

A CHRISTMAS LONG DELAYED.

Woman's Loyalty Recompensed After Many Weary Years.

By FRANK H. SWEET.

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She was just a common, everyday sort of woman, a woman of the people, a product of poverty and yet a heroine as noble as ever was immortalized by poet's pen. Her wasted form was scarcely hidden by the limp, angular folds of her scanty calico skirt and the shawl about her shoulders. Her name was Mary, and as for her other name—it does not matter. She had hardly dared to use it for eighteen long years, and she thought of this as she drew near the big stores which were filled with happy Christmas shoppers.

She could just faintly remember that first sad Christmas thirty years before when her father, mother and herself were taken to the city pesthouse. She never saw them after that day, for when she left the hospital she went away alone. Mary was only six years old then, and her life seemed to have begun in her uncle's tenement, where the health officer had left her. It was even then a life of poverty and hunger. Her uncle was a strange man and before she came had lived all by himself.

When she was a little older he sent her out upon the streets to beg and then cursed her because she was so timid and got so little. She was begging one night by the Common when she met her first friend, a very kind young man, who took her hand and told her she mustn't beg. He took her down into Pe alley and gave her supper there with the newsboys and promised that she should become a news girl herself next day, which was better than begging. "Mary the news girl" they called her then.

Her second friend was a new neighbor's girl, who moved into the same house where she lived. This neighbor's girl worked as a "cash" in a big store, and when Mary's uncle disappeared one night and did not come back the neighbor's girl lent her a dress, found her a place also as cash girl and persuaded her mother to take the orphan into the family. Then began the best part of Mary's life. Dora and her mother were honest, if poor, and they gave Mary as good a home as they could for her meager wages. But the hours of work were long and weary, with no money for finery and no time for play. It was scarcely easier when Mary became a clerk, with better pay, but with greater expenses for board and decent clothes. She was old already at seventeen, a pale, shy girl, when she came to know Tom Haley, who was a janitor in the store. It seemed very strange that Tom, who was several years older, should care for her and should want to take her to walk on Sunday afternoons, but when they knew each other better and after Tom had asked her to marry him he said that the reason he liked her was because she was so good. That did not clear the mystery for Mary, but she worshipped Tom.

She promised to marry him, and yet she held with timid obstinacy that



"MARY, MARY, ARE YOU MAD?"

there was a great deal to be done before then. Homeless as she had always been, a waif of the street, she knew that Tom was scarcely better off than herself, yet she could not bear to think of marrying without a home. A home was her great ambition, and it could not be realized without money—a great deal of money, as it seemed to her, at least \$500. And her lover came to share that ambition.

Late one Saturday night when Mary and Dora went home together to the tenement down in the Cove district they saw a fierce looking man sitting on the doorstep. His rough hands stopped Mary as she tried to pass, and she felt the return of the old sickening fear as she recognized her uncle. He did not say why he had deserted her or told where he had been, but harshly ordered her to pack her "duds" and go with him. The thought of Tom Haley was the first that came to her mind, and it gave her courage to say that she would not go. Then as the tears started to her eyes she jerked away her hand and ran up the stairs, breathless and sobbing. A little later the uncle followed and told Dora and her mother that he was Mary's guardian

and was going to have his rights. Mary had locked herself in an inner room, and, although her supposed uncle swore that he would have the law on them all, he finally left the house defeated.

Tom Haley came that Sunday afternoon, as usual, and when he found what had happened he was pale with anger. He and Mary talked the matter over with the hopeless calm of people who are accustomed to misfortune. It did not seem impossible that Mary's uncle might have the law on them, as he threatened. They could not help sharing the fear that all the old neighbors felt for the man. It seemed to Tom that the only thing they could do was to be married at once. But Mary would not listen to this proposition.

It was eighteen years since all this had happened, yet it did not take Mary a moment to remember it all. She had been wrong. She ought to have listened to Tom's pleadings, and, once married, they might both have escaped the misery that followed. The faded woman drew her ragged shawl closer and shivered from something sharper than the December wind. She was living it all over again. She had not dared to leave the house on that Sunday long ago, not even to take her accustomed walk with Tom. Before he left her lover had promised to protect her on her way home the next night if she would wait outside until he had closed the store. That night she had waited and let Dora go home alone. When Tom appeared they walked together down to the Cove district, and, as they had feared, Mary's uncle was waiting in the doorway of the tenement. He scowled as they stopped before him.

"Who is that man?" he demanded of Mary.

