

Reluctantly John Denvers wrapped the shawl tighter round the girl's shoulders, and then slowly they walked towards the house.

'One thing you must promise me,' said John as they approached the illuminated hall, 'that you will send me the magazine containing your story. Will you?'

'If you really wish it, I shall,' said Silvia. 'But you will have forgotten that I ever wrote it long before it reaches you.'

'Ah, don't say that,' said John, turning with earnest supplication in his eyes. 'I shall never forget you—or our story.'

It was pleasant to hear him say 'our story.' To Silvia it seemed as though at least one undeniable fact formed a tiny bond between them.

'Where shall I send it?' she asked presently, and then John wrote on a card, 'The Orient Club, Calcutta.'

Once they had entered the house there was no further reason for delay, and Silvia, having informed Mrs. Dewbury that her aunt was sitting up for her, and that she was obliged to hurry home, she enveloped her head in a lace mantilla and hurried down-stairs. In the hall John Denvers stood waiting to say good-night and—good-bye.

She placed her hand in his and let her eyes rest on his face. It was to be a long good-bye—a good-bye like the story, that had hardly had a beginning, and yet the hands were firmly clasped and the two faces bore an intense look of tender longing.

Denvers pressed his lips tightly together, and Silvia agitatedly drew her cloak closer to her. The cab stood at the door, and Silvia tore herself away.

'You'll not forget?' he called to her, straining to catch a last glimpse of her face, and she answered back, with trembling lips, 'No; you shall read our story. Good-bye.'

That night in her lonely little room, Silvia Clarke wrote the story of her first and only love. It was the simplest little plot imaginable. Her heroine was called Sophia, and her hero James. It was the old, old story of love at first sight, while the lovers had to part and pass their lives in vain regret and longing for that which could not be.

But Silvia broke her word to Captain Denvers. When, after some weeks, the 'Fenwick Magazine' appeared containing her story, and she read it through for the first time in print, she was horrified at its realism, and almost regretted having written it.

'What would he think, after the lapse of time, were I to send it to him now? It would be impossible. I can't. That night he may have fancied that he liked me, but now he has probably forgotten my name. We must let our little story die its natural death; that memory is just a passing gleam of sunshine in my gloomy life.'

But John Denvers had not forgotten Silvia's name, or even the slightest detail about her personality. He had stolen a photograph of Silvia from Mrs. Dewbury's drawing-room mantelpiece with a sang-froid that defied competition, and he had pored over it every day since he had met and left her, until her face had become engraven on the tablet of his mind. He remembered everything—her sweet, perfect figure, her general delicacy and refinement of manner; and, above all, what charmed him most, her incomparable naturalness in saying things which, coming from the lips of any other woman, would sound inharmonious, impossible. 'Oh, Silvia, what a havoc you have wrought in this poor mortal's brain,' he said often to himself, and, 'Child, I am coming back to fetch you, never fear; there is only one woman in God's world for me, and she is Silvia Clarke!'

John Denvers had written to Mrs. Dewbury after his return to India, begging her to keep him au courant as to all home news, at the same time asking her to look out for the 'Fenwick Magazine' containing Silvia's story. He feared that she, woman-like, might feel reluctant to send it at the last moment, so in order to be on the safe side he begged Mrs. Dewbury to forward it to him, at the same time asking her not to let Silvia know of his request. He somehow felt that a great deal depended on that little story, and he awaited its arrival with feverish impatience.

The 'Fenwick Magazine' was brought to John Denvers one mail day just as he was sitting down to tiffin in his bungalow at Calcutta.

The simple, unaffected style of the girl's narrative, told tenderly and romantically, went straight to his heart. The blood rushed to his brain as he realised how she had taken her plot word for word from their own slender romance; how she had even named her hero and heroine after their own initials, and how the thread of the story faithfully followed its lead up to the time of John Denvers' departure for India.

John was crazy with joy when he had read the story. 'She meant it for me, and has loved me ever

since I left her.' He cried gladly, 'Oh, my sweet, brave darling, you were not ashamed to take the theme of our story. But why didn't you send it to me, as you promised to do?' And then a sudden fear beset him. 'Perhaps, since the writing of that story, she had fallen in love with some one else. Great heavens! how am I to know—to find out the truth? I can't remain in suspense for weeks; I must know at once.' Off he rushed to the telegraph office and wrote out a cable addressed to 'Clarke, care Dewbury, London.' The message was laconic, but to the point. 'Have just read story. Did you mean me, Silvia? If so, will you come out and marry me at once?' Wire.—John.

Silvia was at her writing table thinking out some new plots when, several hours afterwards, Mrs. Dewbury rushed into the room and thrust the telegram into her hand.

'There! What do you say to that?' cried Mrs. Dewbury triumphantly and in high glee.

Silvia, flushing to the roots of her hair, hid her face in the motherly breast of her friend and shed thankful, happy tears. 'I can't believe it, after only one meeting,' she said between her ecstatic sobs. 'Does he really mean it?'

'Well, what do you suppose?' answered Mrs. Dewbury. 'You simpleton, do you think he would have cabled if he hadn't been serious? But don't lose a moment in answering, because you may be sure he is in a pretty fume of excitement.'

'What shall I say?' said Silvia, sitting bolt upright, and looking perplexed.

'Why, simply say, "Yes, I'm coming. Love—Silvia,"' said Mrs. Dewbury in a matter-of-fact tone. 'And now put that blessed writing away. It has served its purpose, anyway; but now you won't need to do another stroke, and if I were you I would turn my attention to my wardrobe.'

And so the writing was put aside for a new life, a new world, a new kingdom, of which John Denvers was to be the supreme ruler, and Silvia Clarke, happy, radiant, and almost intoxicated with her new-found joy, prepared to go and join her future husband at Calcutta.—'Catholic Home Journal.'

The Cairns 'Times,' Queensland, in the course of a warm appreciation of Mr. J. Devlin's speech there, says that 'it is doubtful if the Commonwealth can produce an orator to stand anywhere near him.'

MYERS & CO., Dentists, Octagon, corner of George Street. They guarantee the highest class of work at moderate fees. Their artificial teeth give general satisfaction, and the fact of them supplying a temporary denture while the gums are healing does away with the inconvenience of being months without teeth. They manufacture a single artificial tooth for Ten Shillings, and sets equally moderate. The administration of nitrous oxide gas is also a great boon to those needing the extraction of a tooth.

HOW TO PAINT A HOUSE CHEAP.

Garrara Paint In White and Colors, Mixed Ready for Inside and Outside Use. **CARRARA** retains its Gloss and Lustre for at least five years, and will look better in eight years than lead and oil paints do in two. **USE CARRARA**, the first coat of which is no greater than lead and oil paints, and your paint bills will be reduced by over 50 per cent. A beautifully-illustrated booklet, entitled 'How to Paint a House Cheap,' will be forwarded free on application.

K. RAMSAY & CO., 19 Vogel Street, Dunedin.

TO SUBSCRIBERS.

We ask you to do business by mail direct with our Office, without putting us to the expense of sending canvassers and collectors to your door.

As an inducement we offer to send you the N.Z. Tablet for **ONE POUND A YEAR**, paid strictly in advance.

Booked Subscriptions still continue at 25/- per year. No agent, canvasser, or collector has power to alter these terms.

NOTE THE DIFFERENCE:

	Year.	Half-year.	Quarter.
By Mail In Advance	20/-	10/-	5/-
If Booked	25/-	12/6	6/6

MANAGER N.Z. Tablet.