

# HER ONE ERROR.

OR  
THE FISHERMAN'S BRIDE.

CHAPTER I.

THE FISHERMAN'S WEDDING.

"Good morning, mate—a glorious morning!"

"Aye, aye—a right morning for a wedding!"

"Are you hidden to it, Dan?"

"Oh, aye! me and my dame, and the lasses; the lad's is to row the bride's boat, for you know, I suppose its her fancy to be married at the old church at Bontryst; her father and mother both lay there, poor lass!"

"Proud enough the lads be, I'll assure you, and proud my dame be of 'em—six as stout and handsome chaps as you'll meet in these parts. Be you bidden, Ben?"

"Aye, aye; and glad I'd ha' been to join the party, seeing the lass were always favourite o' mine and my poor dame that's gone; but I had g'en my word to go up Rockton wi' Jim Apsley's fish—him bein laid up wi' his bad arm, and I wouldn't break my word to the lad; but my lasses be goin'; and, to speak truth, Meg's been a' yesterday in w' Nelly, helping at the wedding clothes. I'd be bound, they two ha' never been to bed this blessed night, for I see the smoke comin' from the chimney afore day-break."

"Like enough, mate like enough! There be nothing on earth the lasses do take so kindly as the making of wedding-tackle; unless, indeed it be the gear of the smaller craft—the baby clothes. But there's not a soul in the village but would gladly do a turn for Nelly Heartson; and it's no wonder, for a sweeter nor kinder less never set foot on these here sands."

"So she is, so she is, neighbor; she's as good as she's pretty, and you couldn't say more."

"Aye, aye, Ben Stratton, it's true; and, mind you, I ha' knowed Nelly sin' she were that high. I knew her father were sailed many a voyage together, and it were me settling down here as led him to give up a seafaring life and take to the fishing boats. Aye, mate; and I were the first as come across him that morning after the fearful night, when his craft went to pieces on the very rocks that beat the life out of his poor body! It were me found him, poor Heartson! and me it was they would have break the awful news to his wife."

"It was before I came to this part," said his companion.

"Aye, aye, it was a terrible sight, to be sure. The poor wife well nigh out of her mind, and little Nell—she was about five then—just old enough to understand, and to miss her father. The baby was born after, and died same day; and the poor wife fretted herself away in less than two years. Lor' bless you, mate, any of us would ha' took that child and kept it same as our own; but, bit of a thing as she were, she had that spirit—no, she'd 'earn her livin'—says she—her father, bless you, all over, that was—and so she'd nurse the babies, and knit the stockings, and do heaps of odd jobs, she did; and so from house to house she soon made herself worth her salt, I can tell you."

"They ha' been long courting—"

"Aye, that were the lass's independence, just—she would not hear of nothing, till such time as she'd got together all the wedding gear, and needful stores aboard—sheets and quilts, I take it an' such like. To say the truth, mate, I be right glad the day's come, and she's to be made fast; for though the last is true as gold, she's over-pretty and light-hearted to go alone in this world."

"You're right, mate, you're right; and there's been more than one hankering after the prize."

"Aye, Ben Stratton; and, between you and me, there were an ugly draft a-while since, that my mind did mis-give me would run foul of our gallant little sailor!"

"Saul Meghorn?"

"Aye, lad; now I love Nelly-lass like one o' my own, and when I saw that she was not for flouting the black, big fellow, as she should ha' done, one hankering after other men's goods, I up and spoke to her fatherly-like, Ben, as you might ha' done, and she laughed, and says she, 'I ain't married yet, Master Rullocks,' she says—and then looked so pretty and merry in her way, you know, that makes a fool of a man; I couldn't for the life of me be angry; but it do pass my comprehension, it do so. There was she loving young Franklen with all her heart, and holding out the tip o' her finger, as you may say, to that beetle-browed limb of the devil. Lord! but women be the biggest puzzles ever sent upon this earth to plague it."

"Don't be hard, don't be hard," put in Ben, who inclined, perhaps, to something more of leniency in his judgment, that he had been for upwards of two years released from the conjugal yoke; "the fellow be gone now; it's a good bit since, and let's hope all will go straight w' the young couple, as they deserve—"

"There she is!" said Dan Rullocks, interrupting him. The door of a small cottage, at a short distance back from the beach, opened, and a young woman had stepped out, pitcher in hand, and was coming towards the spot, where they stood.

