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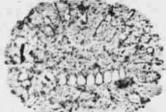
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A. E. BOBBITT,
Cedar Rock, N. C.

(Written expressly for the Courier.)

"Unto the End."

BY ETHEL.

CHAPTER I.

Clyde Cameron sat near the attic window trying to catch the last rays of day light, in order to finish the weeks work due Dupont & Co. The face of the young girl was almost ghastly in its pallor, while the eyes large and dark looked wild in their sunken depths. Yet the incessant "stitch, stitch, stitch, in poverty and hunger," had not wholly obliterated the beauty that nature with lavish hand had bestowed on her. It could be traced in the rebellious waves of glossy hair, that fringed her broad white forehead, and when the thin lips parted in a forced smile at the chatter of a little girl by her side.— They displayed teeth white and regular, and the she was greatly emaciated, the dimples had not been canceled, if beautiful and roguish in the pink rounded cheek, when trembling like a shadow of some deep emotion in the face of silent suffering, it has a communication direct to the heart of the beholder, and makes a deeper and more lasting impression than any word or glance.

The little girl sat crouched down on the floor watching the snow fall on the narrow window sill, folding her little arms she shivered as she thought how cold it was. Then turning her great blue eyes to Clyde asked, "Sister are you going out this evening?"

"Yes dear," she answered while the needle flew in and out with increased rapidity. "I must get some wood and something to eat."

"Let me go too, I can help bring a heap of things," she said pleadingly, stretching out her little hands, the threadbare sleeve slipping back showing the thin arms. Dropping her work, Clyde caught her in her arms and cried out,

"Oh, Lomie! little one, if I could only care for you as I would; the tears rolled down her pale cheek and fell on the golden curls of her little sister.— Hearing a footstep approaching she brushed away the tears, and was fastening the last stitch, when the door opened and a sad faced woman entered, little drifts of snow rested on each shoulder and the rusty black shawl was spotted with the melting drops.

"Oh, Mama!" cried Lomie, darting to her, "I am so glad you have come."

Kissing the little upturned face, she said, "I am glad to get in the house again darling, tho' it is such a poor one.— Have I kept you waiting?" she asked, touching her lips to Clyde's forehead.

"No, mother, I am just through, and altho' I am anxious to know the result of your visit, shall have to wait until I get back, it is so late."

"Yes dear," and shaking the snow from her shawl, she said, "Put this on over yours for it is bitter cold."

"No, I shall walk rapidly, and you will need it before I get back with any thing to make a fire."

Taking the bundle of work she hurried out. The sum she was to receive for their week's work, was not sufficient to keep them from absolute want; at least two days in every week they were without fuel, and too scant often were their meals, to which the emaciated appearance of each testified.

The little family even during Mr. Cameron's life time were never in affluence, but since his death five years before, the struggle to live had been greater each successive year. Until poor Mrs. Cameron felt that the strife of life was wrecking her constitution and making prematurely old her daughter, and with a pang of anguish she felt that if help did not come they would die from privation, for delicate constitutions can not hold out at hard work even when well fed.

Clyde entered the large establishment of Dupont & Co., waited patiently the inspection of her work, received another bundle and the pay—the a

paltry sum, it brightened her face, for it held in check grim want. It was almost dark, with a quick step she passed out and sought a grocery store. Several others were ahead of her, but she went straight to the counter and waited impatiently to be waited on. A manly figure in a heavy over coat was giving an order for Oysters, after which he turned to go out, but on reaching the door was arrested by the angry voice of the store keeper declaring shoplifting could not be done in his house, and seizing Clyde by the shoulder, shook her violently, ordering her to give up that bundle he had left on the counter.

With a little gasp of fright, she denied the charge. The young man stepped back saying, "How dare you be so insulting; the lady came in after I did and stood by me until you came to wait on her."

