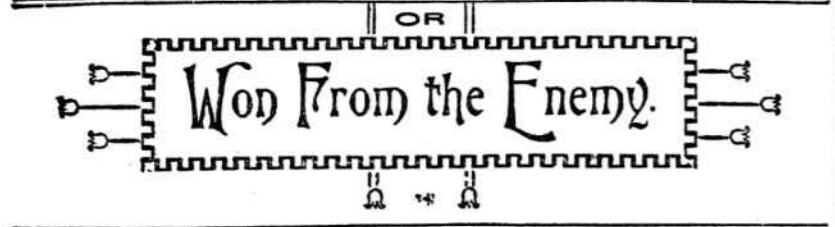


# Maid, Wife or Widow?



By MRS. ALEXANDER,

## PART II. CHAPTER II. Continued.

"Take thou the lead, Heber Gerhardt, and let us go."

"Here, Lies, Lies! Here is a cavalier for you. Major von Steinhausen, Meine cousin has lost her by this sudden summons to the Adjutant."

"Go, meine Liebbling, der Herr Major will take good care of you, and you can show him the way."

Need it be said with what avidity Steinhausen pounced upon this golden chance?

The stars in their courses fought for him at last, he thought, as with a studiously grave, composed air he offered his arm to Lies, who had been hidden by the wide expanse of the Burgmeister's figure.

She looked pale and slightly confused, but infinitely pretty, in a warm winter costume of gray cloth and dark-brown fur, and a cap of the same, over which a blue head "Tuch" (knitted woolen scarf) was loosely thrown to shield their ears from cold and frost-bite.

She hesitated and drew back at his approach. "Perhaps, Herr Major, you have already made some other engagement. I can go with—"

"It is our duty at once to obey," he interrupted, with much decision, and drawing her arm within his own, he led her away to his sleigh almost a prisoner, so tightly did he hold her hand against his side.

Von Steinhausen's movement appeared to put an end to the hesitation; the company began rapidly to arrange themselves in their sleighs, and the Burgmeister undertook the duties of leader.

When all were seated he gave the word "Vorwartz," and they started in the order prescribed by the rules of sleighing parties.

First came the six "Einspanner" (one-horse vehicles) of the unmarried gentlemen, each accompanied by the lady he had invited; next a large sleigh with four horses, conveying the band; then eight or nine "Zweispänner" (two-horse sleighs), each housing four, and driven by married gentlemen, closed the procession.

Behind each rode a servant, enveloped in furs, on a saddle-like seat, his feet resting on a narrow ledge beneath the body of the carriage. Away they went, the horses tossing their heads as if proud of their bells, their gay trappings and the many-colored tufts of hair that hung from the arch above their heads.

The sleigh-bells rang merrily, the drivers cracked their long whips, the band clashed out a quick march, the metal ornaments of the carriages glittered in the sunshine, the little boys shouted with delight, as the whole cortege swept rapidly down a narrow street past the Lazaret, and away over a narrow steep bridge that spanned the river on which the town was built, now fast locked in the frost's icy grasp, into the open country, away past cottages, their windows thickly framed with green pine boughs to keep out the winter blast, past farmhouses with their central dirt-heaps congealed, frosted over, and sparkling in the light, past rare human figures, like walking bundles of clothes, who stopped and stared after the gay company.

Away still, leaving all trace of houses and life behind, always ascending, sometimes so steeply that the fresh, eager horses were obliged to go slowly.

The goal was a mountain village which lay at the foot of a huge, conical hill, or rather mass of rock, crowned by some beautiful ruins. Falkenburg was renowned as an object for both summer and winter parties, and especially for sleighing "Gesellschaft."

Nearly all the drivers were familiar with the way; but to Steinhausen it was quite new. He was therefore obliged to keep his horse well in hand, to that animal's great disgust, manifested by bounds and prancings which fully exercised his driver's skill and strength of wrist. Steinhausen had wrapped and packed up his companion in the luxurious furs of his sleigh with the tenderest care, for which she thanked him with a glance and smile of unusual friendliness, and then an awkward silence fell upon them.

"You are half frightened, I see," exclaimed Steinhausen at last, looking down at Lies, as she unconsciously shrank nearer to him during some of their steeper wilder performances. "No, scarcely frightened, a little uncomfortable, and I fear for you, so lately recovered."

"This tiresome horse is too much," "No, he is not," said Steinhausen, shortly.

