Summering on a Farm.

I'm living in the country now upon a quiet farm,
Where I am free from city noise and safe from urban harm;
And 'stead of horrid cantaloupes and early summer meats,
I feed upon the cold, crisp squash and blood-red winter beets.

I have a room with slanting roof; no wearisome design
Is there upon the wall to greet these tired eyes of mine.
But honest, coarse, sand-paper walls are those about my head,
'Pon which I rub that fevered spot where moquitoes have fed.

No narrow bath-tub have I here to lave myself within,
But one large basin on the floor, a dipper made of tin.
Oh, how the cooling waters plash and o'er my shoulders flow,
Despite their leaking through the floor, assuaging all my woe.

And, as I've said, no city noise doth break upon the ear—
Naught save the cooing of the frogs, the bleat of chanticleer,
The crowing of the Durham cow, the lowing of the hen;
These are the sole disturbances in this my rural den.

And oh, the habits of life, this country life inspires!
The breakfast set at 5 a. m.—ah! how my soul admires
To rise at 4, and ere the sun has started on its way,
To don my duds and enter upon the duties of the day!

Instead of working at my desk in hot seersucker coat,
To seek the fields and toss the hay, to feed the bounding goat,
To dine three times a day on pie, washed down by berry wine,
And when the sun has set at last retiring at 9.

This is a noble life to lead; from care and strife so free;
It tans the cheek, the muscles gain, it fills the soul with glee.
But when next summer comes this way, I fear I can't afford
To swap the sweat of brow and brawn for rural bed and board.

—*Henry Herbert Harkness, in Harper's Bazar.*

ADOPTED BY THE DEAN:

A STORY OF TWO COUNTRIES

As soon as the door had closed, Bertha turned again to the window.

"I am sure she suspected something," she whispered. "Oh, George, we must not risk it; Esperance is so sharp, and she will put them on the clew directly!"

"If there is any chance of that, you must find some means of getting her out of the way. Could you not get grannie to invite her?"

George spoke in low, authoritative tones; Bertha's brief terrified whispers were evidently in subjection. She had always bowed implicitly to his judgement.

"Stay, I have an idea," he said, after a silence, and then ensued a long whispered dialogue. Bertha agreeing in half hesitating tones to all the propositions. The chimes struck again—they counted the notes breathlessly. It was a quarter to ten; George hurriedly took leave, and Bertha closed the window, tremblingly put away her writing materials, and returned to the drawing-room. But her heart suddenly failed her when she saw the others sitting so naturally at their work, and she felt a deep pang of remorse as she glanced at her father sleeping peacefully in his arm-chair, quite unconscious what was in store for him. Should she write to George and say that she could not keep her promise—that while her father lived she must stay with him? But just then Mrs. Mortlake looked up with her disagreeable smile.

"Really, you've had a nice sociable evening, just after your own heart."

Bertha shrugged her shoulders—she had caught the trick from Esperance—and remembered that after all, home was by no means the peaceful haven it looked, and besides, would they really miss her? For a week or two, perhaps, but no more.

"I am going to bed," she said, in her usual voice, to Mrs. Mortlake, "I have a bad headache."

Esperance looked up compassionately.

"I am so sorry! I wish I had helped you with that writing."

No one else spoke; and Bertha, coloring deeply, left the room. How she longed that evening to be alone! Much as she loved Esperance, she felt that her presence now would be almost unbearable. She hurriedly made her preparations for the night, and lay down in the darkness thankful for a few moments of quiet, in which she might think over the extraordinary and most unexpected events of the day. She sobbed a little as she thought of this, partly from an odd sort of attachment to the actual house, hardly to be called love, but a great deal more from terror and the sense that she was about to what all the world would blame.

While she was still crying, Esperance came up to bed, shading the candle with her hand, and moving about the room with noiseless steps for fear she would disturb her cousin. Bertha watched her in silence for some minutes, but she could hardly bear to look at the pure, child-like face, it made her feel so guilty; at length a great sob escaped her, and Esperance hastened to comfort her.

"Is your head so bad, cherie? Let me stroke it for you."

Bertha allowed herself to be caressed for a minute, then with with an irrepressible burst of tears she sobbed out, "Oh, Esperance, if the others had been like you, it would have been very different."

"What would have been different?" asked Esperance, unable to understand her words.

"Everything — life!" sobbed Bertha, frightened to think how nearly she had betrayed herself.

But Esperance never dreamed of suspecting her; she thought her merely unhappy and overtired, and said she would sing her to sleep; and Bertha lay still, listening to an old French hymn, and let her eyelids fall toward the end, but in reality she never slept at all that night.

The next day, however, she was quite self-possessed; it was one of those sudden hot spring days when every one feels languid. She easily persuaded Esperance to stay indoors, and they read together a greater part of the afternoon. At dinner-time a note arrived for Bertha; her color came and went, but no one observed her. She opened and said it was from Mrs. Passmore.

"No one has been to see grannie for the last week," observed Cornelia. "What does she want, Bertha?"

"She wants me to go down with Esperance to spend the evening with her; she says she is feeling very lonely and depressed; if we could stay the night so much the better; she has heard that the carriage is being painted, and we might not care to walk both ways. What do you think, Esperance?"

