



CHAPTER IV.

POMONA VILLA, situated in its own park-like grounds on the borders of Blackheath, was a select seminary for young ladies, conducted by the Misses Prism. The 'park-like grounds' consisted altogether of about half an acre of the terrestrial sphere, the chief part of which was laid down with single, affording an excellent opportunity of research for such pupils as were studying geology.

It will make things less awkward when she goes to school. "Just as you please, sir," responded the housekeeper; but from the way in which she grumbled over her work afterward, it did not seem as though, in this instance, his pleasure was her own.

Meanwhile, Peg O'Reilly's feelings at the contemplated change in her life were very mixed. This poor child, who had been reared in a work-house, made the drudge of a grocer's wife, and as a waif of the streets, had yet preserved amidst all her wanderings an instinctive knowledge that she was capable of better things.

With the face and form of a child of ten years old, she had the prematurely forced mind of a woman twice that age, which began to show itself as soon as ever it was placed in a congenial atmosphere. Her first feelings, when Ruthven carried her off so unceremoniously to his house, had been those of fear and curiosity; but she had fallen into the customs and manners of civilized life so naturally, as almost to incline one to believe it could not be her first introduction to them.

Her conversations with the housekeeper had imbued her with a terrible shame of her past life, whilst those with Hamilton Shore had given her a thirst to raise herself above even its recollections. But beyond all this, as her mind awakened to a consciousness of the utter want of claim she had upon Ruthven's benevolence and generosity, came the deep, heartfelt gratitude which she never ceased to entertain for him. She was very shy still with her patron, and totally powerless to express her feelings toward him. But if ever a girl believed a man to be more than mortal, Peg O'Reilly, in her silent adoration, credited James Ruthven with that attribute. She was sadly disappointed when Mrs. Garrett affirmed she would never be a lady; but she had heard what Lake Addison said to his friend on the subject, and she determined she would try to be one, for Ruthven's sake.

There was a great lamentation on the part of Hamilton Shore when he found that he and Peg were so soon to be separated, and he derived no consolation whatever from Mrs. Garrett telling him that so long as his bed was properly made and his supper ready when he required it, "it could make no possible difference to him, who came into the house and went out of it." Ruthven parted with his protegee in the same demonstrative manner in which he had adopted her. He nodded his head to her in passing, put a sovereign into her hand, and told her to be a good child and learn all she could, and got into his cab and drove away.

Mrs. Garrett, according to instructions, conducted the girl to Blackheath, and delivered her over to the charge of the Misses Prism. Once happily freed from the kisses which the preceptresses lavished on her as long as Mrs. Garrett was in sight, Peg felt dreadfully shy on being introduced to the bevy of young ladies in the school-room, until she discovered that the Misses Waters, Candy, and Prime spoke as ungrammatically as she did herself, and that, thanks to the liberality of her guardian (as Ruthven had desired her to call him), she was as well dressed as any girl there.

Indeed, until the neat black leather trunk with brass nails, which had accompanied her to Pomona Villa, was unpacked, Peg had no idea of the wealth of which she was the possessor. The young ladies of the highest families were all witnesses to its disencumberment, and as the handkerchiefs, scarfs, ribbons, collars and such like easily transferable wares, came to the surface, the affection of her new companions developed itself as though by magic. One girl in particular, a tall, handsome creature of fourteen years of age, whose black eyes and hair and olive complexion proclaimed her to be not all of Saxon blood, was vehement both in the praises of the wardrobe and its owner.

"Stand one on side, girls, and don't push so," said she, authoritatively. "Miss O'Reilly is going to be my friend; we were to sleep in the same room, and Miss Prism has put her under my especial care, so I won't see her put upon in any way."

"Which means that she intends to get that scarlet ribbon she is fingering for herself," grumbled one of the select; "it's just like Carmen Flowers—to pounce upon every good thing that comes into the school."

"Greedy!" said Miss Candy. "Vain!" sneered Miss Prime. "Stuck up!" chimed in Miss Waters. By which it may be seen that Carmen Flower—Spanish by her mother's side, and English by her father's—although she was strongly suspected of turning out a beauty, was not much of a favorite at Pomona Villa.

Whether on account of Ruthven's liberality, however, or because some secret attraction drew the two girls together, Carmen Flower and Margaret O'Reilly were fast friends from the first day of meeting. On Peg's side a vast deal of admiration mingled with the affection she conceived for her new companion.