"But, mein Gnädige, you know the road—may I venture to give MoBr his head, and pass on to the front?" "It is this holding in that makes him troublesome."

"Yes," she returned, "I know the road well."

With a dexterous hand, Steinhausen shaved, perilously close, past the foremost sleigh, and then off they went like the wind, leaving the rest, who shouted reproaches after them for breaking the line of march, far behind; the black horse, relieved of the indignity of having to follow another, settled down into a steady rapid trot.

"That's all right," said Lies' chauffeur. "Now we can talk in comfort."

But he exercised the privilege with exceeding caution, determined not to startle his companion into being on her guard. He inquired with deep interest for her brother, and listened with profound attention to her history of him.

then he led her on to speak of her new home at Leipsic, enjoying the ready freedom of her conversation now that they kept on indifferent topics.

She was evidently familiar with the country and gave him many particulars of its history and traditions.

At length, as Steinhausen was beginning to think they had had enough of indifferent subjects, and that his fair companion was rather too much at her ease, the road, which had hitherto been constantly ascending, approached the first rocky, pine-sprinkled hills that guarded the entrance to the valley and village which was the object of the excursion, and began to descend the side of a picturesque gorge, at the bottom of which summer time gurgled and chafed a little stream, now still and silent in the iron grasp of winter.

The hills rose high at either side, studded with huge gray rocks which stood out on all kinds of fantastic shapes, loaded with snow on one side and bare on the other, as the wind had drifted; the great solemn pine-trees looked dark and weird over the exquisite dazzling white which shrouded the earth; the death-like, utter silence was almost oppressive.

They might have been the first human visitors that had ever broken in upon the profound solitude, so far as appearance went.

A sense of their complete isolation seemed to force itself upon Lies Gehring.

She turned once or twice to look back and said: "How far we have left the rest behind!"

"Yes; they will not be up for this half-hour," returned Steinhausen, coolly. "But that is no matter. What curious rocks," pointing to a gray mass high above their heads and in front of them.

"It is called the 'Basket-woman,'" she replied, "and here on the left is the 'Stein Beck.'"

"See! you can trace the head and horns quite well. The shapes of the rocks here are very curious."

"Very curious, indeed," said Steinhausen, looking about him. "They are strangely worn and cut."

"Learned people say that a great lake or sea once filled up this valley and the country round, and these rocks are worn and shaped by the action of tides and currents."

"I believe Bohemia was once an inland sea, and we are close to the frontier."

"Close to the borders?" replied Steinhausen, laughing and cracking his whip.

"It is a temptation to cross it and bid our party a long farewell."

And glancing at his companion, he laughed again at the expression, half-annoyance, half fear, that crossed her face.

"You believe me capable of any wickedness, I suppose," he continued. "Do you not also believe that, whatever temptation may assail me, my first thought is and ever will be for you?"

"You may trust in my deep regard for you."

Lies was silent, and when she spoke again it was to direct him which of two rather faint tracks to take. They had traversed the windings of the gorge, which now opened out in an oblong valley or basin, at one side of which was a small "Dorf," the houses looking like white hillocks above the universal snowy mantle that lay thick and soft upon the earth.

Over the village towered a sudden mighty mass of rock rising six or seven hundred feet, quite clear from all the other hills and crowned by the graceful ruins of a "Kloster."

The sides were plentifully dotted with pines and gnarled fir trees; but here and there great sheer surfaces of rock showed bare and uncouth with a sort of savage strength. Underneath the road wound past the first cutting better houses, through the narrow street, and finally, by Lies' directions, they stopped at a larger and more pretentious "Restoration" than could have been expected in so small a place.

It was built on the side of the hill or rock, and was reached by a flight of steps.

The view over the valley was very charming, and the principal room was quite surrounded by windows that commanded it.

thought a bitter smile; "on the contrary, it is in many ways a relief." Steinhausen's heart beat exultingly at this extraordinary avowal, and yet an odd sort of disappointment warred his complete satisfaction.

Lies was to him not only a charming woman, the touch of whose hand sent a subtle, delicious thrill through every vein, but an ideal woman, too—and his first ideal!

For a moment he did not know how to reply. For a moment he did not know how to reply.

He feared to presume on her strange—he hoped peculiar—confidence in him. But her manner left him in doubt, and while he doubted, the first sleigh of the party they had left behind came round a turn of the road under the great rock, and rapidly approached.

Steinhausen uttered a strong expression of disgust. "I did not think they were so close upon our heels," he said.

