SHIRLEY ROSS:

A Story of Woman's Faithfulness.

CHAPTER XLIII.

It was later on the same day, and the shades of night were gathering over Erindale. The cottages were all closed, and only little glimmers of light were shining through the cracks of the shuttered windows in those where the inmates had not yet retired to rest. The Oliphant Arms was closed, although the light streamed ruddily from the fanlight over the door, still lighting up the little bit of street upon which it fell, and falling upon the bowed, shrinking figure of a woman who was making her way down the street as fast as her trembling limbs and the slippery state of the roads allowed her. If any of the villagers had met her they would have recognized her immediately; but the uneven, irregular street was empty and deserted, and there was none to see the school-mistress as she hurried along.

The clock in the church tower had just struck 11 as she had left the cottage adjoining the school-house, sending Jip back, when he followed her, to the threshold of the door, and bidding him "Watch," and, when the dog had obeyed, she had locked him into the house and hurried down the hill, pale and trembling and nervous, starting at every sound, and pressing her clasped hands to her heart, as if to still its throbbings.

But her agitation was not entirely to be attributed to nervous fear of the dark night. Had her face been visible, any one might have seen upon it a great fear which was not due to physical alarm.

"Am I doing right? Am I doing right?" she muttered as she pressed on. "Oh, Heaven help me—Heaven help me! I do not know where to turn or what to do. Am I prudent in taking this step? And yet—and yet I cannot let him die—I cannot see him suffer so cruelly without obtaining what assistance I can. Oh, Jack, if you were not Guy's friend—if you were not Guy's friend!"

The tears were gathering thickly in her eyes; but she dashed them away impatiently as she went on, quickening her steps for a few minutes, then from very weakness obliged to slacken them again. And so, stopping at intervals to recover breath and regain sufficient strength for another start, she made her way to a pretty white house at the other end of the village, and there she paused, looking up wistfully at the windows whence no light issued.

The white house faced the road, being divided from it only by a small strip of garden, and the hall door was in the centre; but there was a side door, from which a narrow stream of light issued, and toward this Shirley walked rapidly. But when she had reached it, and had even lifted her hand to the bell, she hesitated, shrinking back and moving away again; then she advanced and pulled the bell, giving it a swift sudden pull which rang a peal that aroused all the echoes of the quiet house. Almost immediately the door was opened by a sharp looking boy of fifteen or sixteen.

"My word, but you did ring!" he was beginning saucily, when he recognized the applicant and adopted a more respectful tone. "I beg pardon, ma'am; I did not see you at first. Do you want the Doctor, Mrs. Grant?"

Shirley was leaning against the wall by this time, panting and breathless; but she forced the white lips to answer in the affirmative.

"Yes," she said. "Is he in!"

"No, Mrs. Grant," the boy answered, civilly. "He is out at a dinner-party at the Rectory; but I expect him back every moment. Will you wait to see him, Mrs. Grant? Or shall I run around and fetch him?"

"I will wait," she answered; and the boy ushered her into a little waiting-room, which looked cold and comfortless, with the fire dying out in the grate.

The lad turned up the gas into a sudden flare, which made Shirley cover her eyes for a moment; then he pulled forward a chair and placed it for her.

"I will tell the Doctor you are here, ma'am," he said, "the very minute he comes in."

"Thank you," Shirley said, wearily, as she sunk down upon the chair he had placed; and then, when the boy had left and she was alone, she crossed her arms upon the table and let her head sink upon them in an utter and intense weariness of mind and body. But the weakness was only momentary; almost immediately she raised her head, and, rising, she began to pace up and down the little waiting-room, pushing back her hair from her brow with a troubled, bewildered, almost despairing expression.

"Have I done right? Oh, merciful Father, have I done right?" she muttered, as the little feet hurried to and fro swiftly and unsteadily. "Dare I trust him? Dare I trust any one? And yet the responsibility is so dreadful that I cannot bear it alone. Oh, Heaven help us all—Heaven help us all!" she prayed incoherently.

When she heard the doctor's step coming up the gravel path she started, and, sitting down, tried to wait his entrance with something like composure; but it was a very pitifully eager face which met the new-comer's glance as he entered the waiting-room; and the eagerness died out of Shirley's eyes and a terrible disappointment stole into them as she saw that it was not Dr. Lloyd, but his assistant, Mr. Litton, who stood before her.

