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Greta's Reward.

By I. P. H.

The strains of a violin floated from the porch of a California ranch house standing isolated near the base of a mountain. The ranch was ill cultivated and there was little "stock" upon the scant alfalfa pasture.

The house, on the contrary, was large, well built, and was altogether a pretentious looking residence. John Engledew had bought the land and built the house when he first came out from England ten years previous with a pretty, delicate wife and a little girl five years old. Being of a sanguine and unbusiness like disposition he was cheated in the land, and spent so much upon the house that he had not the wherewithal to support the place during the first non-paying years; hence he became poor instead of rich; he was in debt and the land was mortgaged "up to the hilt." Of late Engledew had fallen into bad health, he had almost entirely ceased to work, and what little the ranch returned them when the interest on the mortgages was paid was due to the young violinist who was making music upon the porch.

A believer in heredity would have had his theories thrown into confusion by the little musician; it was neither from the delicate, querulous mother, nor from the lazy, good humored, lax principled father that Greta Engledew inherited the vigorous will, courage and good sense that showed in the clear, blue gray eyes and in every pose of the lithe, strong figure. At fifteen she was more of a woman than most girls of twenty; it was she who milked the cows, made the butter, cooked and cleaned, rode to the town to sell poultry and eggs, insisted on lazy Mike, her ten-year-old brother, attending the "district school," and generally "kept things together" on the "Vivay Hallowa" Ranch.

The father was as wax in the hands of Greta, but the mother had a spice of that strange obstinacy common to the weak. She would occasionally take determined and usually disastrous action in the family affairs; thus she steadily combated her daughter's persistent cultivation of her musical talents, while she deplored the fact that her shapely hands were sunburnt because she did not wear gloves.

Greta had a pronounced and remarkable talent for music. Old Manuel Xeres, who lived at the Mission Dolores, had discovered her gifts; he had taught the little blue-eyed girl all he knew, and when he died, which he did when his pupil was fourteen, he left her his violin—a "Strad"—of which neither she nor any one in her environment knew the value. Greta arose at dawn to work in order that she might have time to practice. She loved music, but she had also other aims in view.

She was playing "Che faro," giving the long-drawn, wailing notes softly, but not so absorbent, in the music as to prevent her hearing the door at the back of the house open and close. She stopped playing and listened; there were steps in the kitchen—light, hesitating steps.

"Is that you, father?" she cried.

There was no answer.

"Mike, is it you?"

Still no answer came. As Greta went into the house, violin in hand, she heard a distant beat of hoofs. She walked through the front parlor, through the kitchen beyond and into the small wire-enclosed "summer" kitchen that lay behind it. In this apartment she saw the visitor whose steps she had heard—a tall man, clad in the ordinary working dress of a rancher, a sunburnt, black bearded man, who might have been any age from twenty-five to thirty-two. He leaned on the table for support, his breath came in gasps, and on the left sleeve of his cotton "jumper" was an ominous dark-red stain.

"Who are you?" asked Greta, boldly.

"What do you want?"

The stranger raised his head, looked at her straight from a pair of handsome hazel eyes, and caught the sound of horse's hoofs; he sprang toward her and clutched her arm.

"Listen to me," he said rapidly.

"I am innocent—I never touched the horse, but it's my oath against Jim Sweeney's. They're all on my track like hounds; if they catch me they'll hang me to yonder tree! Will you hide me? If you don't, I'm a dead man, and I swear to you that I'm innocent!"

"Innocent or guilty," said Greta, coolly, "they're no right to kill you for that."

The man looked at her and gave an odd, reckless laugh.

"No right to hang a horse thief?" he said.

"You're not Californian."

"No, I'm English—as you are. I knew you were English the moment you spoke."

The sound of hoofs echoed on the bridge over the ditch; the girl dragged her unbidden guest through the kitchen into the parlor, pushed

him into a deep rocker which stood with its back to the room, flung a handkerchief over his head to make it appear that he was indulging in a siesta, and drew her bow steadily across the violin strings. She had played three bars of the "Che faro," when there came a knock at the door.

"Come in!"

The door was pushed open, to disclose a group of angry men. The girl stepped forward.

"Good-day, gentlemen!" she said, in a clear voice. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

The spokesman doffed his hat. He was an American, and Americans are habitually polite to women.

"Sorry to disturb ye—Miss Engledew, ain't it?"