Lies made no reply, but after an instant's silence, said, as she played somewhat nervously with the scarf she had taken from her head: "Tell me—as we have fallen into a confidential tone—why Frau von Steinhausen is not with you?"

"Frau von Steinhausen," he repeated, greatly puzzled. "Who is she?" "Your wife, of course," said Lies, opening her great blue eyes.

"My wife! I have none—I never married. Who told you so?"

"I thought—I understood you to say that—"

"You misunderstood or misconstrued anything I could have said," he interrupted, eagerly.

"Ah, Lies! distance, time, various distractions may have dimmed the first vividness of the impression you made upon me, but no other has ever interfered with it."

"Must I never tell you of the agony it is to feel that you are another's—another who does not value the jewel he possesses—"

He stopped, for the long line of sleighs were all in sight, and the first almost at the place where they stood.

Lies still gazed at him as if bewildered, then a sudden, bright, sweet smile lit up her face; a quick blush flitted over her cheek, she looked down and had just begun to speak:

"I think I begin to see how the mistake—"

when the newly arrived sleigh driver shouted from beneath: "You were not so far ahead, after all, Herr Major, though you did break our rules so boldly."

"Better break rules than bones," returned Steinhausen, hastening down the steps to assist the lady who occupied the second seat in the sleigh to extricate herself from her furs.

She was a pretty, simple girl of seventeen, the Burgmeister's daughter, and as soon as she was liberated from her profuse wrappings she ran up the steps to link her arm through that of Lies, and began chattering at a rapid rate.

The rest of the party now drove up in quick succession, and the large room of the Restoration was crowded with gay, laughing, noisy, talkative groups, which contrasted with the deathlike silence and stillness which reigned without.

Most of the gentlemen chaperons had delayed a few moments to see personally to the accommodation of their horses, but they soon joined the rest, and then coffee was brought, and the pleasant confusion of finding seats ensued.

During this time Steinhausen carefully bestowed his attentions on every other lady except Lies, yet never lost sight of her.

He saw that she talked with much animation with nearly all the ladies, and many of the gentlemen.

He noticed a light in her eyes, a bloom on her cheek that made her, in his opinion, quite lovely; and he attributed both to the excitement of wounded feeling.

He saw, too, that brute of a husband of hers speak to her with an angry brow and a look that made Steinhausen long to tear him limb from limb.

It would be wiser to show more spirit. So, internally chafing, he sat down with the rest to take his coffee.

# POPULAR SCIENCE

Two London investigators are seeking persons, who, in the dark, can see colored rays from the human body and Reichenbach is said to have proven that fifty persons in every 100 can see the latter.

London fogs are of local origin, although their cause seems to be not fully understood. Kew loses only ten per cent. of the annual sunshine through fog, while Westminster loses thirty-six per cent.

Science now transforms radishes into potatoes. Showing a process of Pasteur. M. Moillard cultivates a young radish in a glass retort, in concentrated glucose, when the radish develops much starch and swells out, losing its pepperness, and acquiring the taste, consistency and nutritive properties of the potato.

The toxin of fatigue is obtained by Herr Weichardt, a German biologist from the muscles of animals that have been worked to exhaustion. This muscle extract is separated from other products of muscular activity by dialysis, great care being taken to avoid contamination by bacteria, and it can be dried and preserved for a short time, but rapidly loses its power.

Glass lives for bees are well known, but a portable ants' nest, as supplied in London under the name of "The Lubbock Formicarium," is something of a novelty. It is expected that one of these nests will serve six years or more for study or exhibition. The nest resembles a picture frame ten inches square, and contains the small yellow ant in its various stages, with or without a queen, and with associated insects.

Concrete is finding an important new application as a setting for posts, both wood and iron. When the wooden post is treated with tar and the hole around it is filled with well-tamped concrete, a cheap and practical, indestructible foundation is secured; and similar bedding gives to iron posts for telephone lines and other purposes the stability hitherto lacking. The concrete protects the iron from rust, as it does the wood from rot.

Some substances darken on being heated, while some lose color at low temperatures, and the hypothesis that all colors would fade to whiteness at the absolute zero of temperature has met with considerable favor. An investigation of the effect of liquid air freezing has been made in France by Jules Schmedlin. It appears that in solid state or fixed on textile fibres, like silk and wool, coloring matters change slightly, but in alcoholic solution, some of them—especially some of the rosanilines—are much altered. Even in solution, however, other dyes—such as methylene blue and malachite green—are not altered in color by the cold of liquid air.