"Mrs. Grant!" he exclaimed, in some surprise. "I hope you have not been waiting long? You ought to have sent Saunders for me. Do you want my services yourself, or have you been doing one of your kind actions and sitting up with some poor patient of ours?"

He was a slender, handsome man of seven or eight-and-twenty, with a pleasant kindly face and keen blue eyes which looked at Shirley rather attentively as she stood opposite to him with wide desolate eyes and that intense disappointment on her face. He had put out his hand to her on entering, and mechanically she had put her shaking, trembling fingers into it; and they lay there still, firmly clasped in his gloved hand.

Mr. Litton had been dining at the Rectory, and over his evening clothes he wore a heavy ulster, in which he looked flushed and happy and handsome. Some of the Erindalites thought that there was "something" between Dr. Lloyd's handsome assistant and the Rector's pretty daughter. Whether it was the case or not, it was certain that he was very frequently at the Rectory; and there was a pleased, well-satisfied smile in his blue eyes which showed that he had not met with a cool reception there this evening.

"What can I do for you?" he said, gently, seeing Shirley's agitation, and speaking kindly and soothingly. "You look very ill yourself, and it is a cold night for you to be out. Did you come alone?"

"Yes," Shirley faltered.

"Was there no one who could have saved you such a long walk? You look quite exhausted."

"No one."

"And the need was urgent?"

"Yes."

"Poor child!" he said, pityingly. "I do not think many can need my professional services more than you do yourself at this present minute. Wait a minute and I will get you something which will do you good."

He was turning away, when her voice arrested him.

"Dr. Lloyd?" Shirley said, sharply.

He looked at her in some surprise.

"Dr. Lloyd has gone to London," he said, quietly. "Did you not know? He went with poor Mrs. Pitt, and——"

A groan escaped from Shirley's lips as she sunk down upon a chair, her hands hanging helplessly by her side. Dr. Lloyd was an elderly, gray-haired man whom she could have trusted; but Mr. Litton was a stranger.

"Shall I not do?" he said, gently. "He left me as his substitute, you know, and, in default of better professional aid, I can only offer you mine."

Shirley shook her head despairingly.

"I do not doubt your ability," she said, unsteadily, "but——"

"Nor my willingness, I hope?" he put in, warmly. "I shall be happy, believe me, if I can be of any use to you."

"You are very good," she answered, covering her face with her hands for a moment; and, seeing how terribly agitated she was, he quietly left the waiting-room, and, going into the surgery, mixed her a soothing draught and a restorative, with which he presently returned.

"Drink this," he said, gently but firmly; and Shirley, because it was too much trouble to resist, obeyed him, looking up as she finished into his face with wistful, wondering eyes.

"Mr. Litton, can I trust you?" she asked, a great earnestness in her voice and on her face.

"I hope so," he said, smiling a little. "My dear Mrs. Grant," he added, with a gravity which sat well on his handsome face, "in the profession to which I have the honor to belong we become the recipients of many secrets, and a doctor is obliged to be as trustworthy as a confessor himself. If what you have to tell me is something which you hesitate to divulge because you fear it may get wind, you can dismiss your fears. You may safely trust me, for your secret will never pass my lips."

"It is not my secret only," she said, looking up at him with wistful, troubled, pleading eyes. "Oh, if I dared tell you—if I dared tell you!"

"Is it my loyalty you doubt?"

"No—oh, no!"

"Then why do you hesitate? I am not as old as Dr. Lloyd, certainly; but I can keep a secret as well as if my hair were gray."

Shirley rose in her uncertainty, clasping and unclasping her hands in her excessive agitation.

"Mr. Litton, forgive me," she said, brokenly, after a pause. "I am in very great distress and perplexity, and I do not know what to do. I hardly dare trust any one."

"Would you like me to give you my word of honor that I will say nothing of anything you tell me?" he asked, gently, pitying the intense distress from which she was so evidently suffering.

"Will you?" she said, eagerly, turning to him with outstretched hands.

"Yes—willingly, if it will alleviate your distress."

"Oh, thank you—thank you!" she cried. "Will you promise me to ask no questions but such as are absolutely necessary, to tell no one in all the world where I shall take you to-night, and what you see there?"

"I promise."