"I am the man she is going to marry," said Tom, answering for her. Mary clung to her lover's arm. She felt a thrill of pride in Tom, followed by a nameless dread of what might happen to him. Her uncle's quick anger was aroused. He cursed Tom as a liar and abused Mary in the vilest way. Suddenly he stopped and, slouching down the steps, said to Tom: "If you are going to marry her I've got something to say to you first. Meet me at Jones' place, and we will have it over."

He brushed them, as he passed and disappeared around the corner of the court. Tom's hands were clenched, and he would have followed at once had not Mary hung so heavily upon him. She was more frightened than before, it was so strange, so unnatural. Tom was eager to go to the saloon around the corner and find out what her uncle had to say. He had nothing to fear, he said, and would be right back. When he had gone Mary bolted the door and sat waiting fearfully in the dark. Then the minutes dragged more heavily, because she thought it was time for Tom's return, and she breathed more freely when she heard a man's step upon the stairs and a bold knock upon the door.

"Is that you, Tom?" she said. She hardly noticed that his voice sounded strange when he answered. She drew the bolt, but it was her uncle who put his foot against the door and forced his way into the room. Seizing the almost paralyzed girl by the arm, he held up a bottle which she could just see in the dim light.

"It's vitriol," he hissed. "It will burn like a flame and eat like a tiger. Now, come along and don't make any fuss."

She dared not resist, but went along with him, wondering, with sickening dread, what terrible thing he had done to the man she loved. When they got into the court by the flicker of a street lamp they saw Tom coming toward them.

"Tell him you are going with me and won't have anything more to do with him, or I'll give him the acid," muttered her uncle. Mary, half stupefied with fear and wishing to save Tom from her uncle's fiendish threat, obeyed. She coldly passed Tom by and told him "not to bother her" then, as she had important business with her uncle.

"Mary, Mary, are you mad?" Tom cried, but she walked on, leaving him standing as if he had been stung. Her uncle chose the quietest streets, and they walked rapidly across the city toward the north end. She thought many times of calling for help, but the bottle of liquid fire was still in his hand, and she knew only too well that he would use it. The real terror of the situation seized her when they came to an old wooden rookery that had once been a mansion, but was now dark and empty. Her uncle opened the street door and almost dragged her up the three flights of old-fashioned stairs. "I'll have you safe enough in a minute," he said as he fumbled with the key. It was too much for Mary's weakened nerves. She lost all sense of fear and control, crying, "Tom, help!" slipped from her uncle's grasp to the floor. As the old man bent over her he heard quick steps coming up the stairs and a voice he recognized saying, "Yes, Mary, I'm coming!" Tom had followed them unseen to learn just what the mystery of Mary's coolness meant and was on hand to rescue her. But the thought of the dreadful bottle in her uncle's possession aroused Mary, and, seizing her uncle's hand, she screamed: "I'm all right, Tom! Go away!"

"What does this mean?" asked the panting Tom as he burst into the room and glared at Mary's uncle. The old man was cursing under his breath and, clearing himself from Mary's grasp, sprang savagely toward him. "The vitriol, the vitriol!" was all that Mary could say. It was all over in a moment. The men grappled. Tom bent the old man over the banisters, only half realizing the danger, while Mary wrenched the bottle from

his grasp and threw it away. Suddenly the old banister broke, and with a gasp of horror Tom and Mary saw the old man topple headlong heavily to the floor below.

When Tom reached him there was no sign of life. The man's neck had been broken, and Tom had just made sure of this fact when a policeman put his head in the door and asked in a gruff voice what was the matter. Why Tom Haley attempted to escape he could never tell. Terrified and dazed, he made a blind rush for the back door, but found himself in a yard surrounded by a high fence with the policeman at his heels. The hand of the officer was on his collar, and his struggles to free himself were soon quieted with stinging blows on his head.

There were long months in jail until the indictment was brought against Tom and more delay before the case finally came to trial.

Oh, justice had been blind! The revolver Tom had in his pocket he had



AND FROM THE CHURCHES OF THE CITY CAME THE PEAL OF BELLS.

borrowed "for an old man," as the tender testified. Jones said that he had been to his place "looking for an old man." A neighbor had seen Mary's cold greeting as she started away with her uncle and had heard Tom's threat of vengeance afterward. The policeman had seen Tom entering the house and had found him bending over the dead man.