HOW HE ESCAPED CONFIDENCES. A Doctor's Ruin to Siderack Those Who Would Have Spoiled His Vacation.

"On one of my recent vacations," said an eminent divine, "I wished to travel unknown. I took off my clerical suit as soon as my home city was well out of sight, and I determined that for the next few weeks I would wear no tales of woe, comfort nor weeping people, and not have to live up to the reputation a minister of the gospel has to maintain. I would be normal for a time, anyhow."

"But what was my dismay to find that one of the cottages near the hotel I had chosen was owned by a fellow townsman. He greeted me effusively as 'Doctor' before I had a chance to shut him up. But luckily it was on the beach, and I thought no one was in hearing distance. I explained, and he promised absolute silence. As it happened, however, one of the men at my hotel had overheard the greeting, though not the rest of the conversation, and he took me for an M. D. He had troubles of his own. He wanted to go to the seashore. His wife preferred the fresh water beaches. So he determined to get hold of a doctor and make him prescribe salt air. I was the victim. He took me aside and told me all his symptoms, and though I managed to turn the conversation, after a while I saw things getting serious. But I evaded him so skillfully that at last he went to the man who knew me."

"Is that man a doctor of medicine?" he demanded.

"No," said my friend. "See here, I'll tell you what he is if you'll promise on your solemn word and honor not to tell."

"All right," said the other man. "My friend leaned over confidentially. 'He's a private detective,' he whispered. 'And I was left in peace throughout the rest of my vacation.'—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Sun's Nearest Neighbor. The rarely seen planet Mercury reached its greatest western elongation from the sun on January 22, and since then has been favorably placed for observation as a morning star, rising an hour and a half before the sun in the southeast. It is an achievement to catch a sight of this elusive baby planet, and it is on record that Copernicus never succeeded in seeing it. Those who are not early risers must wait until the end of March, by which time Mercury, moving at the rapid rate of nearly 1800 miles a minute, will have passed to the other side of the sun, and be even better situated as an evening star in the northwest. The planet shines with a dull rosy hue, and to watch its quick passage through the stars is most interesting.

It Rained Geese. Though Hungary can never hope to compete with America in richness of unbreeds, the following effort is not bad. It is reported from a village in that country that the inhabitants have kept indoors by a heavy shower of wild geese. It is supposed that the birds flew from a moist layer of atmosphere to a cold one, got their wings frozen and were unable to fly.—London Globe.

Two Interesting Inscriptions. In Russia, beside an old highway, is a bronze tablet bearing this inscription: "Napoleon Bonaparte passed eastward along this road in 1812 with an army of more than 600,000 men." And beside another road only a few miles distant is another tablet, on which these words are inscribed: "Napoleon Bonaparte passed westward along this road in 1813 with an army of less than 200,000 men." That's all.

# THE GREAT DESTROYER

SOME STARTLING FACTS ABOUT THE VICE OF INTEMPERANCE.

Horrible Cruelties That Would Cease to Attract if the Stimulus Afforded by the Traffic in Strong Drink Were Withdrawn—Destroy This Business.

(Below is presented a remarkable philippic from the Rev. Walter Walsh, Chairman of the Prohibition party of Scotland, and one of the most heroic characters now in Scottish public life.) The commonwealth of God is menaced by the trade in strong drink, which, therefore, cannot be tolerated by the new spirit growing up in the modern world. The times are distinguished by their growing devotion to the cause of reform and humanity. Men are drawing nearer to the institutions which are established amongst them, asking why they exist, and what they can contribute to the common good. The times are audacious, not afraid to challenge the most ancient prerogatives, bold to defy privileges which are not of the human race. But the liquor trade has grown to be the mightiest enemy that ever warred against society and religion. It is the centre of the horrible inferno that welters at the bottom of the civilized world.

Round the drink trade, in concentric rings of flame, revolves the whole hellish phantasmagoria of gambling, brutal sports, prostitution, as well as drunkenness. Besides being an evil in itself, it is frequently the direct cause, and always the direct support, of every other evil. The publican and the book-maker are always fast friends and are frequently the same person. The bar is the great house of parliament for the betting fraternity. When the British Cato shall have abolished the public-house, he will be found to have abolished, in great part, the betting and gambling interest, which is eating the heart of honor out of the country. Without the agency of the public-house, again, it would be impossible to organize those brutal sports which disgrace such large numbers of our fellow-countrymen. In districts where such sports are customary, it is the publican who promotes rabbit-coursing, pigeon-shooting, sparrow-tournaments. The publican is the organizer of boxing-matches, assaults, prize-fights, and the like. Without his cheap and practical, indestructible foundation is secured; and similar bedding gives to iron posts for telephone lines and other purposes the stability hitherto lacking. The concrete protects the iron from rust, as it does the wood from rot.