"Yes, I'm Greta Engledew. Say, shall I call papa?"

"Thar ain't no need, Miss Engledew. Ye ain't seen no one pass by yere, I s'pose? We're out after a skunk of a horse thief; that's what's the matter with us!"

"Papa's working down near the People's ditch. You might ask him."

"You ain't seen no one pass?"

"No; I've been playing here—directing attention to her violin—and I've not been out since noon. Say, Jack—boldly turning her head toward the rocker, at which one of the men was looking—"you've not seen a horse thief, have you?"

The occupant of the chair remained silent.

The girl laughed, went up to him, and peeped under the handkerchief.

The sleeve of the jumper and the cushion of the chair were alike soaked with the red stream that issued from the wound in the man's arm; the man himself was in a swoon. Greta dropped the handkerchief and turned to the pursuers.

"Sound as a church!" she said, merrily. "I guess you needn't trouble him with questions."

"Sorry to hev troubled you, Miss Engledew! Say, boys, he must hev made tracks for Blue Point Falls."

"Just go way down by the People's Ditch and ask papa," said the girl, snuffering easily after them.

"No, I guess not, Miss Engledew; we'll go by Blue Point."

The cavalcade clattered over the bridge, and the girl sprang back into the house. She ran to the kitchen to fetch water and some stimulant, then rapidly returned to the side of the wounded and hunted man, who was still insensible; she ripped up the sleeve and revealed a sunburnt, muscular arm, with a bullet wound a little below the shoulder. Greta was capable of a little rough-and-ready surgery; she stopped the flow, bathed and bandaged the wound, put the arm in a sling, and then managed to force some stimulant between the white lips; in ten minutes the man groaned, stirred, sat up, and gazed at her blankly.

"They've gone past here to Blue Point Falls. If you're fit to go, you'd best be off to the Mission."

The man stood up.

"I am very much obliged to you," he said, faintly.

"You've no need to be. Would you like something to eat before you go?"

"No, thanks. I should like some water."

She brought him some, and he drank; then he suddenly turned and said, abruptly:

"You declared that I ought not to be hanged, even if I were a horse thief."

"That is the view I take of it. I don't think you ought to be."

The man stooped and looked steadily into her eyes.

"But I do not wish you to think of me as a thief—I want you to feel convinced that I am honest, and that I am simply the unluckiest man on earth."

Greta gave no answer.

"Do you believe that?"

Greta looked at him—the hazel eyes were very honest.

"Do you?"

"Yes—I do."

"Thank you," said the man, drawing a long breath. "I'll go now—only—"

He paused.

"Well?"

"I haven't heard a violin for ten years. Would you mind finishing 'Che faro'?"

"Why, you must be mad!"

"I assure you I am not—but, if I am, will you humor me?"

"Yes."

She played the air, and at the end of the first bar—

"Thank you—I shan't forget that music nor the musician. Good-by!"

"Stop!" said Greta. "Come with me—it's twelve miles to the Mission, and you're too weak to walk them."

She fitted before him to the barn and through the barn to the pasture; presently she returned with a horse, bridled and saddled.

"Here—you can get away on this."

"No—no," said the man, gently.

"You'll get a scolding if you give away your father's horses. You shan't be scolded for me."

He clasped the hand that held the bridle as he spoke.

"This is my horse," said Greta, flushing, "and you're welcome. I want you to take him."

Their eyes met; the man mounted silently and stooped.

"Will you tell me your name?"

"Greta—Greta Engledew."

The man stooped lower yet, suddenly flushed, and pulled himself upright in the saddle with a jerk.

"Thanks avall little," he said, in a low voice, "but I shall not forget."

He hesitated, then stretched forth the unwounded arm, and with his hand gently drew out the bunch of orange-yellow wild flowers that glowed on the girl's bosom; he thrust them into the breast of the stained cotton jumper, and turned the horse's head. Five minutes later he had vanished in a cloud of dust.

Four years had passed. Greta Engledew sat in a small, dingy apartment in Plymouth. Time had transformed her into a remarkably handsome girl. Her violin rested upon her knee, and she tapped her little foot rather impatiently upon the floor.

"But, mother, dearest," she said, gently, "what else can I do? I do not think you understand, dear, that we are positively penniless!"

The only answer was a wail from the pallid woman, in her shabby widow's weeds, who was Greta's companion.

