her stay at the park, and this was Saturday—the next week he would ride up to spend Sunday with her; and as she liked being in his home, he was afraid that, finding him gone, she might be disposed to return; and he wanted her to enjoy an untroubled holiday.

Anita's first impulse had been, indeed, to return at once, but Gray said decidedly that the horses must rest for a day, and when Donald's letter came she indignantly acquiesced in his plan. It was but a choice of evils at best, she told herself. She dreaded to meet her husband, angry still because of her heart, as much as she feared Gray's re-awakened passion. And Gray did his utmost to keep her fear of him in abeyance. His attitude was simply that of a kindly kinship, his attentions only such as unconsciously he seconded all her efforts that they should not be left alone together, distracting himself with his talent of flirtation, to every woman who smiled him a welcome.

And Anita, indignant at first for the indiscreet admission into which he had led her, reassured by his indifferent attitude, grew to regard him more kindly as the days wore on. If the fear that lurked in her heart tended to make his presence irksome, there was always his weakness to plead for him. Gray was undeniably seriously ill. Everybody observed it. Pitying glances were continually reading the story of the fever flushed cheeks and the too brilliant eyes; and strangers, with blundering kindness, went out of their way to scrape acquaintance and suggest their remedies for his cough. But it was growing better, Gray each day brightly declared, with that strange self-deception that seems a part of pulmonary disease, each day seeming a little thinner, a little weaker; while Anita's heart, as it grew heavier for him, yet turned to him the more in pitying tenderness.

We are never so oppressed with the cruel inexorability of nature's laws as when we see our friend, glowing with the full joy of life, blindly hurrying on to the vast unknown whence no one may come back to tell us it is well with him; when we know that the hand warm in our clasp is already chilling with the creeping clutch of death; when we must see that were our love as wide as the world, it could not hold him back for a moment against that invisible grasp that is drawing him down as in a quicksand before our eyes.

And this was Gray—dear old joyous hearted Gray, who had played with her, and loved her, and shouldered the blame of many of her small sins when they had been children together; when death had seemed an intangible something that belonged to age, that never by any chance would touch their happy youth.

And now presently the air would be meeting together in the little space filled with his happy life, as if he had never been, and she would be living on to see how little the world had need of him, or of any one of us. She did not need to love to feel the pitifulness of it.

For two days it had rained, a merciless, steady, driving pouring that mocked at every tradition of Colorado's fair climate; two days of confinement in the bare ranch parlor, where, among all the care seated abominations, were but two chairs really comfortable to tempt the selfishness of a dozen unhappy people—where every game invented by man failed to offset the torture diabolic impulses were continually evoking from the decrepit piano. For Anita there was a bit of silver lining showing through the clouds, in that Mrs. Rogers was kept shut up within her cabin, a quarter of a mile away. That vivacious little person rather haunted the ranch hostelry, where she came for her mail, for milk, butter and other necessities—most of all, it was whispered by the observers, to carry on a sort of methodical flirtation with a consumptive young clergyman, with a side glance to spare for Gray Van Zandt's blue beauty. Had there been a hundred men in Eden, would Eve ever have rested until she had beguiled every last one of them into a bite of her fatal apple?

In Gray, however, the little coquette had found one who was fully alive to the flavor of the fruit she had to offer. Nothing he could have done would have won him more favor in Anita's jealous heart than the cold shoulder he turned upon this woman whom she counted her rival. By no means as guileless as the days of women he was as wise as the present that was the first weak one to see.

CHAPTER IX.

"Oh, Gray, let me go!"

A man who has been always favored of women, though he may have been given the best of reasons to know that the heart is no clock-work mechanism, to be wound up by marriage into a perpetual regularity of action, even though for his sake seeing angels may have fallen, is yet, on his own account, rarely minded to feel the poisoned barbs of jealousy. A flattering experience has contributed to an armor of self-confidence too heavily invulnerable. And thus Anita's vengeance full flat at the outset. That she knew well, but she had not loved her cousin—poor devil! and that settled the matter; and that sort of marriage is always a failure. It would have been

To BE CONTINUED.

Chinese Cures.

Indigestion, such a baneful disease where cools do not mind their parts, is cured by the Chinese with a powder of dried horned toad, provided it has been carefully caught and prepared when the moon is on the wane.

Centipedes, which in life produce agonizing blisters in the neighborhood of their bites, still carry with them in the powdered state the faculty of raising blisters when made into a poultice. San Francisco, Chronicle.

SEILON'S CATARRH REMEDY. A marvelous cure for Catarrh, Diphtheria, Canker-moath and Headache. With each bottle there is an ingenious nasal Injector for the more successful treatment of these complaints without extraneousness. Price 50 cts. S. B. by Thomas & Aycocke, Louisburg, and T. C. J. year, Franklin, N. C.

A STATEMENT.

ACCORDING TO LAW OF THE AMOUNT OF EACH AMOUNT CLAIMED AND ALLOWED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY, AND TO WHOM ALLOWED, BEGINNING OF THE FIRST MONDAY IN DECEMBER 1890, AND ENDING ON THE FIRST MONDAY IN DECEMBER 1891.

Table with columns for names, amounts, and dates. Includes entries for N. D. D. May board of prisoners, A. H. Moore keeping rats from Simms bridge, J. A. Thomas books and stationery, etc.

Note: The omission of numbers from 321 to 332 was a clerical error in making out under (TO BE CONTINUED)