

ONE GIRL'S FOLLY.

BY ANNA SHIELDS.

I was only seventeen when it all happened. Seventeen when I walked home through the clover fields in the cool of an August evening and wished I could die then and there. I seem to see myself now, as dazed and miserable, conscience-stricken, mortified and heart-sore, I stumbled along until I reached my home, and crept into my own room, utterly crushed. Then I thought myself a martyr to circumstances, unfortunate and blighted for life. Now I smile, sadly, it is true and think what a little fool I was.

Orphaned in infancy, I was taken home by my aunt, Miss Edith Gates, my father's sister, and made her pet, plaything and comfort. She had no one else upon whom to lavish the wealth of a loving heart, and she gave me its entire devotion. But experience of life was bounded by the narrowest limits. In our little village society was an interchange of tea drinkings, spending the day with a neighbor, and an occasional summer picnic. My education was entirely conducted by Aunt Edith, and while there was a basis of solid information imparted by the driest of educational text-books, my accomplishments consisted of a smaller knowledge of the piano, a very limited amount of French, and a varied experience in fancy work.

I could cook and keep a house in order; I could cut and make every thing I wore; I could cultivate a flower garden and was learned in the ways of chickens and hens. But my literary acquirements were very small and my knowledge of fiction or poetry consisted of a small acquaintance with Shakespeare, Miss Edgeworth, and Milton. To say I cared for none of them would be mortifying, but it is true.

I only tell all this to show what an ignorant child I was when I was called upon to exercise a woman's privilege and choose between two suitors.

From the time when I could first run alone, Albert Gates, a far away cousin who lived close by us, had been my playmate and companion. To him I looked for all my childhood's pleasures, and as I grew older, for the protection that even a boy can give one younger and weaker than himself. His father was a farmer and owned a pretty place, which his mother made a second home to me. I called them uncle and aunt, but they were cousins, two or three times removed, of Aunt Edith's.

As I grew from childhood to girlhood, Albert and I would some times talk of a far away future when I was to be his wife and we were to live at the farm. My wildest dream in those days never went beyond this, the quiet life of a farmer's wife with Albert's love and all the serene content which his mother enjoyed.

But when I was just seventeen a new and strange world opened to me. Aunt Edith after fifty years of single life, married the minister and six months later went with him to India, upon missionary duty. My mother's sister, who lived in New York had offered me a home long years before, and had never ceased to urge her claim. So when Aunt Edith sailed I was taken to New York, and my Aunt Mary, Mrs. Julius Hamilton had the care of me.

Oh, what a desolate little waif I was! I pity that child who was once myself, with a tender, yearning pity to this day. Aunt Mary was a woman of fashion, a wealthy childless widow, whose ideas of life were bounded by the requirements of society and fashion. She had urged her claim upon me from childhood, but when I was actually in her possession she found me all she most disliked.

I was very pretty. It would be but mock modesty to pretend ignorance of that fact, but I was shy, ignorant, awkward—a raw country girl, and yet too old to begin a system of education such as my aunt desired. Continually scolded where I had been petted; sneered at and kept perpetually reminded of my shortcomings and ridiculed for my want of manners, my shyness only became more painful and my awkwardness more apparent.

But I was dazzled by the wealth

around me. For days the mere table service of silver and glass, the decorated china, the fine damask, filled me with delighted awe. Servants, too were a wonder and pleasure to me. Accustomed to do every thing for myself, it filled me with a childish sense of importance to order attentions from the domestics: I felt like a queen every time I rang the bell, and to sit idly and see my room put in order was a source of the most profound gratification. To see well served meals for the first time after they were on the table, and have no care in their preparation was another delight.

To be sure my aunt's tyranny—it was little less—made me long often for the freedom of my old life, and yet it did look like hardship to think of the menial duties that would meet me there.

Judged to be too young and ignorant to be introduced into society, I was put under competent masters for music, dancing and languages, and kept out of sight as much as possible, seeing only my aunt's most intimate friends.

But amongst these I found a lover. He was a man of about, 40 a lawyer, and had both position and wealth. To this day I feel a stupid wonder at his infatuation! What a man of the world, handsome and accomplished, courted by society, wealthy and fastidious, could find in me to make him want to share his life with me, I cannot, even now imagine. But the fact remains that he loved me and wooed me in a courtly fashion.

My aunt was at once amazed and delighted. She kept constantly before me the advantages that would be mine if Mr. Elton was serious in his intentions. He had taken me to operas, concert, drive and ride; had lavished flowers and music upon me; had visited my aunt upon every imaginable pretext, and by his gentleness and kindness had charmed away my shy awkwardness. Determined to help along the wooing, my aunt made a study of my dress, and while she never failed to plant a sting of dependence in every favor, to keep me reminded of my peniless condition, she brought all my beauty by becoming attire, and was generous in gifts if not in words.