"We had much better have remained in California after dear father died and the ranch was taken, but I yielded to you in that. See now, dear mother—we have no relations, no friends, no interest. I cannot get employment without references. Mike is too young to be of any help in that direction, but he can be of assistance in the path I have chosen; he can protect me, and he sings very nicely."

"I still think it disgraceful and almost immodest."

The tears welled up in Greta's eyes.

"Oh, mother, do you imagine that I take any pleasure in walking miles along dusty roads in order to play my violin on the parades of summer watering places? But until I did this we were in want—you know we were!"

"The whole thing has been a muddle from beginning to end," responded Mrs. Engledew.

Greta was silent.

"Of course, you will not listen to me," the lady continued; "you will start to-morrow as you propose?"

"We cannot pay the rent and buy food if I do not," replied Greta.

"However, I will not oppose you. Refer it to Mike, mother—let him decide."

But Mike, mindful of days of semi-starvation, supported Greta, and on the following day brother and sister started on their tour.

It was a hard life, unfit for a refined and gently-bred girl, but it was a free and healthy outdoor existence, and the weather was beautiful.

For three weeks they tramped happily from place to place, but on the fourth week disaster befell the young musicians.

There is an unwritten law which prevails in California to the effect that wayfarers may halt and refresh themselves with the produce of orchards. Mike, reared in California, in perfect innocence plucked and ate, only to find himself given into custody by an irate farmer, who met Greta's pleadings by roughly telling her that:

"Her was ivery bit as bad as that young limb was. He'd be bound her'd taught the boy to steal; he'd go before his worship, Squire Arden! Ah, he'd be lucky if he got let off with the birch and a fine!"

Poor Greta found some difficulty in getting decent lodging for the night, and would have fared badly had not a rosy-faced young woman consented to receive her.

"Don't you fret about the boy," said this good Samaritan. "What's a few apples! Lor' bless ye, Squire Arden's a very pleasant gentleman! He's only had Combeley Dell a year—since the old squire's death. The old squire was dreadfully bitter against Mr. Miles, till the death of Mr. Francis two years ago made Mr. Miles the heir. Then the old squire made friends with him."

Greta listened with little interest—she was thinking of Mike. The next day she went with a beating heart to see her brother arraigned in court. The justice was a handsome man on the right side of forty—a grave-looking man, closely shaven, and with very fine eyes.

Greta explained, tremulously, that her brother had meant no harm—He had not understood English customs.

"You are from California," said the justice, fixing his gaze on her face.

"Yes."

"I think," said the magistrate, slowly, "I shall be justified in dismissing the case. You will be prepared to pay for the apples?"

"Oh—yes—yes—three—times over!"

"That," said Mr. Arden, slowly,

"will be unnecessary, Miss Engledew. The prisoner is discharged."

Greta thanked him fervently, and was turning away, eager to join Mike.

"Miss Engledew, one moment," said the squire. "I am anxious to speak to you. Do you know my house?"

"Yes."

"My carriage is outside. I will direct you and your brother to be driven there."

Greta, bewildered and exceedingly thankful to be restored to Mike, entered the smart dogcart, and was driven to a beautiful old house on the outskirts of the moor.

They were shown into a room, where a servant brought them lunch. An hour later the door opened, and their host entered. He advanced and held out his hand.

"You do not remember me, Miss Engledew?"

"I have never met you before, I think, Mr. Arden."

"I thought you did not remember; but a man does not readily forget the woman who has saved his life. Do you remember these?"

And with loving care he drew from a big, bulky pocketbook a bunch of faded and withered flowers.

Greta started.

"Will you play me 'Che faro' to-day?" said Arden, softly. "You see, I have the same flowers still, Miss Engledew, and the horse is very happy in our Devon pastures."

Greta turned white, and would have fallen had not Arden caught her.

"Your sister and I are old friends, my boy," he said, as he turned a smiling face to Mike. "I owe her more than she guesses—more than I knew until this moment."

Greta Engledew was playing "Che faro" under a cedar tree on the lawn of a pretty cottage where her mother was installed in great comfort.

Miles Arden sat beside her.

"Greta," he said, as the long, wailing notes died away, "three months ago I said that a man does not forget the woman who has saved his life. That was a half truth—will you hear the whole to-day? A man may forget the woman who has saved his life, but not the woman who fills it with a love that will last as long as his life lasts. Greta, I think I loved you even that day, for it was very hard to ride away without taking—what I take now."—New York Weekly.