"Oh! sir," cried Clyde, "I do so thank you, I only hurried to be waited on because it is so late; how could I conceal any thing?" she said, throwing back her old worn shawl. This is a bundle of work, and as quick as thought she broke the string and displayed its contents, then with a burning spot on her cheek and an indignant flash from her dark eyes, she refolded her bundle, and started out. The Grocer was very much ashamed of his rudeness, begged her to let him wait on her, asked her pardon saying, he had lost so much that he was getting irritable over it.

Clyde turned and made her purchases there. As she was going out the young gentleman stepped to her side, and said,

"You have so many little packages, and it is so cold and hard walking in the wind, let me help you."

She looked up into his face. It was a handsome one, and looked back into hers very compassionately.

"Oh, sir, you are too kind, I cannot take advantage of you, and—"

"I would like to help you," he interrupted, holding out his hands for some of her packages.

But stammering out in a distressed confusion that her evening's work was not over yet, she left him as hurriedly as she had entered the store. She felt sick at heart for fear she had acted rudely; but what was the use to permit his kindness of heart to take him to that miserable place. She was poor, but did not want to be put on the charity list. No, no, they would work on, living honestly, and looking unto the end only for peace and rest. Unto the end! How many sufferers are looking forward impatiently to such an event—come as it may. Upon some, fortune smiles, and from hard work and want, they glide into the joy of dreamy ease. Unto others it comes the saddest of all the melancholy days; yet it comes the same to all, at last. Whether delayed by seasons of pleasure or hastened by penury, death puts its icy fingers alike on the bounding pulse of the rich and the feeble flutter of the beggar—each the world forgetting, by the world forgot.

Clyde's painful reverie was broken by the kind voice of old Mr. Timms, the corner grocer. He generally closed early, as he lived some distance, and Clyde would not have seen him in her deep thought had he not spoken.

"Ah, lassie, it is pleasant to see thee."

And looking up she saw him looking his door.

"Good evening, Mr. Timms, I thought you would be closed, it is so late, but if you could let me have a little wood sir, I should be so glad, it is too late to go to the wood yard."

"Yes, yes, child, it is too cold to be without wood," and unlocking the door, they went back into the shop.

Placing a quarter on the counter, she said,

"I am so glad I can get it here."

"Keep your money, child, you shall have the wood."

"But Mr. Timms, you gave me some once before, and I can't come to you any more if you do not let me pay you."

He looked at her a minute, and then dropping the money in the drawer went into the back room, returning with his

arms full of wood, refused to let her carry it, saying:

"Your arms are full of bundles, I will carry it."

"You are very kind to me, Mr. Timms, I wish I could repay it some time."

"Never mind, lassie, never mind," he said, toiling up the narrow stairway.

The first landing all was dark—one more flight and the door is pushed open, throwing a bright ray of light on the well loaded couple—while little Lomie capered around them, singing out,

"Oh, mama! here is some sure 'nough wood, and uncle Timms, too,"—who, putting the wood down, caught her in his arms, saying:

"Good evening Mrs. Cameron, don't thank me for the wood, it is Miss Clyde's and only came to see my little girl," he said, laughing, and putting Lomie down he added, "I must go back for the rest."

"I am glad to hear there is more, sit down Mr. Timms, we won't mind going for it."

But he would go, and soon came back with another large turn of wood, refusing to come in, as it was Saturday night, and he had a number of little chores to do.

In the mean time the smoking embers revived into a glowing fire—the one little table was placed near their stock of crockery, tho' scant, was often more than they were able to fill with provisions. Thus enjoying their simple meal, Clyde told of her little adventure, and concluded with—

"I do hope the kind gentleman did not think me rude."

"No my dear, I think you acted wisely, for although his interference in your behalf seemed kind and gentlemanly, we cannot always judge from appearances what one's motives are.— We must manage it so that you will not be out so late."

"Now mother, tell me of your secret business this afternoon?"

Her mother smiled, and said:

"I saw in yesterday's paper, that a good vocalist and performer on the piano, would find it to her interest to call at—street No. 49. So I went to see if it would not turn out for some good to you."