Ever before me during that winter, was the temptation of wealth and position compared to poverty and obscurity. For while Mr. Elton urged his suit by every act of devotion, Albert Gates wrote to me two and three times a week in the tone of an accepted lover. He only waited till he was of age to claim me and take me back to the dear old farm-house, where his father and mother would welcome me as a dearly loved daughter.

I was not a wicked coquette though I see how much like one I appeared. I was a foolish child who did not in the least realize the importance of the situation in which I was placed.

But in the spring it became evident that I could not well bear the excitement and strain of my new life. Accustomed to be fast asleep by nine o'clock it made me ill to sit up till long past midnight at opera or concert, and sleeping till late in the morning did not act as tonic.

My aunt relaxed something of her rules of seclusion when Mr. Elton became my suitor, and I was allowed to come down stairs to all the home festivities, and visit the homes of very intimate friends. Added to this, I was kept strictly to my lessons and piano practice, and daily exercises. It was no wonder that the early spring found me pale and languid, and the physician who took care of my aunt's nerves advised her to send me into the country.

"A watering-place will not do," he said decidedly; "your niece needs perfect rest for several months."

Then, with a sudden spasm of homesickness, I begged to be sent to D—, my old home. The house in which Aunt Edith lived was rented to her cousin, who consented to let me have my old room. Half D—, think, was related to me, for every other house, it was said, belonged to a Gates, and going to Cousin Hannah was like going back to Aunt Edith. But I was spoiled. I found my girlish appetite refused to relish peck and beans, salt beef and cabbage; berry pies were an abomination to me and fastidious

nose curled up at gingerbread. I mentally criticised the cut of Cousin Hannah's calico dress and shuddered at her sun bonnet.

Worst of all, Albert's deficiencies of dress and education became painfully apparent, at the same time that his genuine manly devotion was most pressing. It was a busy time with farmers, and I avoided Albert whenever I could, while now my letters came from Mr. Elton, worded with an easy friendliness, yet containing an undertone of authority, as if already he felt a right to dictate my life.

I was not positively engaged to either of my lovers on that August night of which I have written. The day had been warm but not oppressive, and when the moon rose, and the breeze sprang up soft and deliciously cool, I was not unwilling to stroll with Albert down the road to a spot beside the river bank, where under a spreading tree there was a wide bench especially pleasant to the young people of D—.

We had been seated but a few moments when Albert for the first time made me a downright offer of his hand, and I knew in that instant that I loved him. I loved him and not three hours before I had answered a similar proposal from Mr. Elton by accepting him. All the glamour fell from before me when Albert spoke, and I knew that I had sold myself for ease, luxury and position.

I cannot write the words of the scene that followed. I was frightened at Albert's rage, his bitter reproaches and scarcely knowing what I said, I told him the truth—that my promise was given but my heart was his.

He flung me from him as I clung to his arm, imploring him to forgive me, and strode away just as Mr. Elton came forward from behind the tree to face me. He had not intended to play eavesdropper but my aunt had been taken suddenly, dangerously ill, and had sent for me. Directed by cousin Hannah he had followed me, to hear the most of my confession.

Albert's anger was not so crushing as the cold sarcasm of his words, as he told me he had believed me a simple tender child only to find me a calculating coquette.

There was no return train to New York until early morning, and I could meet him at the train, so I refused his escort back to the house and he left me.

But my life did not end as I hoped it would on that miserable night. I was beside my aunt by noon the next day, and roused from my selfish grief by her claims upon my care. She lay ill, very ill, for several weeks, and then was ordered to Europe still an invalid. For six long years she was hopelessly sick, and I was her constant nurse and companion. We both learned much in those years, and when she died and left me her entire fortune, I could smile over the misery of the poor child who stumbled through the clover fields, praying to die.

Albert Gates married the prettiest girl in D—, and Mr. Elton married a widow as old as himself and now has a daughter as old as the girl he once sought for his wife.

! No I never married; but there is not a happier, more contented old maid living than I have been for thirty years and more.

The Sharon Case Ended.

San Francisco, Cal., Jan. 15. — Judge Shafter in the superior court to-rendered a decision in the Sharon case which virtually ends that famous litigation. The principal point in the present controversy was a demurrer to the answer made by the Sharon heirs. In this they incorporated the degree of the United States circuit court by which the alleged marriage contract between Sarah Althea Hill and William Sharon was decided a forgery and ordered canceled. Judge Shafter held this decree of the United States court was superior to all other courts and that the contracts had no legal existence. He ordered the Sharon case postponed indefinitely.

Senator Brice Now

Columbus, O., Jan. 14.—Calvin S. Brice was to-day at noon elected to the United States senate, receiving a majority of the votes in each branch of the legislature.

BRAZILIAN TROOPS REVOLT.