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# THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMENTS FOR MARCH 12.

Subject: The Slavery of Sin, John viii., 31-40—Golden Text, John viii., 34—Memory Verses, 31, 32—Commentary on the Day's Lesson.

I. The test and blessings of discipleship (vs. 31, 32). "Then said Jesus, 'Blessed are ye who believe in Me, who have seen Me and have believed that I am the Light of the world, and after His answers to the Pharisees, and now Jesus directed His remarks to these new disciples. "Which believed." The term "believe" applies here to the disposition, openly expressed, to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. "If ye believe (R. V.) Not a fickle, intermittent relation, but a firm, intense and continuous. "In My word." If ye obey My commands and follow My teachings carefully. Our spirits must drink in Christ's words as our bodies drink in the atmosphere. No man is worth listening to on questions of faith and doctrine who is not himself a reverent listener to Christ. Abiding in God's word must become the permanent condition of our life. The learner, not the teacher, is the one who accepts and follows another as teacher and master. True disciples are real representatives of Christ, who have a holy life before the world.

"I shall know if ye truly know Me, if ye do as I say. For whosoever heareth My sayings and keepeth them, he shall not see death, but shall have life, which shall last forever." (John 14:24). The rules had spoken of knowing the law, Jesus speaks of knowing the truth. This is a species of learning infinitely transcending all the guesses of doubting scientists and sneering philosophers. "Make ye free." Intelligence is not sufficient. A learned man is still a wicked man under the bondage of sin unless he has been made free. Knowledge appears to give man a false freedom as the fruit of knowledge. Christ associates liberty always with the truth, which He is Himself, and so presents the truth as the cause of liberty and of freedom. Freedom offered by the slavery of sin (vs. 33-36). "They answered, 'Many commentators refer this "they" not to the many who believed (vs. 30), but to the Jews who had not believed. The little episode of verses 33-32 is thus held as a pleasant parenthesis, and the believers are all allowed to be genuine and perhaps permanent. The words cannot be spoken of simple people who are to be believed, but to the cunning, cunning Pharisees, "Abraham's seed." They had Abraham's blood in their veins, but not his faith in their hearts. "Never in bondage." This answer was given in the language of pride ordinarily. Politically, the seed of Abraham had been in bondage to Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome. Spiritually, they had been in bondage to their idols and superstitions. The rabbi, who were literalists in interpretation, and without spirituality or sympathy (Matt. 23:4). "How sayest Thou." Upon what possible principle dost Thou presume that which Thou art not in possession of, viz., glorious liberty? We already possess as our birthright what Thou art offering to us as the full result of discipleship.

Verily, verily. A solemn declaration enforced by these words. "Whoever cometh to Me, and heareth My sayings, and doeth them, he shall have life, which shall last forever." (John 14:24). The rules had spoken of knowing the law, Jesus speaks of knowing the truth. This is a species of learning infinitely transcending all the guesses of doubting scientists and sneering philosophers. "Make ye free." Intelligence is not sufficient. A learned man is still a wicked man under the bondage of sin unless he has been made free. Knowledge appears to give man a false freedom as the fruit of knowledge. Christ associates liberty always with the truth, which He is Himself, and so presents the truth as the cause of liberty and of freedom. Freedom offered by the slavery of sin (vs. 33-36). "They answered, 'Many commentators refer this "they" not to the many who believed (vs. 30), but to the Jews who had not believed. The little episode of verses 33-32 is thus held as a pleasant parenthesis, and the believers are all allowed to be genuine and perhaps permanent. The words cannot be spoken of simple people who are to be believed, but to the cunning, cunning Pharisees, "Abraham's seed." They had Abraham's blood in their veins, but not his faith in their hearts. "Never in bondage." This answer was given in the language of pride ordinarily. Politically, the seed of Abraham had been in bondage to Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome. Spiritually, they had been in bondage to their idols and superstitions. The rabbi, who were literalists in interpretation, and without spirituality or sympathy (Matt. 23:4). "How sayest Thou." Upon what possible principle dost Thou presume that which Thou art not in possession of, viz., glorious liberty? We already possess as our birthright what Thou art offering to us as the full result of discipleship.

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