"It is a matter of life and death," she said, brokenly. "Oh, if I could only be sure of what I ought to do! It seems as if there were no alternative, as if I must trust you; and yet—and yet—"

She wrung her hands passionately. Roland Litton looked at her with sincere compassion; he could not feel offended at her want of confidence in him; every other feeling merged in pity for her distress.

"Oh, help me!" she said passionately. "Tell me what to do?"

"How can I, Mrs. Grant? I can only say that you may safely trust me."

She looked at him eagerly and keenly for a moment.

"Yes," she said; "then I will trust you. Will you come with me?"

He looked surprised for a moment, then said hastily—

"Certainly; I am at your service."

He opened the door for her, and, with a desperate effort, she regained sufficient composure to precede him out of the room, across the little passage, and into the garden.

"Don't sit up for me, Saunders," Mr. Litton said, carelessly. "I have my latch-key, and in all probability I shall not be required to night."

"Very well, sir," said Saunders, who shut the door noisily after Mr. Litton, as he followed Mrs. Grant down the path, joining her at the gate.

She was calmer now; the draught he had given her was taking effect, and the face she turned toward him had lost its agonized expression of fear.

"Are you well wrapped up?" he asked, gently. "I fear not," he added, as he drew her shawl round her and gave her his arm, "I wish I had brought a wrap for you."

"I do not need it," she answered, quickly. "I am quite warm, almost too warm indeed."

"Too warm on this bitter night!" he said, incredulously. "It is not a fit night for a delicate woman like yourself to be out."

Notwithstanding the intense nervous excitement under which she was laboring Shirley Glynn noticed, and never forgot, her companion's thoughtful care of her that night. He talked easily and pleasantly, thus avoiding the embarrassment of a silent walk, but without giving her the trouble of answering. He described the dinner-party at the Rectory, meanwhile taking care not to walk too fast for her, but suiting his steps to hers, and making her lean upon him when they came to the hill on which the school.house stood. And then, seeing that his light chat distressed her, he ceased, and gave his whole attention to affording her the support she needed far more than she owned even to herself.

At last they reached the school-house, and Shirley's trembling fingers unlocked the door and admitted him into the little passage. When she had closed the door she fastened it securely on the inside, and then led the way into the sitting-room. The lamp was burning on the table, and there was a bright fire.

With an abrupt gesture Mrs. Grant pointed to a chair, and bade him sit down for a moment; then throwing off her shawl and bonnet, she went quickly up stairs, leaving Mr. Litton alone. Five minutes passed while he waited for her, and the sound of voices reached him as he sat—muffled voices, it seemed to him, broken once or twice by a dreadful cough. Then she came down and beckoned to the doctor. He put his hat on the table and went to the door at which she stood.

"I have trusted you," she said, "and you have promised. Now come with me, and remember the promise you gave me."

"I will remember it," the young man said, gravely, as he followed her up the narrow staircase into the room whence the the voices had proceeded.

CHAPTER XLIV.

"It is a very painful business altogether," said Lady Oliphant gravely. "I really do not know what to do for the best."

"I am afraid, my dear, that you have no one but yourself to blame for the annoyance," said Sir Frederic quietly as he looked up from his newspaper. "You took Mrs. Grant on trust, although you might have guessed that there was some mystery about her. That a woman of Mrs. Grant's appearance and education and manner should be wandering about the country in a state of destitution was in itself a most suspicious circumstance, which I pointed out to you at the time."

"My dear Frederic, you were almost as much infatuated about her as Madge and I were."

Sir Frederic smiled.

"I am glad you said 'almost,'" he remarked. "Because, if you had said 'quite,' I should have thought you were jealous! Yes, I will own frankly that the singular uncommon charm of manner which Mrs. Grant possesses was not without its effect upon me. But I cannot conscientiously say," he added smiling, "that I ever approved of the child's intimacy with her."

"She seemed good and sweet and honest," Lady Oliphant said sorrowfully. "I cannot even now think of her as anything else."

"My dear Margaret," said Sir Frederic, putting away his newspaper and going to his wife's side as she stood at the window looking out on the terrace in front of the hall, "women to all appearance as sweet and true as Mrs. Grant have turned out depraved and worthless; and, although I hope I should be the last man to judge any one hastily, I cannot help thinking that you have been grossly deceived in your school-mistress, and that the sooner you get rid of her the better."