Quite a Bloody Conflict in the Republic's Capital

New York, Jan. 14.—One of the correspondents of C. R. Flint wrote from Rio de Janeiro under date of December 23, 1889, as follows: "The outlook here is not reassuring. Last evening parts of two regiments of cavalry, infantry and artillery mutinied. They tore up the republican flag and raised the old imperial flag, and it required all the regiments and artillery to subdue them. They fought at the Sarcotoras till a quarter past 8 o'clock at night and one hundred rebels were wounded. The remainder surrendered. To day twenty-one of the ring leaders were shot. None of the officers were in the mutiny, but all the non-commissioned were. The cause of the mutiny was dissatisfaction with the men's pay. The police are paid three mired a day and the soldiers claim they were promised the same, but it was raised to not quite that amount. It is said that a number of old conservatives and liberals have been tampering with the soldiers and were at the bottom of last night's row. This morning early Silveira Martins, Barao De Lago, Dr. Lima Gurate, Dr. Ferrira Vianna, late minister of justice in the last conservative ministry, and Commendador Braga, one of the leading merchants of Rio, were arrested."

A G. A. R. Story.

"Towards the close of the war," said a member of the G. A. R. whose mind is well stocked with reminiscences at a recent meeting of his post, "I was visiting a southern hospital, and while passing through one of the wards my attention was attracted by a young fellow who lay on his bed with eyes closed and his face so white and still that I thought he must be dead. While I stood looking at him a door near at hand opened and a young girl, beautiful as southern girls sometimes are, entered. The wounded man opened his eyes, and suffering a spasm of pain as he turned his head to look at her exclaimed:

"Oh, Lord!"

"Why do you speak my father's name?" asked the girl, advancing to his side. "I am a daughter of the Lord. Is there anything you would like to have ask of Him for you?"

"Yes, came the answer in slow, suffering tones, while he devoured her with his eyes. "Yes; ask him if he'll take me for a son-in-law."

Suppressed for Cause.

New York, Jan. 15.—At the annual meeting of the American society of civil engineers, begun here to-day, the committee appointed to look into the bursting of the dam at Johnstown, Pa., stated that the report had been decided upon. Some discussion was had when it was agreed that just at present it would be unwise to make the report public because of the many suits pending for damages. Finally it was decided to seal the report and keep it secret.

According to the philosophy of the pessimists there is always some thing to dread. Some one says: "Man has anything but a soft snap on the earth. When he is well he is in constant fear of being ill, and when he is ill it is always time for him to take his medicine." So trouble is always in sight for the jaundice-eyed.

Sneezing people do not care much for toys. Many hundreds of thousands of francs were lost by the great Louvre establishment because of influenza. During the holidays no one would visit the place to buy the mountains of Christmas and New Year's toys, which remain unsold and will probably be carried over till next year.

The pope is keeping up with the current history of the world. He reads the newspapers of all nations from 6 to 10 every evening. He knows how to remain young and wise.

A man in Massachusetts who accepts a free pass takes his own risk. The supreme court of the state has ruled that a man who is injured while riding on such a pass cannot recover damages.

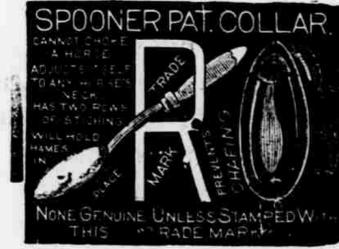
McFARLAND BROS

—AT BUTLER—

KEEP THE LARGEST STOCK

AT THE BEST PRICES IN

HARNESS and SADDLRE



SPOONER PATENT COLLAR

—PREVENTS CHAFING—

CANNOT CHOKE A HORSE

Adjusts itself to any Horse's neck, has two rows of stitching, will hold hames in place better than any other collar.

FRANZ BERNHARDT



Sole agent for the Rockford and Aurora watches, in Gold, Silver and Filled Cases, very

JEWELRY STORE

Is headquarters for Fine Jewelry

Watches, Clocks, Solid Silver and Plated Ware,

Spectacles of all kinds and for all ages; also fine Opera Glasses. You are cordially invited to visit his establishment and examine his splendid display of beautiful goods and the low prices.

ALL KINDS OF ENGRAVING NEATLY EXECUTED

T. E. PETTYS, A. O'WELT

PETTYS & WELTON

DEALERS IN

Staple & Fancy Groceries

Feed and Provisions of all Kinds.

QUEENSWARE AND GLASSWARE

WIGGARS AND TOBACCO,

Always pay the highest market price for Country

Produce. East Side Square, Butler, MO

C. B. LEWIS, Prop'r.

THE BRICK LIVERY STABLE.

AMPLE SUPPLY OF

Buggies, Carriages, Phaetons, Drummer Wagons, &c.

This is one of the best equipped Stables in this section of the state.

FIRST-CLASS RIGS FURNISHED

At any hour, day or night on the most reasonable terms.

Farmers desiring to put up their horses when in the city will find this barn the most convenient in town.

NOTE.—The Constables office can also be found at the office of the barn. Call and see me.

C. B. LEWIS.