"God bless you, my lass, this bright, sunny morning, that's to make you the wife of as honest a man and as brave a sailor as ever stepped deck or shore. You're worthy of him, Nelly, dear, and he of you; bless you both; and, my girl, don't forget he's an orphan like yourself, and love him, and be kind, dear, as you can be, Nelly. The roughest of us need a woman's love and tenderness, my girl, more than you may think. God bless you from my heart,

dear Nelly, and may you be as happy as the day is long!"

He kissed her forehead, and Nell's bright eyes were filled with tears as she said, "Thank you, I'm sure, Master Rullocks, you're very good; thank you!"

"God bless you, too, Nelly Heartson!" said Ben, who now came up with the filled pitcher; "and there be another in heaven that blesses you, surely, dear lass, for your dear goodness to her when she was with us."

"Oh, thank you, thank you! Please don't, please—said poor Nelly, whose sensitive heart, really touched by the honest warmth of the old friends, was sobbing out his emotion. "Thank you both! and I'm sure I'll mind. I'll be very good. You come and see Aaron and me?—and—thank you, I'm sure!" The pitcher was carried to the door by Ben, where they left the sobbing, laughing, blushing bride.

"I'm so happy!" she said; "everybody's so kind."

"And that's what you're to cry for, I suppose, and dropping of your tears all over your white ribbons there; do leave off, you naughty, unlucky thing, you!" cried Meg Stratton, who, in the capacity of chief bridesmaid, milliner, and mistress of the ceremonies, took upon herself to lecture the bride.

"For Nelly had, all in a flutter, seated herself down on the side of the bed, among a heap of snowy belongings, inadvertently gemming them with the only jewels she was likely to boast of, on the occasion.

"Oh! it isn't unlucky, is it, Meg? It was for joy, indeed it was! Your father and old Dan Rullocks spoke so kind just now; every one seems to love me."

"And so you're crying about it! I suppose, if one of us was to box your ears we might get a laugh. There, go along, and be getting the breakfast, do, you silly girl."

But Meg fondly kissed her friend as she pretended to chide. That was the mischief, you see. For one reprover, Nelly Heartson got two—aye, halia dozen caresses. If she had had less of one, she might not have needed the other.

Smiling through her tears, the bride elect set about getting breakfast for herself and her companion, adding to the usual ordinary fare such extra little dainties as she had made, or as had been sent by kindly neighbors on every side, who wished her well.

Presently came taps at the door, and in dropped, one by one, matrons with kind tokens of affection, seasoned with sage advice; maidens longing to see the bridal finery, which Meg now triumphantly displayed, proud of her work and justly so. Then came the favored ones, elected to the rank of bridesmaids; and all laughed, joked, smiled, and were gay, standing around the homely breakfast-table, joining in the fragmentary meal.

"Good gracious! Nellie, there go my brothers! and you not so much as your hair done."

So exclaimed Patty Rullocks one of the pretty bridesmaids, as six stalwart young men appeared coming along the beach, from the village.

They were all nearly of a height, and dressed alike in nautical, holiday costume, of white jacket and full trousers, and straw hats, each with a colored ribbon fluttering gaily from its crown, and on the wearer's breast a knot, or favor, corresponding in color to that on the hat.

By a pretty conceit, each of the bridesmaids wore colors pairing with those of the young rowers, which, it is not unfair to conclude, was the token of sympathy in the owners—with one exception among the young men, who failing, perhaps, of mating himself with a lady, wore the bride's color, as did Meg Stratton.

"They are going to the boat, now," cried Patty; "and they'll surely call here, to know if we are ready."

"Come, Meg, said Nelly; and away she hurried to her chamber, leaving to her friends the duty of receiving her escort who did not fail to look in at the cottage, and rehearse in concert with the other members of their joyous party, the order of their going.

But they soon hurried on their way, for the bridegroom was to be brought in state (so they planned it) in their trim boat, in all its glory, with colors flying.