"Oh, Fred," Lady Oliphant exclaimed sadly, as she recalled Mrs. Grant's pale, sad face and wistful eyes, "do you really think it is so bad as that?"

"It is not desirable to retain a school-mistress about whom the whole village is chattering," he said gravely. "You can go nowhere without hearing some remarks about her. The frequency of Mr. Litton's visits at her cottage at all hours is sufficient in itself seriously to damage her reputation, and she has been seen walking with him and letting him out of the house in the middle of the night. Moreover, she must have had some good reason for dismissing the little servant and living alone, as she had been doing, ever since Christmas. We cannot blind ourselves to these facts, my dear, however much we may wish to do so. Besides—"

"Besides what?" Lady Oliphant asked, looking up eagerly.

"Besides, Jarvis, when he was at the Oliphant Arms the other day, heard a man say that, on Christmas night, when he was walking over the hill on his way from Adinbrooke, he saw Mrs. Grant kneeling before her fire, while a man, who sat in a big arm-chair beside her, had his arms around her and his head over hers."

"Was it Mr. Litton?" said her ladyship in a low tone.

"No, he said not—that it was a stranger."

"Oh, Fred, I do not believe it! Of course one can understand about Mr. Litton. She is so lonely, poor thing, and he is very nice and pleasant and agreeable, and it is quite likely that they have fallen in love with each other; but that Mrs. Grant is so depraved—No," continued Lady Oliphant energetically, "I will not believe it!"

"I thought Litton was engaged to Rosie Venn?" said Sir Frederic dryly.

"He paid her a great deal of attention," said his wife. "And poor Rosie is very much distressed about this rumor concerning Mrs. Grant. Really it is very painful; and I do not know what to do."

"My dear Maggie, your duty is perfectly plain. You must dismiss Mrs. Grant at once, and find a less attractive and mysterious teacher for your schools. To-day is a whole holiday, and you had better drive up the hill and get rid of a very disagreeable task, unless you would prefer to write to her."

"I think it would be kinder to see her," Lady Oliphant said, with some hesitation. "I suppose it must be done, Fred?"

"There is no alternative, dear. I regret it for your sake and poor Madge's, for the child is sincerely attached to Mrs. Grant; but it cannot be helped. At any rate, the child must not go to the cottage," he added decisively. "I cannot allow that!"

"No, certainly not. I am glad Guy and Mr. Ross are here, as their society will amuse her and distract her attention."

Sir Frederic's glance followed his wife's, which had fixed itself on a group standing on the terrace, at some little distance from the house, having just ascended the broad stone steps leading from the flower-garden upon which the breakfast-room opened. It was a pretty group, and to the mother's loving eyes it was a significant one; and, while she smiled, she sighed softly at the thought it conjured up.

Madge, in a pretty skating costume of brown velveteen trimmed with dark fur, was standing by one of the tall marble vases which stood on either side of the steps. Major Stuart, in his heavily furred overcoat, leaned against the other, looking at her with a smile in his grave eyes; while close to Madge, standing on one of the steps and looking up at her with an intent tender gaze, was a handsome fair young man, whose face was bronzed and grave, but whose eyes, when they looked at Madge, were very soft and wistful.

"Would you like it, Fred?" Lady Oliphant said softly, as she slipped her hand through her husband's arm, and smilingly indicated the group. "I am afraid he will want to take her from us."

"Which of the two, Maggie—Stuart or Mr. Ross?"

"Mr. Ross, of course," she answered. "Poor Guy will never love any one again! He gave his whole heart once; besides, he is too old and grave for our Madcap."

"He might sober her," said Sir Frederic, smiling.

"Mr. Ross has quite sufficient gravity for that," Lady Oliphant said. "What a sad story it is!"

"What is? Our Madcap's love affair?

"Oh, no—I hope not—but that mysterious disappearance of poor Lady Glynn! Guy made every research at the time, as you know; and, since Mr. Ross' return, they have begun them again, but with the same result—failure!"

"Yes, poor thing, she is dead," said Sir Frederic musingly. "It is impossible that they should have been unsuccessful otherwise. Poor girl; hers was a sad life!"

"It was a terrible thing, that murder of her husband! Do you know I think Guy has never got over it?"