"Oh! Mother, I have not played on the piano any in two years, how could I answer to that description?"

"I knew your modesty, and that is why I did not let you know what I was going to do. I called at the place, it is that splendid establishment of Mrs. Nathier, and she is a perfect lady.— Clyde I went to school with her and we use to be quite intimate when children. She did not recognize me. I am greatly changed, and if I had not been she would never expect to find Clyde Fremont in such poverty. I could not tell her, but I told her I came in behalf of my daughter and your ignorance of my doing so, that you had quite a talent for music, but was out of practice for the want of a piano. She said she had some pressing engagements, but would see you Monday at ten o'clock."

"Oh! Mother," said Clyde clasping her thin white hands.

"I don't believe I have forgotten. I do believe I could play even without looking at the keys."

Her eyes brightened and the crimson spot burning on her pale face showed that music had a charm for her that few possessed.

"I thought so darling," said her mother fondly; "and poverty has not taken away your voice, if it has your piano. Mrs. Nathier probably wants you to teach, at any rate I hope it is something that will pay you, it will be better than sewing so constantly."

"Oh!" said Clyde, while great tears rolled down her cheeks if I only could do something to keep off want, I would cheerfully work."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Call a lady a "chicken," and ten to one she is angry with you. Tell her she is "no chicken," and ten to one she is still angrier.

What I Have Seen.

An old man of experience says: I have seen a young man sell a good farm, turn merchant, and die in the insane asylum.

I have seen a farmer travel about so much that there was nothing at home worth looking at.

I have seen a man spend more money in folly than would support his family in comfort and independence.

I have seen a young girl marry a young man of dissolute habits, and repent of it as long as she lived.

I have seen a man depart from truth where candor and veracity would have served him to a much better purpose.

I have seen the extravagance and folly of children bring their parents to poverty and want, and themselves to disgrace.

I have seen a prudent and industrious wife retrieve the fortunes of a family when the husband pulled at the other end of the rope.

I have seen a young man who despised the counsels of the wise and advice of the good, and his career end in poverty and wretchedness.

How he Wanted his Picture Taken.

Yesterday a young man with a wart on his nose dropped in at the Sherman photograph gallery and remarked that he wanted some pictures taken.

"Will you have it standing or a bust?" queried the artist.

"Bust!" exclaimed the fellow, as he picked up his hat. "Bust! Mister, do I look like a man who would come in to a picture gallery to get or a bust?"

They explained to him, and finally persuaded him to sit long enough for a negative. The picture was a good one, and the nose stood out like a black cat in a bay window.

The fellow looked at it, and as he handed it back said, "Shoot again, old pard, and see if you can't make the wart look like a piece of chewing gum."

They told him that it couldn't be done.

"Well, see here now, pard," he pleaded, "my name's Truffles, and I'm engaged to a girl back in Indiana, and she wants my picture. She don't know I've got this wart—it's grown since I left there; and if you could just rub it out of the picture and make it look like something that she's familiar with—a slice of bacon, for instance—I'd feel better."

They fixed it up for him, and when he went out he chuckled.

"That'll fetch her; she'll just naturally think I'm floatin' round in solid comforts like bacon and string beans and such."

The Women Who are Loved Most.

The women who have been the most loved from the time of Eve, have been of great activity and industry.

Penelope, to whom the great heart of Ulysses turned faithfully in all his wanderings, wore by day and unwove by night for twenty years, the web that fascinated her impatient suitors.

The fair, unfortunate Roman, Lucretia, "spun among her maidens." And when King Harold came to take his last farewell of his affianced, the lovely Saxon, Edith—Edith of the swan neck—he found her at the loom.

The most precious and valued old laces were wrought, stitch by stitch and loop by loop, by the fingers of patient queens and royal ladies, and were often the product of a lifetime of labor.

They are not the idle women who have inspired, and been the heroines of song and story.