Carmen was only one year older than herself; yet she appeared almost a woman by comparison with her, and Peg thought she had never seen anything

more beautiful than her flashing black eyes, and long, straight limbs, and the abundant dark tresses with which her head was crowned. Carmen was an orphan, too, who could not remember either father or mother, and lived with her uncle and guardian, Sir Frederick Flower, in an old house in the country called Abbotsville. It was rumored in the school that Miss Flower was an heiress, and would inherit all her uncle's money, and Carmen was fond of boasting to the same effect; but that circumstance made no difference to Peg. Her heart had known too little of affection not to respond eagerly to that semblance of it which school girls exhibit toward each other, and which has its outlet in kisses, secrets and terms of endearment. She mistook all this gilt for gold, and before a month was over her head she adored Carmen Flower as a being of superior order to herself, and was never so happy as when she was running her errands, doing her commissions, or waiting on her pleasure.

Carmen liked this adulation; it was as balm to her conceited spirit, and if she had ever felt an attachment to anyone it was to Margaret O'Reilly. Inheriting from her Spanish mother a haughtiness and thirst for admiration which had rendered her obnoxious to her companions, her beauty and wealth had not met hitherto with the consideration she thought they deserved. The British girl is almost as ready as her brother to put down anything like self-assurance and conceit, and the butcher's and baker's daughters had been irritated rather than awed, by the assumption of importance maintained by Miss Flower.

But poor Peg had no dignity of her own to keep up. She could not assert loudly like the Misses Prime and Candy, that she was as good as others; she was only anxious to conceal the past, and let it die in silence. Even to her friend, Carmen Flower, she said nothing on the subject. Her feminine instinct had already taught her that the confession would do her harm, added to which Mrs. Garrett had especially cautioned her, on her master's behalf, not to reveal anything of her past life.

So all that the young ladies discovered was that she was an orphan and lived with her guardian, the same as Carmen Flower did. They thought her dreadfully vulgar at first, but natural timidity made her expose her deficiencies as little as possible, and natural intelligence quickly taught her to remedy them. It was Easter when she was sent to Pomona Villa, and by midsummer no one would have recognized her as the same girl. Her face and figure had filled out, her cheeks bloomed with health, and her language was at least as correct as it is with most of her age. In fact, Margaret O'Reilly had become the prettiest girl in the school, and, though their attachment continued unabated, Carmen Flower was more than disposed to be jealous of the attention she attracted. When Mrs. Garrett arrived on one of her monthly visits to see how the girl was progressing, she held up her hands in amazement.

"Lor' bless me, Miss Margaret, I never did see such a change! Well, Blackheath must agree with you, and these ladies must be doing their duty for you to look so well. I should think you must weigh double what you did when you came here."

But it was nothing more than fresh air and wholesome food and the absence of fear that had wrought the miracle. For the first time in her life Peg's little mind and body were having fair play, and they responded gratefully to it. It was a great disappointment to the girl when the midsummer holidays arrived to find that she was to spend them at Pomona Villa, in company with Miss Tarbrush, whose parents lived in Calcutta. But so it had been arranged by Ruthven from the beginning.

USES FOR COCOANUTS.

Florida Has Several Plantations of This Tropical Fruit. Quite a number of tropical nuts have recently been introduced into cultivation in this country, says the New York World. Already on the east coast of Florida are growing 250,000 coconut trees, 42,000 being in one plantation. It is believed that the first trees of this kind in that state sprouted from nuts brought from Central America and the West Indies by the gulf stream. At Key West and about some of the old forts coconuts were planted at an early day, as certain ancient trees now standing bear witness. In 1877 a bark freighted with coconuts was caught in a storm off the coast of Florida and beached near Lake Worth. Several thousand of the nuts were saved and planted, the satisfactory growth of the seedlings giving an impetus to cultivation.

The word coconut is derived from the Portuguese "coco," meaning monkey, because the base resembles a monkey's face. The tree was known to the people of Ceylon as early as 160 B. C., the milk being used by them for making cement. The coconut is one of the most useful of plants—root, trunk, leaf, sap and nut are made to yield tribute to man. The fiber of the husk furnishes excellent yarn and is preferred to horsehair for stuffing beds, cushions, chairs and saddles. It is stronger and more elastic than hemp. The Polynesians twist small cords of this fiber, which serve in the construction of houses and canoes where Europeans would employ nails. The green nuts are grated for medicinal use. Grated coconut forms an ingredient of the East Indian condiment curry. In the Maldives labor is usually paid for in coconuts.

If Satan ever laughs it must be at the hypocrites, they are the greatest dupes he has.

HUMORIST'S CORNER.

SOME LAUGHABLE PICKINGS FOR OUR LEAN READERS.