"Poor fellow; he has been cruelly treated. Think how many of his friends have turned their backs upon him, and still think him guilty of a dastardly crime! Upon my word, Maggie, I cannot think of it with any calmness!" Sir Frederic continued, with great warmth. "A man so brave and noble and true, with such reputation as Guy Stuart always had, to be thought guilty of a crime of which the judge and jury acquitted him! It was strange, was it not," he added more calmly, "that it should all have taken place during our only absence abroad?

"Yes—very strange. Well, daughter mine," she continued, with a quick change of tone as Madge and her companions came up to the glass door and entered the room, "what is the programme for to-day?"

"We have not quite decided," Madge replied. "I was going to escort Guy and Mr. Ross up to the school, and introduce them to Mrs. Grant; but they say they would rather see her in her official capacity than in private life, so, as to-day is a holiday, we must defer the visit."

"Yes, certainly," said Lady Oliphant hastily. "Why not drive to Lee Park? Lord Lee has written to papa to say that he has thrown the lake open to skaters, and that he hopes we will go."

"Oh, that will be charming! Papa, shall we go this morning? Are you disengaged?"

"I am quite at your service, Madge. Mr. Ross, have you forgotten how to skate?"

"I hope not," he answered, smiling. "It used to be a favorite pastime of mine in my boyhood. My sister and I did an immense deal of skating in Germany and Holland," he added, a shade falling over his face.

"Then you will teach me the outside edge," said Madge, with her pretty imperious grace. "I am longing to be able to skate really well."

"I shall be delighted," said Jack, his face brightening with pleasure. "But I have no skates, Miss Oliphant."

"Papa can accommodate you," said Madge, laughing. "Guy, will you come with us?"

"With much pleasure."

"And you will skate?"

"I am afraid I am too old, Madgie!"

"Too old!" echoed Madge gayly. "Why, even papa skates!"

"Even papa!" said Sir Frederic laughingly. "And pray is papa such a Methuselah, you Madcap?"

"Papa is a dear gray-haired personage, and very handsome still," laughed Madge, looking at him fondly.

"But I am gray-haired too, Madgie," said Major Stuart smiling.

"You're not gray-haired, Guy; you have just a few white hairs beneath your beard. How I wish you would dispense with it!"

"Why? Don't you like my beard?"

"No, I prefer the long mustache, you used to wear."

"You don't remember me when I wore a mustache only, Madgie."

"Don't I? What an absurd idea! I remember you perfectly! Well, are you coming with us?"

"I was going to ask Guy to drive me as far as the school-house," said Lady Oliphant, smiling. "And if he will do so, we will follow you to Lee Park. Am I unreasonable, Guy?"

"Unreasonable to give me a great pleasure?" he answered, smiling. "If so, you are always unreasonable where I am concerned, Lady Oliphant."

"Can not we all go together?" suggested Madge. "I should like to have a peep at Mrs. Grant, mamma."

"We will go together in different vehicles," said Sir Frederic laughingly. "I will take the break, and Stuart can drive mamma in the pony carriage. I know what your 'peeps' at Mrs. Grant are, Miss Madge, and I should prefer, if possible, getting to Lee Park in time for luncheon. But we will start together, if you like."

"And you will drive over the hill?" said Madge coaxingly.

"Why, yes—it is the shortest way," said her father, smiling. "I will go and get ready. Maggie wrap up well, dear, as it will be bitterly cold."

"Madge, you had better put on your sealskin," said Lady Oliphant, as she went away to get ready; and Madge obeyed, leaving Major Stuart and Jack Ross on the terrace together.

"How charming she is!" the latter said, with a little sigh, as he watched Madge disappearing through the door of the breakfast room.

"Yes," assented Guy rather absently, speaking as if his thoughts were far away.

"Guy, does she ever," Jack began, and then hesitated a little—it was always painful to him to bring that look of sorrow to Guy's face which the mention of Shirley's name always brought there—"does she ever remind you of Shirley?"

Guy Stuart started slightly, and waited a minute before he answered.

"Yes," he said gravely. "She has never done so before; but this time it has seemed quite strange how constantly she reminds me of her."

"Ah, then, it is not my imagination!" said Jack Ross eagerly. "I think it was that similarity of manner which attracted me to her at first. Of course there is not the slightest personal resemblance."

"Not the slightest," assented Guy, thinking of Shirley's rare beauty, and contrasting it with Madge Oliphant's bright prettiness.