"There!" cried Meg for the last time, as she succeeded in the formidable achievement of hooking that "bottom hook," for which she had thrown into her ten fingers all the combined forces of her body; "there!" and she rose from her knees, and, over Nelly's head, looked in the mirror. "Well, now, I do declare! upon my word, if you ain't the tidiest, unluckiest thing. What on earth is the girl crying at now?"

"Oh, Meg, I can't help it!" sobbed the bride, throwing her arms around the neck of Meg, who, on her part, despite the risk to the finery, could not refrain from an involuntary hug.

"I am so happy, and I do so love him, and he is so good, and I don't deserve him!"

"Well, then, you must try to," said her downright friend, kissing her, and giving her a slight shake. "I hope Aaron'll box your ears, if you don't behave. It's too bad—it is, indeed, Nelly; there's no telling what bad luck will come of it, crying over your gown and gloves, too—see here!"

Over the blue waters, where diamonds glittered enough to furnish a million brides, at the splash of the oars the boats danced lightly with their precious burdens; like white-winged birds resting on the waves; the steamers fluttered, the music struck up gaily; and again rose the triumphant chorus, as they bore away the maiden from the home which her own industry had reared, to the home which the hills, the old church of Bontryst some few miles round the path, wherein Nelly had chosen—for the reasons I have named—to become the wife of Aaron Franklen.

CHAPTER II.  
SAUL MEGHORN.

The last fold of the bride's veil fluttered out of sight; the last white sail gleamed round the jutting crag that hid the little fleet from the village; and the groups and couples who had flocked to doors and windows, nay, down to the beach,

to gaze, dispersed and withdrew, gossiping, by the way, to their homes.

Higher up—the cliffs towered far above the little village inland, and the scattered fishing-huts upon the beach, sheltering them from the cold north and biting east winds.

If any there had turned their eyes upward, back from the sea, to those same cliffs, they would have seen, sharply defined, in dark outlines against the summer sky, the figure of a man, erect, motionless, gazing hungrily out after the bridal boat.

"Wretched man that I am! Have mercy on me! oh, merciful Heaven!"

He groaned as he fell upon his knees, with this piercing exclamation—lower, lower, and lower, till his face touched the ground, till he sank, like one paralyzed and moaned and uttered words inaudible—spasmodic bursts of real suffering.

"And it has come to this—I shall see her no more, but as his wife—no more! no more! at all, for I cannot live and see her!"

After some minutes he rose and gazed wildly out over the sea, but even the mockeries had ceased; only the steady, passive wash of the patient waves far below reached him.

"Why did I not seize her then? Why did I not, by one bold stroke, make her mine for ever? She dared not have returned after a night's absence! That proud young fool would have scorned her—she must have been mine—she loved me!—she as good as told me so, by actions and admissions—! I should have made her happy—oh! why did I play traitor to myself when opportunity was given me? Fool! miserable, wretched, hesitating fool that I was! why did I not avail myself of the last, the only chance?"

He paced to and fro hurriedly; he threw back his thick black hair, and seized his broad forehead in his hands, as if he would have hurled it from the cliff; his hark, deep-set eyes gleamed with living fire; his hot breath seemed to scorch his parted lips, as it panted through them.

"Why did I not?" he repeated, smiting his side heavily with his arm.

"Why! because I am becoming a piti-ful, driveling, whining, abject coward before the power of this girl! It was not enough that I abandoned a pursuit that I gloried in—forsook my fellows and the goods we shared; because in her eyes I might find favor, and be an honest man—an honest man!" he sneered out the words bitterly, as if he mocked the speaker. "And this was not enough, but my arm must become nerveless, my heart turn to gentleness, my hand forget its cunning! Time was when the sight of a village bridal would not have staid me in my path one instant. The thought of their happiness!—bah!—am I become a coward? Saul Meghorn, who has dared the danger of the sea, the fierce pursuit of armed men—who, with the gibbet facing him ashore, the night and tempest on the ocean, never yet knew fear—now shrinking from meeting a few harmless peasants! Nay, it is not that! My love was lawful; why should it not have met with success? I would have made her my wife! I loved her! oh, how I love her, in spite of all! And she loved me—she did, she must! Why listen to me?—meet me?—receive my first gift?—though not the others? But she did love me; oh, and I hoped, I believed, that the turning-point of my life was come—that the dreary past was done with—the dream! Oh, fool! idiot! miserable fool that I was!"