They are not the idle women whose children rise up and call them blessed, and to them grateful husbands say, as said Brutus to Portia:

"You are my dear and honorable wife, As dear to me as are the ruddy drops That visit my sad heart."

Truthfulness a sound basis.

Hard up, yet Rich in Eloquence.

He walked out of the depot with a satchel in his hand—a good-looking satchel, yet terribly gaunt and thin.— If satchels had ribs, one could have seen that satchel's ribs, and noted how thin in flesh it was. When a professor of hack-driving asked the stranger if he would have a carriage, he smiled blandly, and replied,—

"Not this time, colonel—not just now, although I warn thee that it is plebeian-like for a duke to walk around with his baggage in his hand. I am in search of a hostelry—a caravansary where I can recuperate and refresh."

Finally, when he stood before the hotel clerk, the clerk noted that the stranger's hat was full of dents and caves; that his shirt-front was badly soiled; that his garments were becoming threadbare, and that there was need of thorough repair.

"I desire a seat at the banquet-board without delay," said the stranger. "I have traveled far, and need refreshment."

The clerk smiled as the satchel was lifted over the counter. He "hefted" it, and smiled again.

"I carry the duets here, in my wallet," said the stranger. "and after I have sipped the amber mocha, served the spring poultry, I shall cheerfully requite thee."

He might have seventy five cents about him—the clerk would chance it. Victory lurked in the stranger's eye as he turned to one of the bell boys, and said,—

"Youthful slave, conduct me to a place where I can lave my sovered brow."

He was conducted, and after he had laved he looked a little better. Even a bootblack is improved by a liberal application of soap and water. Still, there was that lank satchel behind the counter, those threadbare garments and that hungry voice.

"Now, serf, proceed to the banquet hall, and I will follow thee," said the stranger, as he ran a coarse comb over his head for the last time.

Seated at the table and approached by a waiter, he remarked,—

"Thou canst bring me rare viands of any kind, and I shall not quarrel about the cookery."

"Beefsteak, fried ham, mutton chops, or liver?" queried the girl.

"Fair lady, to thine own judgment do I leave it," he replied; "only let wigs be added to thy speed, for my castle is leagues away, and I hunger."

She brought him a well-selected stock of groceries and provisions, and he got away with them as a steam ditcher goes down through sandy soil. He ate his fill, and then he crammed another meal down on top of that. He emptied his coffee-cup again and again and when he finally rose from the table he could hardly lift himself.— Turning to the fatigued waiter, he gently said,

"Fair maiden of the valley, thou hast done thy culinary work in a manner which speaks volumes for thee.— Permit me to offer thee my heartfelt thanks."

He strolled into the office, put some matches into one vest pocket, and some toothpicks in the other, and then leaning his elbow on the counter, said to the clerk,

"Thou knowest thy duties well, and when I am far away I shall gladly sound thy praise."

"Can't, no fooling now—out with that seventy-five cents."

"As soon as my retainers arrive I shall give thee a weighty purse, and thou canst keep every ducat in it."

"Ducats be hanged! I want scrip—nickles—stamps! I want pay for your breakfast!"

"Gently, my friend with the Roman nose," continued the stranger; "thou canst not say but I am a lord or a duke in disguise."

"And I don't care a cent! Are you going to pay?"

"Am I going to turn these fragments

of wood into gold? queried the stranger, as he held up a number of fine toothpicks.

The clerk came out of the office, having the lean satchel in his hand, and he took the stranger to the door, kicked him with great good will, and pointed up the street.

"I go," said the man in a solemn voice, "but when my retainers arrive I shall seek revenge—human gore shall be shed to satisfy me."

"You want to gore right away from here—quick—smart!" exclaimed the clerk.

He went. His face was clouded for a moment, but then a grand smile covered it and he stopped a newsboy, and asked,

"My faithful minion, canst thou direct me to an office over the door of which hangs the traditional golden balls of the base money lender—a place where I may exchange a few precious hairlocks for some vile dross?"

And the boy did.

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