The Lilies of the Valley—Return of the Prodigal Son and His Reception in Darktown—A Startling Assertion—How He Looked at It.



A spray and lightly said—"Wait, I'll get another. For this one I have had Twirling in my fingers Until it must be dead."

"That was the one I wanted." She could not fancy why. When I could take a fresh one For one about to die; But kept her faint-flush'd profile Averted from my eye. —J. Russell Taylor, in Truth.

Couldn't Shave a Bit.

When the famous archaeologist came into the club yesterday afternoon his erudite countenance was ornamented at several points with attacking plaster, and there was a general inquiry among his friends as to what was the matter. "Razor," said the professor briefly. "Good gracious! Where did you get shaved?" asked one of our younger members sympathetically.

"It's a strange thing," said the man of learning. I was shaved this morning by a man who really is, I suppose, a little above the ordinary barber. I know of my own knowledge that he took a double first class at Oxford; that he studied at Heidelberg afterwards, and spent several years in other foreign educational centers. I know, also, of my own knowledge, that he has contributed scientific articles to our best magazine, and has numbered among his intimate friends men of the highest social and scientific standing in Europe and America. And yet," soliloquized the savant, "he can't shave a man decently."

"By Jove!" exclaimed the young members, in astonishment. "What is he a barber for, with all those accomplishments?"

"Oh, he isn't a barber!" said the book-worm, yawning. "You see, I shaved myself this morning."—Answers.

Richly Deserved.

Pillsbury, the champion chess-player of America, is possessed of a fund of quaint humor, as a London policeman knows to his cost.

In reply to the American's query, "How can I reach King William street?" the policeman said, "You can take a cab, or you can take a 'bus, or, as it is only 200 yards from here, you can walk."

"Oh," said Pillsbury, with one of his best smiles, "I know I can walk, but what I want to know is the way."

After being instructed, Pillsbury put his hand in his pocket, as if to produce the necessary douceur, and asked: "Will you take a drink?"

Robert, having expressed his hearty willingness, Pillsbury went on: "Well you had better go and get one; and you can either pay for it yourself, get someone else to pay for it, or take it without paying for it."—Answers.

How He Looked at It.

"You men don't seem to have even a faint appreciation of your privileges," said Miss Shingiss to Mr. Van Braam.

"Aw!"

"No; you don't. In China a man has to pay from \$250 upward for a wife. In this country brides are given away, and yet men hesitate to marry."

"Still I think the Chinese have rather the best of it," replied the incorrigible man. "In that country the fashions never change, and the cost of keeping a wife isn't worth mentioning."—Pittsburg Chronicle-Telegraph.

The Prodigal Son.



Mrs. Spivins—Well, it's gittin' late. Guess I goes down an' chops some wood an' cook th' ol' man's suppah." (Hears knock at door.) Who's dar? Come in. Gentleman (at door)—Mudder, doan you know me? I is yo' son, Ikey Spivins; done been away fo' fifteen years.

Mrs. Spivins—You Ikey Spivins? Ikey—Deed I is.

Mrs. Spivins—Well, if you is Ikey Spivins an' yo' is sho' of it, just take this ax an' go down an' split some wood fo' yo' ol' man's suppah.

"Biykins has his own way in his house." "Yes. But his wife always tells him what it is going to be before-hand."—Washington Star.

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A B-a-d Man.

"Whereas," reads a notice printed in the Biddeford (Me.) Journal, "my husband, Amas, has left my bed and board without any cause, I Caution all wimlin taking up with him, as I am the third one that he has brought to distraction to my knollig."

When Nature

Needs assistance it may be best to render it promptly, but one should remember to use even the most perfect remedies only when needed. The best and most simple and gentle remedy is the Syrup of Figs, manufactured by the California Fig Syrup Company.

"Hello" Don't Go Now.

In answering a telephone call it is much better to say "yes," with a rising inflection than "hello." In fact, "hello" is now tabooed in select circles.

If the Baby is Cutting Teeth, be sure and use that old and well-tried remedy, Dr. Williams' Drops for Children's Teeth. The man who prays much can do much, if he prays in the right way. Iowa farms for sale on crop payments, 10 per cent. cash, balance 1/3 crop yearly, until paid for. J. MULHALL, Waukegan, Ill. Glass windows (colored) were used in the eighth century. HALL'S CATARRH CURE is a liquid and is taken internally, and acts directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Send for testimonials, free. Sold by Druggists, 75c. F. J. CHENEY & CO., Proprs., Toledo, O. If a snail's head be cut off and the animal be placed in a cool, moist spot, a new head will be grown.

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