The temperature of the air decreases for each 1000 feet of height.

Soap to which from one to five per cent. of naphtha acids has been added is recommended by a German chemist as a ready destroyer of virulent disease germs.

The aluminum has not been tested for lightning rods long enough to allow of answering definitely. Probably they are, but they would be expensive. Copper is much better as a conductor than iron.

Two balloons used for the purpose of making atmospheric measurements were sent up from the geophysical laboratory at Pavia, Italy. They reached the record height of 442,000 feet. The thermometers recorded 144.8 degrees below zero, Fahrenheit.

The Teltow Canal, in Prussia, recently opened, besides establishing an important link between the eastern and western canal systems of that country, provides for an electric system of traction for canal propulsion. This canal cost about \$10,000,000, and was constructed by the District Council of Teltow.

In Java the planting of indigo is steadily decreasing by reason of the great increase in production of the synthetic article; in fact, much of the land on which indigo has heretofore been cultivated has now been turned into sugar plantations. Exports in 1903 were 1,297,274 pounds, and in 1905 540,452 pounds.

A novel burglar alarm made in Berlin consists of a small box containing a dry battery with an electric bell on top. The apparatus is fastened on the door above the key, and contacts are so arranged that any attempt to turn the key or open the door rings the bell. If desired, the bell can be placed at a distance, as in the usual form of alarm.

United States Consul, H. D. Van Sant, sends from Kingston a clipping from a Canadian paper describing a "freak-craft, a triple-tailed production, able to turn a couple of circles within its own length." The main hull is thirty feet long, and the outrigger twenty-five feet, joined to the main hull by steel braces. Either hull can pitch independent of the other one.

SOUTHERN FARM NOTES.

TOPICS OF INTEREST TO THE PLANTER, STOCKMAN AND TRUCK GROWER.

The Cattle Industry in the South.

A recent bulletin of the Mississippi Station, prepared by A. Smith and C. I. Brag, states that the "farmers of that State and throughout the cotton belt generally are slow to realize the benefits of stock raising and cattle feeding, and that it is more remunerative than continuous cotton growing." Cotton growing has therefore been the chief source of revenue for the farmer; cotton is pre-eminently the "money-crop" of the region, and other branches of farming have been neglected. The feeding experiments carried on at the station with twenty-five grade steers, two to four years old, which were classed as medium feeders, using cotton-seed hulls and meal, cornmeal, wheat bran and hay (Johnson grass and a mixture of alfalfa and Johnson grass, 2:1) furnish quite clear evidence that the feeding of beef cattle in Mississippi is a safe and profitable investment and a much more economical way of maintaining the fertility of the soil than by purchasing fertilizers.

In the wheat and corn belts farmers have long ago discovered that the continuous sale of their crops could not be carried on indefinitely without impairing the fertility of the soil, and that they must have recourse to live stock of some kind to return to the land some of the elements of plant food taken from it by the crops grown, thus preserving their farms in a state of productivity more easily resembling the original condition of the soil. In the cotton belt the beef breeds of cattle are only beginning to take their rightful place among other farm live stock. This is largely owing to the prevailing idea among farmers that raising beef steers for market is not profitable.

Dairy farming has many good points of superiority over beef raising, but to farmers who are not close to a good market and are handicapped by lack of available and steady labor, the breeding and feeding of cattle will offer many inducements.

That is a profitable business in the South is shown by the low cost of raising cattle, economy in producing suitable feeds, and the inexpensive buildings required.

With a pure-bred beef sire, a herd of native cows, and plenty of pasture land, a farmer may in two or three years' time develop a good grade beef herd, which will largely increase his profits and maintain the fertility of the soil.

The comparison between the stable versus open-yard system, while showing some advantage in favor of the stable method, readily indicates that a combination of the best features of both systems is preferable. This could be done by allowing the cattle to run in large sheds with a solid tight floor, which should be well bedded, and the manure all saved. If desired, outside yards connected with these sheds could be provided, so that the cattle should have some exercise and plenty of fresh air. One of the secrets of successful cattle feeding is in making them as comfortable as possible.

Where cottonseed meal and hulls can be purchased at a reasonable price, they prove to be very cheap feeds for fattening steers. No bad effects result from feeding cottonseed meal for such short periods as this, and it remains to be seen whether any ration can be compounded exclusive of good silage, which can equal it as an inexpensive feed.