All hope had left Mary's heart when she heard Tom sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment. Even the assurance that it would not be over eighteen years with good conduct on Tom's part failed to brighten her despair, for that term seemed almost a lifetime. The thought of the jail haunted her everywhere, and instead of trying to get back into the store where she had worked with Dora she found a place as waitress in a restaurant down by the market, but she was recognized even there, and when she found that men came to see her as a curiosity she would not stay. She no longer dared to be a waitress and for years lived as dishwasher in restaurants and cheap hotels. The pay was scarcely enough to keep her alive, yet she saved a few cents week by week, never failing in her hope and her trust for Tom. When his time was nearly up she was more feverishly eager to save, for after all her hardships she had but little, scarcely \$200, in all these weary years. Then she had a long sickness of typhoid fever that in three months swept all her precious savings away.

This was her first day out after her convalescence. She was still very weak and without a dollar. But what did it matter? This was Tom's day of delivery. She knew the hour when he was to be set free.

She wanted Tom, and the long deferred hope of a happy home seemed a slight thing compared to her great longing. The great prison which she knew so well was almost in sight. At last she reached the shelter of the high wall and looked up the passageway that led to the entrance. She felt a sudden consciousness of her ragged clothes, of the limp calico skirt and of the holes in her shoes. She would not disgrace Tom by going inside, but would wait in the street where no one could see her.

What was she bringing her lover after all these years? She had neither youth nor health nor money nor home. She almost dreaded to see him in the new clothes that she knew the state would give him. He was coming. She heard his footsteps on the walk, but she could not bear to put him to the test and tremblingly crouched by the great wall.

He came to the street and looked about him. How old and gray he seemed, but how handsome still! Dejectedly he walked away from where she was hiding, failing at first to recognize her. Her weakness and her longing overcame her and, huskily crying "Tom, Tom!" she staggered out before him.

"Mary!" he gasped and ran to her as she was sinking to the pavement. "I worked for you, Tom, but was sick and lost it all. I have no money for our home," she said.

She was fainting on his shoulder, and the big tears rolled from his eyes and his voice choked him as he replied: "God bless you, Mary! You're too good for one like me."

And from the churches of the city came the peal of the bells ringing the chiming of Christmas eve.

FRIBBLES OF FASHION.

Vagaries of the Plaited Skirt—Russian Blouse Suits.

About the newest plaited skirts there is no regularity of arrangement—in fact, the plaits start from here, there and everywhere. It is this eccentricity that makes the skirts difficult. And yet with all these plaits put into goes the effect at the hem is very narrow. No petticoat is worn, the skirt is quite short for morning and quite long for afternoon, and the plaits cling to the ankles.

Diagonal serge belongs to the Russian blouse suit. It is made in one and two toned effects.

Muffs will be worn this season in the evening. Of course they will not be the ordinary winter muffs. They will



MODISH COSTUME FOR SMALL GIRL.

be huge creations of chiffon, lace and ribbon, very light and filmy.

Belts of leather or suede are again in vogue. They are about five inches in depth.

The girl's dress to be seen in the cut is made in jersey style, with a plaited skirt. One of the pretty plaid materials of the season is used. A sash of ribbon is an attractive feature of this very desirable little frock.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

IN FASHION'S REALM.

A New Sweater For the Motorist. White Coat Linings Demode.

The newest sweater or undergarment designed especially for the motorist is a semifitting sack shape with a couple of pockets in the basque.

A smart felt hat for a young girl is in a charming shade of pearl gray with a garland of small flowers and foliage, all made of bebe ribbon entwined with a band of gray velvet.

A point to remember with regard to the lining of coats is that white linings are no longer fashionable. Either



PARTY GIRDLES.

the lining is of silk or satin of the same tint as the coat or a contrasting color is used. Banana is the leading color this winter.

A new make of cashmere with a more satinnlike surface than usual is worn alike for day and evening dresses. All sorts of fancy girdles are being worn just now, and the illustration shows a number that are smart and in every way attractive. No. 1 is made with a rounded upper edge, No. 2 with the square bib effect and No. 3 with the points that are among the newest of all things. Each and every one is suitable for thin materials. The girdles are made over fitted foundations, which are lined to preserve their shape.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

This May Manton pattern is cut in sizes for a 32, 34, 36, 38 and 40 inch bust measure. Send 10 cents to this office, giving number, 6508, and it will be promptly forwarded to you by mail. If in haste send an additional two cent stamp for letter postage, which insures more prompt delivery.

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

No More Rabbit Eared Collars—Mole-skin a Lovely Pelt For Coats.

Collars are now practically even all round and are very high. Tabs and points have disappeared.

The quality of molskin gives clinging lines to a long coat, and the color cannot be improved. Its dull gray tones blend with every shade of costume.