Even more terrible than his previous rage was the gloomy despair which gradually took possession of his dark features.

"Why I might end it all," he said to himself in a lower tone, still gazing down upon the rocks and beach below.

"She would understand it all, when they found and told her of the crushed and battered corpse of the stranger who puzzled them, I know, these months past." He was silent awhile, then withdrew from the precipice, and let his gaze wander abroad over the sparkling sea.

"But why should I? I cannot but believe that she cared for me then, though some idea of duty, perhaps, held her to her bargain with this paltry young fisherman. At any rate, I will not give up—I will not be baffled."

He paced to and fro again upon the rock, then stood still, drew about him the large loose coat which covered his sailor dress, and replaced the broad hat which he had thrown aside.

"I said I would not see them as they returned; why not? If she loves me, she will be pleased; if not, that is but a small installment of what she shall feel. She made me love her, she let me love her, she gave me hope. Lost! I said; but why? Aye, that was in my piling mood; I am better now—myself again. She shall yet be mine—mine only. If I live—despite the gay procession to the church this day—if I live, my wife she shall be. To myself I pledge my word, and when did Saul Meghorn lie to himself?"

There was no fashion—no great world, you know, to consult among the fishermen of Sandcombe, and so the bride did not run away the moment she had changed her dress.

Nelly's, though it was pretty, and becoming, and suitable as could be, was too fine to allow her to assist in the hospitable entertainment of her friends. Such a feast was spread as good taste and kindly feeling, though with but humble means, could command, and to these simple, hearty people it was a feast indeed.

Then there was more music, and races were run by the young men; and there was some good singing among the girls, and dancing on the smooth level, where they played bowls and cricket. Then an extensive and hospitable tea, and story telling—more singing and music and dancing, till the sun went down into the sea, and the moon and stars looked out overhead.

Then good nights were bidden, and good wishes passed. And, left at length alone the young husband and wife, for the first time closed their doors upon all the outer world, to shut in all themselves their own world of home.

Dear Nelly is nestling her fair head upon the shoulder of her lover husband, whispering to him all her love, as they stand together in the silent moonlight. Who, to look at that sweet face, with its masses of soft hair, its half-closed, gentle eyes, and loving mouth, would think it could raise that storm upon the cliff we beheld this morning—could play, willfully, deceit and falsehood?

Not willfully would Nelly have hurt aught that breathed or had a name. With as sensitive a heart, as loving a nature, as ever belonged to woman, yet had Nelly played that cruel, heartless, and deceitful thing, a coquette.

Oh! how some people err in excusing by gaiety of nature, by thoughtlessness, by desire to please, the sin of coquetry.

The man of worth or sense will no more think of taking to wife a coquette with whom he has flirted and toyed, then he would take to cord his luggage the slip of elastic he has snapped, and played with, and thrown aside—the one is an untrustworthy as the other.

Nelly was not by nature nor habit a coquette—she respected too much the feelings of others to be so—but she had played the dangerous game, and we all know how much may come of the trifling even of an hour.

In a moment of ill-temper and disagreement with her lover, she permitted the attentions of Saul Meghorn, whom she met at the fair in an adjoining town; and who needed, little indeed, inducement to throw himself in her way.

Half in jest half in vanity, she gave him not the best and safest denial in her power—praise of her own lover; for it is certainly true, whatever young ladies may have read to the contrary, that men seldom—good men, never—urge a suit so replied to.

Thus, from day to day, from week to week, it had grown—a short absence of the young fisherman elect favoring it till the day when, alarmed by more pressing importunity, Nelly told the dark-bereaved stranger—who, to say truth, half scared her—that she was going to be married. His rage and indignation at this announcement caused her to fly from him; and she had never seen him since.

Young Aaron knew something, but not all of what had passed.

Those of the villagers who had seen, cared not to speak of it to him; and the young man, honest and sterling as day's own light, himself, never let thought of evil approach the name of his betrothed; he was too intent upon the furnishing of the little cot among the cliffs, where he meant to carry his dear prize, to give thought to aught else; and, in her heart of hearts, Nelly felt she held him so dear, that she could even afford to trifle without risk.