Black Root or Cotton Wilt.

Many complaints are already reaching us concerning the ravage of this disease, which is yearly proving disastrous in our sandy sections and which is destined to increase its ravage from year to year, unless intelligent methods are adopted to stay it. The cotton affected begins to wilt or die, without any apparent cause; but if you pull up a stalk and cut into the root or stem, you will see it has begun to grow black, and hence the name of black root. It is caused by a fungus that is in the soil and which attacks the roots and checks or destroys the flow of sap to the top of the plant. There are two remedies. The first and most effective lies in rotation of crops. We have been planting cotton continuously too long on our lands. Fields affected with this disease should be planted next year in corn or oats and velvet beans. Do not plant in cow-peas, as this disease also feeds upon the cowpea, and will survive in the soil. But if planted in corn, wheat, oats or velvet beans the fungus will perish out more or less completely for lack of food. It has also been found beneficial to plant cotton on such lands late, not earlier than the first of May. The second remedy is to secure cottonseed of a

resisting variety. The Government has been experimenting upon disease for several years, and found that some varieties of cotton resist the attack of this black root much more than others; so, to breed a resistive variety and a State Entomologist will be in position to supply our farmers with some of these seed next season. We are thankful that the high price of late the high price of our crop product—the high price of labor are tending to make our Southern farmers adapt better methods and lead to do better work. We still have much to learn and more to do. Southern Cultivator.

Let the South Help Itself!

Perhaps it is necessary to the peace of mind that the newspaper should all take a fling at the Chicago packers. One derives a sense of virtue from the act of hurling anathema at the wicked. The Pharisees of our used to have a great time at the game, and their modern imitators are not thinning out with time.

It seems in order to say, however that at least Southern towns, cities and communities have no right to complain. If at any time they have suffered, either in their stomachs or their pockets, because of the high price or the unwholesome character of Chicago meat products, they have only themselves to blame. There has never been the smallest reason why they should not feed themselves from their own herds, flocks, fields, dairies, and barnyards. The South is rich in farming and grazing lands and the inhabitants thereof can raise beef cattle, sheep, hogs, poultry and vegetables of the very finest quality and in unlimited quantity if they choose. Why need they go to Chicago, Kansas City, Omaha, or any other distant market for food which they can produce themselves? And if they persist in a policy so unnecessary and so improvident, they might have the grace to realize that it is their fault, and refrain from condemnation of others. The pastures of the South can turn out as good beef and mutton as the stockyards of Chicago can. Southern farms are capable of furnishing as high class butter, milk, eggs, etc., as any farms in Iowa or Kansas. Why, then, do not the Southern people help themselves instead of calling upon Hercules to help them and filling the air with complaint and imprecation when he fails to answer to their satisfaction?

We do not pretend to pronounce upon the truth, or lack of truth, in all these nauseous denunciations of the packing houses. We are quite sure, however, that the Southern people would be in much better business to set about the task of caring for themselves. It is not at all necessary for them to be dependent on imported food of any kind. When they bewail the hardships inflicted on them by the Western trust, they remind us of nothing so much as of the Texas ranch owners, thirty years ago, denouncing the quality of the condensed milk they got from Minnesota.—Washington Post.

Spot Cash.

That has got to be the motto of the farmer if he ever salts down any very great amount of money as the result of his business. Too many of us have been in the habit of trading off our butter, eggs and other farm produce to the man who "keeps store" at the corner. The consequence is that he not only keeps the store, but he keeps about all the profit there is in what we raise. He gets a good margin on the stuff he buys of us and makes a fair speck on the calico and the sugar and the tobacco we take home.

Now, I want this margin of profit myself, and so I say to the groceryman: "You pay me a fair price for what I bring you to sell and I will do the same by you. If you will not do that, I will hunt up some one who will. I am not obliged to let you have my stuff. I can send it a hundred miles away to market if I can get a better price than you will give me, and I will do it, too!" This talk about patronizing the home market is not what it is cracked up to be always. Let's get this thing down to a cash basis and see how things will work then.

And I know how it will work. There will be more and better things in the house (butter and eggs, and we will have a great deal more money to jingle in our pockets than when we're going on with the old trade system. And the store-keepers will do better off, too. That's another good thing about it. What will have a better time of goods and sell more of them. Let's try this and see.—E. L. Vincent, in Progressive Farmer.