Chiffon is back again in lovely designs which offer dainty colored relief from the ever present plain white shirtwaist. Dotted and striped effects are especially adapted for tailored effects.

Buckles have come to the back, front and sides of this season's hats in forms that depart from the metal shapes of a few years ago.

With the new coiffures, which have a flat effect in front, many women are wearing especially ornamental head-dresses. Little caps of gold or silver mesh incrustated with jewels are remi-



A SMART AND PRACTICAL HOOD.

niscant of Juliet. Velvet clasped under a jeweled buckle is effective on yellow or white hair.

Hoods are among the prettiest head coverings that a woman can wear. This season they are being much used for the theater and opera as well as motoring. Here is a model that can be made available for all occasions. Chiffon with rosettes of ribbon makes a dainty combination, or crepe de chine heavily lined is practical for motor wear.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

SNAPSHOTS OF FASHION.

All Black Gown Modish This Winter. Persian Silks.

The all black gown will have a conspicuous place in the wardrobe this winter. Different black materials are used in the same gown, making a very chic effect.

Persian silk is artfully used by blouse makers as a foundation for dark chiffon. The lovely design of the silk is elusive in its colorings, and its uncertainty adds a charm which is always striven for by those who shun glaring or conspicuous tones.

A pretty drapey that might be removable if desired adorned a long plain skirt of banana chiffon broad-



A FASHIONABLE CAPE.

cloth. The drapery consisted of a long strand of chiffon, the same color as the gown, bordered with a handsome pattern of colored flowers.

Capes are being much worn. They are always a comfortable and easy wrap to slip on and off. The cape illustrated is made in true military style with straight revers for its entire length, or it may be buttoned over in double breasted fashion. The arm openings are at the seam, but many women prefer the front openings.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

This May Manton pattern is cut in three sizes—small 32 or 34, medium 36 or 38 and large 40 or 42 bust measure. Send 10 cents to this office, giving number, 6294, and 10 cents for the braiding pattern, No. 6294, and they will be promptly forwarded to you by mail. If in haste send an additional two cent stamp for letter postage, which insures more prompt delivery.

VANITY'S VISIONS.

Latest Stationery Fad—Crowns That Are Popular on Hats.

The latest monogram on stationery has a harmonious blending of several colors.

Castor shoes of leather and sailing cloth are suitable to wear with dresses of the same color.

The full crown has not gone out, and in net or tulle with a wide velvet brim and ribbon or velvet roses for trimming it is extremely piquant.

An attractive black hat has the crown entirely encircled by a band of black lynx, and at the side are massed white ostrich plumes.

The low bowl crown mushroom shapes are frequently made up in fur, with a sweeping feather at the side-caught by a large ornament. One fur model is in gray fox, with a silk scarf in a lovely rose shade folded around it and an osprey plume of the same rose tint thrust through this scarf.

Every variation of the tunic skirt is fashionable this winter, and the one



SKIRT WITH POINTED TUNIC.

illustrated is particularly good style. Soft material must be used for the tunic skirt; otherwise the effect is bulky and heavy. The flounce which makes the lower part of the skirt is in circular shape.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

This May Manton pattern is cut in sizes from 22 to 28 inches waist measure. Send 10 cents to this office, giving number, 6609, and it will be promptly forwarded to you by mail. If in haste send an additional two cent stamp for letter postage, which insures more prompt delivery.

JOTTINGS OF FASHION.

Satin Charmeuse Favorite Material For Evening Gowns.

Satin charmeuse remains the favorite fabric for ball and dinner gowns—in fact, for evening gowns of all descriptions. It is delightful when veiled with embroidered chiffon of a dainty color.

Black velvet trimmed with black silk braid and black fur is much in evidence. The skirt is also of black velvet if economy is no object, but face cloth with a note of velvet repeated on



THE FASHIONABLE PLAID.

It makes a more practical skirt for walking and looks, too, a little less showy.

A little cravat to finish off one of the new fur bordered gowns seen recently was made of strands of chenille mingled with mink tails.

The dress pictured makes a tremendously smart school frock carried out in plaid with plain bandings. The waist can either be lined or unlined and the skirt made with a high waist line or with a belt as preferred.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

These May Manton patterns are cut for the waist from 22 to 28 inches bust measure and for the skirt from 22 to 28 inches waist measure. Send 10 cents each for these patterns, giving number, skirt 6291 and waist 6292, and they will be promptly forwarded to you by mail. If in haste send an additional two cent stamp for letter postage, which insures more prompt delivery.