Does the lily, when handled, escape much? Can the driven snow dare the contact of earth and retain intact its whiteness? Young Aaron was handsome, active athletic, but wanting in that satonic majesty of presence, which half awe, half frightened the foolish Nelly; yet made her feel a thrill of pride, too, that a man so much older, with such a beard, and so big and grand, should, care to come, and wait, and look for her among the rocks.

He brought presents, too, of a style quite different from good Aaron's simple offerings. But Nell, to do her justice, had not a mercenary soul, and cared not for gifts. The first only she took—a thick, massy, yellow bracelet, a great, green serpent twisted round it, with eyes that glittered like fire.

She kept it two days, but she hated it, and herself for taking it. She took it back to Meghorn, who refused to accept it, and she dashed it over the cliff; so the gold, rubies, and emeralds a queen might have envied lay at the bottom of the sea.

Then Aaron came home, and when the foolish, loving girl heard his deep, earnest voice bless her face, and tell of his longing for a sight of her, while away; when she felt his warm kiss, and his protecting arm about her, she just hated herself still more, and had very nearly told her lover all (well for her if she had). But the next day finished all, as we have said; the giant took his departure from Sandcombe, and the preparations for her wedding put all thoughts of him out of Nelly's mind. The neighbors wondered a little over the mystery of the big, solitary man, who had come to live in the town but a few miles off, during the summer, and whose occupation had seemed to be of the slightest—then they, too, forgot him.

On the evening of the wedding, however, the landlady of that out-of-the-way little house, the Peep o' Day, started at the harsh tones, which, with an oath at her tardiness ere she had comprehended the order, demanded some brandy to be sent in to the fireside, "in there," as the rude customer, pointing before him, strode on to the small parlor or tap room (for it was the only one), within.

"It's Saul Meghorn come back," she whispered to her husband; "what on earth's he doing hereabouts again?"

"Spending his money like a gentleman, as he always does," growled her spouse; "that's enough for us, isn't it?" and he hastened to attend his guest.

"Take away the light! That will do. Leave me to myself!" was the hasty request of the stranger, as the obsequious host set down the liquor and a candle, and busied himself in sundry arrangements of the room.

"That'll do go along with you—what vile stuff is this you've brought me the last all done, then?"

"Yes, captain; and to tell the truth, I've been hoping and praying—"

"There, go, go take the candle away; yonder's the light I'm best used to."

The man went, closing the door after him; and Meghorn remained, leaning his chin upon his hands, from time to time applying himself to the liquor—which he did not cease to grumble at—then gazing moodily out towards the beach and over the wide expanse of ocean, now flooded by that same silver light which was resting lovingly amid Nelly's soft tresses, mingling itself insensibly with the pure slumbers of the fair young wife.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## LIFE OF A TRAMP.

A Minister Tries It In Order to Find Out How It Goes.

The Rev. Mr. Delano of the New York Baptist conference did not believe that the tramp was as bad as he was painted, or that he was treated like a brother by his fellow-man. In order to prove the matter to his own satisfaction he spent several weeks of his last vacation on the road. Among his experiences as a tramp were these:

"I came to one house at the close of a peaceful summer's day and saw an old couple sitting together within. My beard was a week old and my hair short enough for a graduate of Sing Sing. My rather prominent nose was burned and frayed in the contest. The old lady had a sweet, benign face framed in a white cap border. She told me to come in and sit down. But the old farmer looked his prejudices.

"What has brought you to such a state as this?" he asked sternly.

"Before I could answer him, the old lady—bless her—remarked in an audible aside: "Perhaps he knows our Ned."

"It was her kind and womanly way of disarming him. I did not know 'Our Ned,' but I hope he was worthy of such a mother.

"Isn't it about time for our bread and milk?" suggested the farmer, and I was invited to partake of the simple and most welcome meal. As I was going, after thanking them, the old man said earnestly:

"You will be all right if you'll just leave whisky alone."

"This to me; a respectable minister of the gospel! I wanted to drop my assumed character and assure him I never tasted the stuff, but it was too early in my experiment, so I kept silent and resumed my tramp.

