

THE EVENING NEWS.

Saturday, - - - March 4, 1871.

[From Scribner's Monthly.]
THE STORY OF A VALENTINE.

[CONCLUDED.]

"But she could not find a way—she had no rope to throw. Again the Colonel, meaning to do anything else but that, opened the way. At the breakfast table the next morning she received a very magnificient Valentine. All at once she saw it was it. It was St. Valentine's day. The rope was in her hand. Exhaling herself from breakfast she hastened to her room.

"To send a valentine to her faithful lover was the uppermost thought. But how? She dare not write her name, for, after all, she might be mistaken or confounding on his love, or she might offend his prejudices or his pride by so direct an approach. She went hunting around for something. She drew out a little pine boat that Henry had whitened for many years before. He had named it 'Hope' but the combined wisdom of the little boy and girl could not succeed in spelling the name correctly. And here was the little old boat that he had given, saying often afterward that it was the boat they two were going to sail in some day. The two children then, the son of one of them, made a laugh between them. Now—but I mustn't be sentimental."

"It did not take Jennie long to draw an exact likeness of the little craft. And that there might be no mistake about it, she spelled the name as it was on the side of the boat: 'Hope'."

"There was not another word in the valentine. See if it is not shrivelled up with it, and dropped it in the post-office. No merchant, sending all his fortune to sea in one frail bark, ever watched the departure and trembled for the result of venture as she did. Spain did not pray half so fervently when the invincible Armada sailed. It was an unanswered prayer—an unutterable prayer. For heart and hope were the lading of the little picture-boat that sailed out that day, with no other wind but the wind in the sail."

"She sat down at her window until she saw Henry Gilbert pass the next street corner on his morning walk to the post-office. Three minutes after he went home, evidently in a great state of excitement, with her valentine open in his hand. After a while he went back again towards the post-office, and returned. He had taken a reply."

Jennie again sought the office. There were people all around with their hide-and-seek, and little comic valentines open in their hands. And they actually seemed to think them funny! She had a reply. It did not take long to find her room and open it. There was another picture of a boat, but the name on its side read 'Despair'. And these words were added: 'Your boat is the pleasantest, but, understanding that there was no vacant place upon it, I have been obliged to take passage on this. Slowly the meaning forced itself upon her. Henry had found that she whom he thought a friend was coqueting with him. I think Boston, you will hardly justify her in proceeding thus upon him.'

"Why not? Haven't a woman as much right to make herself understood in such a manner as a man? And when the social advantages are on her side the burden of making the advances often falls upon her. Many women do it willingly, and are not ashamed."

"Well, you know, I'm conservative, doctor, but I'm glad you're consistent. She did send another valentine. I am afraid she strained this figure of speech about that. But when the social advantages are on her side the burden of making the advances often falls upon her."

"Many women do it willingly, and are not ashamed."

"Good," cried the doctor; "I always advocated giving woman every liberty in the world."

"But I will stamp you yet doctor," said Hubert. "That evening Gough was to lecture in the village, and my friend went, not to hear Gough, but to see Miss Jennie Morton at a distance. Somehow, in the stupor of revivified hope, he had not thought of going to the house to see her yet. He had prepared his departure, and was about to leave when he saw a man standing near his door. Knowing how much opposition he would have to contend with, he thought, if he thought at all, that he must proceed with caution. But some time after the lecture began he discovered the Morton family without Jennie. Slowly he dawned upon him. He was near the front of the church in which the lecture was held, and every inch of aisle was full of people. To get out was not easy. But as he thought of Jennie waiting it became a matter of life and death. If the house had been on fire he would not have been more intent on making his exit. He reached the door, he passed the happiest evening of his life, only to weep to sorrow, for Jennie's father is dead set against the match."

"He has no right to interfere," said the doctor, very firmly. "You see I stand on the principles."

"But if I tell the story out I am afraid you would not," said Hubert.

"Why isn't it done?"

"I beg your pardon, doctor, for having used a little craft. I had much at stake. I have disguised this story in its details. But it is true, I am the hero."

The doctor looked quickly toward his daughter. Her head was bent low over her book. Her long hair hung about it like a curtain shutting off all view of the face. The doctor walked to the other window and looked out. Hubert sat like a mummy. After a minute Dr. Hood spoke:

"Cornelia!"

She lifted a face that was adown. Tears glistened in her eyes, and I doubt not she had a prayer in her heart.

"You are a brave girl. I had other plans. You have a right to choose for yourself. God bless you both. But it's a great pity Hu. is not a lawyer. He pleads well." So saying he put on his hat and walked out.

This is the conversation of the Huberts repeated to me that day sitting in his own parlour in a carriage in Alerville. A minute after his wife was in. She had been presenting for the minor ailments of some poor neighbors. She took the baby from her crib, and beat over her till that same long hair curstained mother and child from sight.

"I think," said Hubert, "that you folks who write loves stories are all alike. You stop at marriage. The honeymoon never truly begins until conjugal affection is enriched by this holy partnership of loving hearts in the life of a child. The climax of a love story is not the wedding; it is the baby."

"What do you call her?" I asked.

"Hope," said the mother.

"Hope Valentine," wailed the father, with a significant smile.

"I believe," I said, "you call the 'Hope' with an 'a', I believe," I said.

"You naughty 'Ha,'" said Mrs. Cornelia. "You've been telling. You think that love story is interesting to others because you enjoy it yourself."

"William, these knaves never call anybody names; but William, if the Mayor of the city were to come to me and say 'John, I want you to find me the biggest lie in all Philadelphia,' I would come to thee and put my hand on thy shoulder, and say to thee, 'William, the Mayor wants to see thee.'"

"My dear friend," said a gentleman to a bankrupt, the other day, "I'm sorry to hear of your misfortunes. Your family has my warmest sympathies. Still, don't trouble yourself about my family. I looked out for them, too, but just now you sympathize for the families of my creditors."

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