"And that only makes it all the more remarkable," Jack said eagerly. "It seems so very strange that two people who have never met should have the same little tricks of manner and speech."

"Yes; it is very strange."

There was a short silence; then Guy laid his hand gently on his friend's shoulder.

"Are you falling in love with the child, Jack?"

Jack colored hotly under his Eastern bronze.

"What makes you think that, Stuart?"

"Many things. But you have not answered my question, old fellow."

"What chance should I have?" said Jack, with some agitation. "A poor fellow like myself would not dare to aspire to the heiress of Erindale Hall."

"Why not?"

"I should not like to be called a fortune-hunter, Guy."

"Who would call you so?"

"Her father and mother—Madge herself perhaps," the young man said, with a little tremor in his voice.

"I am sure they would not. Their only wish would be for the child's happiness; and I think she likes you, Ross."

A gleam of eager delight flashed into Jack's blue eyes.

"If I could think so I would be the happiest man on earth," he said eagerly. "But no—I dare not. Such happiness is not for me, and—"

"And what?" Guy asked gently.

"And when they knew, as know they must, that I had been the real cause of Shirley's misery, they would hate and despise me."

"How must they know it, Jack?"

"Because I could marry no girl without telling her that episode of my past life, Stuart," he said gravely and tremulously. "I call myself an honorable man; and yet poor Shirley gave her happiness and perhaps her life to save me from being branded as a felon."

"No fault, so bitterly repented of and atoned for by years of patient plodding, industry and self denial, could stand against you now, Jack—at least, not with such people as the Oliphants, who are far too liberal minded to hold such a narrow creed as that," said Guy earnestly. "Do you care for her, Jack?" he added, after a pause.

"With my whole heart," Jack answered, almost with a groan. "Guy, I have been undecided whether it was not better to go away and never see her again."

"You are but a timid wooer, Jack. Don't go away. Wait patiently. Since you love her so well, it cannot do you much harm to wait a little longer even if your affection is not returned. Ah, here she is, pretty child—'a sight to make an old man young!'" added Guy, smiling as he went forward to meet Madge, while Jack, in almost uncontrollable agitation, moved away in an opposite direction.

"What is the matter with Mr. Ross?" she asked, as she held out her pretty little hand for Guy to button her gloves.

"A very common malady," said Major Stuart, smiling, as he bent over the little hand.

"And what is that?"

"Disease of the heart."

"Disease of the heart!" echoed Madge the bright color fading somewhat. "Do you mean that he is ill, Guy?"

"Not exactly," he answered gravely, while poor Madge hurriedly recalled all the stories she had ever heard about people who had disease of the heart—how they had gone about without even knowing the malady by which they were affected, until suddenly they had dropped dead, without a warning or a moment's preparation.

"Guy, what do you mean?" she said with tremulous earnestness; and Guy, looking up from the little gloves, saw how pale she had grown.

"Nothing, but he has fallen in love, my poor Madgie," he answered, smiling "Why, you look quite pale and startled!"

"Well, no wonder! Guy, you are very provoking."

"Am I? Then I will say no more," he answered, smiling. "May I not button the other glove?"

Madge held out her hand to him; and, as he took it into his, he felt that it was a little unsteady. Jack's chance did not seem very hopeless in Guy's eyes just then.

"With whom has Mr. Ross fallen in love?" she asked presently.

Guy made no answer, and she repeated the question.

"With whom do you suppose?"

"I really don't know. I am not acquainted with all the ladies whom he knows."

"Nor am I."

(To be continued.)

They Have Found No Ghosts.

The Psychical Society of England reports that its efforts to discover ghosts have been unavailing. The same complaint is made by the American Society for Psychical Research. Paradoxical as it may sound, therefore, these organizations have lost their spirits because they could not find any. It is to be hoped, however, that they will not give up their quest of the coy and elusive ghost. Rome was not made in a day, and the scientific investigation of the psychical phenomena which have for so many ages puzzled mankind cannot be effected until after years of patient effort. —*New York World.*

Says Sir Lyon Playfair in *Macmillan's Magazine*: "The protective duties of America remove from us the most formidable competitor in the markets of the world by raising its cost of production. They protect England in all neutral markets and enable us to send even into the United States $125,000,000 of manufactured goods, while they return to us less than $15,000,000 of their manufactures."