"After that I went to houses where the door was opened a crack, and the narrow face of a woman was thrust out for a second, then the door was slammed. Cats arched up their backs and spat at me. Dogs growled at me. I cut hickory wood harder than iron for bread that must have journeyed with the children of Israel, and I slept on a carpenter's bench in the basement through the Christian charity of the owner of the house."

"The last venture I made was into a field where a fire was burning, and three tramps lying beside it. I was glad to meet the tramp on his own ground and learn something of his history and traditions. One of the men jumped up and came to meet me. He did not hold out his hand in a fraternal way, with a smile of welcome and a 'put it there, pard.' He eyed me with suspicion, and asked megruffly what I wanted. He was bigger than I, and the other two men joined him, so I kept a civil tongue, and they gradually warmed to me. The big one was a clergyman's son—just as I was and he knew as much Latin and Greek as I did, and had studied more classic literature and spoke more languages. The other was the son of a millionaire father. The third was an outsider. We slept around the haystack that night and in the morning I told them who I was. The clergyman's son remarked: 'I noticed that you didn't swear.' I heard how every man's hand was against them, and how they were against every man—Ishmaels of the world, soured and embittered by treatment that would not be given to dogs. In my true character I reasoned and prayed with them as I have since pleaded for them.

"Treat the tramp kindly and he goes away with a blessing in his heart. Shut the door in his face and his prayer turns to a curse. That is my experience and belief."—From the Detroit Free Press.

## BISMARCK'S FALL.

A story of Bismarck That has not yet been Published.

That is a very dramatic story that comes from London regarding the true inwardness of the resignation of Count Bismarck. The London Times published recently a story which made a profound sensation throughout Europe, and it is to the effect that after the difference, already related, between the Emperor and his minister, Bismarck exclaimed: "Then I can only tender your majesty my resignation." Little could he dream it would be accepted, and when an aide-de-camp waited on him for it he was sent away with an excuse for its delay.

Now comes the astounding part. Bismarck sought an audience with the Empress Frederick. "In a panic at his fall," relates the London Times, "this man, who but the day before had been the great chancellor, now stooped before her whom he had so long humbled, and explained the danger to the empire involved in his fall, and the fatal consequences which the young emperor risked in this overturning of the founder of the empire. He begged her majesty to intervene and prevent the disaster to Germany, and the remorse that her sovereign would feel at this unmerited humiliation of his most faithful servant."

The Empress heard his story, and her reply will live in history as long as the history of nations shall exist. It was this:

"I much regret being quite powerless. I should have been extremely glad to intervene with my son in your favor, but you so employed all your power in estranging his heart from us, making his mind foreign to mine, that I can only witness your fall without being able to ward it off. When you are no longer there, my son will perhaps draw nearer to me, but then it will be too late for me to help you."

In the entire history of Europe there has never been chronicled a more dramatic scene than this. It needs a Shakespeare to embalm it in immortal literature. The chancellor left the presence of the empress with bowed head, and immediately tendered his resignation, which was accepted.

## London in a Fog.

London has been sunless for more than a month. "At one time this afternoon," writes Harold Frederick on Saturday, "it grew so light here in London that one could distinguish houses on the opposite side of the street quite plainly, but it didn't last long, and this evening people are bumping around in the same old pea-soup fog, which has enveloped the metropolis since New Year's. A little of this bat-like existence each winter has certain charms of uniqueness and variety, but Londoners this time are fairly worn out with it. No glimpse of sunshine has been permitted us now for thirty-eight days, and sometimes there have been bannocks of solid darkness lasting for fifty hours at a stretch. Moreover, it has been for the most part exceptionally cold from an English standpoint. To be sure, the mercury has never fallen beyond 13° above zero; but that is deemed such an inhuman temperature here that a driver on a coach between Canterbury and Dover the other night actually allowed himself to be frozen to death by it."

No man is very strong who is not strong enough to control himself.

Demosthenes, the Grecian orator, cured his stammering by having his mouth full of pebbles, and many are the modern orators who have cured their hoarseness by an occasional dose of Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup.

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Angels are not far away from people who are trying to please God.

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