"I should like to go very much," said Esperance, brightly, "we have not been out all day, and it would be so nice and cool now."

"We will go down after dinner then," said Bertha, quietly; "I don't know about staying for the night though; we will see how grannie is when we get there. If we do not come back by half past ten, Christabel, you will understand that grannie was very pressing, and that we stayed."

Bertha's cheeks were burning now, but no one noticed her. Everybody was hot that evening—there was nothing unnatural in it.

The curfew had just ceased ringing when the two cousins started. Bertha took her cloak and a small bag, just in case they should stay for the night, she said. They passed silently through the Vicar's court, then Bertha paused.

"I am just going into the cathedral for a moment," she said; "I left my umbrella in the aisle at the afternoon service—somebody may carry it off if it is left."

"But the great doors will be locked," said Esperance.

"Yes, but I have both the keys. We will come in here and go out by the west door—it will cut off a corner."

She quietly opened the massive door, and locked it behind them. The light within was already growing dim owing to the stained-glass windows; they looked about for the umbrella, walking slowly down the aisle to the closed gate which led into the nave, but it was not to be found. Bertha locked the gate.

"I am afraid we must give it up," she said, in a strained, unnatural voice; "the only place we did not look in was the vestry; it is just possible one of the vergers may have put it there; just run and see, will you?"

Esperance obeyed, walking half-way up the aisle, trying the vestry door, but it was fast locked; then she turned back to rejoin her cousin, quickening her steps as she saw that she had gone into the nave. The iron gate was closed; she supposed Bertha had left it on the latch; the gate would not yield. Was Bertha playing her a trick, she wondered. She called after her, feeling half amused, half frightened; her voice echoed long through the vaulted roof, but there was no reply, only she could hear that Bertha walked more quickly, and the next moment the great west door closed behind her, the key grated in the lock, and Esperance was left alone in the cathedral.

For an instant she stood half petrified with astonishment, then glancing round she saw that Bertha had thrown down her cloak within the choir aisle, and beside it a little three-cornered note; she opened this eagerly, and read the few lines, which had evidently been written with a trembling hand:

"Forgive me, dear Esperance; I would not have left you in this way, but I feared you suspected me last night, and we could not bear really to implicate grannie; the blame of this will fall on no one but ourselves. We shall travel all to-night; to-morrow, by the time you are released, I think we shall be married. Once more, forgive me, and love me still, if you can.

BERTHA."

The note fell from Esperance's hands, and a great cry of despair rang through the cathedral. Bertha had eloped with George, and she, the only person who knew of it, was perfectly helpless! The horror of that moment, the dismay of that discovery altogether unnerved her. She turned giddy, and sunk down on the cold stones, her hand pressed against her temples as if to stay the fearful thoughts which flashed through her brain. The cathedral was locked up for the night; the vergers had been their rounds; no one would go up to the belfry even, for the curfew had been rung. At the deanery no one would dream that anything was amiss; they were at this very moment going on with their usual routine—the dean perhaps in his observatory, Cornelia and Christabel quietly reading and working, all within five minutes' walk of her, and yet it was as impossible to let them know those terrible tidings, as if they had been at the North Pole. And when the dean did know, would it not almost break his heart! It must, it must be prevented! Again she read through the note of explanation, and dwelt one more on the words, "we shall travel all night." They would probably start by the 8.30 express, and already it must be nearly time for it—even as she thought of it the chimes struck the half hour, and the distant shriek of a railway whistle made itself heard. Again that wail of anguish broke from Esperance, and reverberated through the vast emptiness of the cathedral; she sprung to her feet, and a sort of madness seemed to seize her; she pulled and shook the iron gate as if she would have torn it from its hinges, then remembering that this would only lead to the nave, and more locked doors, she rushed to the eastern end of the aisle and knocked and hammered with all her might at the south door. But the door was far from a thoroughfare, and no one was likely to hear her. Once she caught the sound of footsteps passing on the pathway a few hundred yards from her, and knew that it must be the policeman on his rounds, and she called and knocked with the strength of despair, but the echoes only mocked her voice; the ponderous door seemed to let no sound penetrate it, and the footsteps died away in the distance—it was of no use.

Her hands were all bruised and bleeding with the unavailing attempts; she sat down on the step and leaned her head against the hard, iron-studded door, crying piteously. Although the previous day had been hot, Esperance was shivering with cold now. She crept up to one of the stoves, knowing that for a great part of the year they were kept up all night; but the fires had been discontinued for some days, and the iron bars felt as cold as ice. Then she remembered Bertha's cloak, which must, evidently, have been left for her, and she went down to the iron gate once more, her footsteps echoing strangely in the silent night. She picked up the cloak and moved back again to the crusader's tomb, not sorry to be in the moonlight region again.

Just then a fresh thought occurred to her mind. The vergers would come round at 8 o'clock to unlock the gates! how should she explain her presence to them? Bertha's flight must, is possible, be kept secret, and yet if she were found locked in the cathedral in this unaccountable way they would surely suspect something. She hoped and prayed that the dean, or Cornelia, or some one who must eventuallly know, might come before them, and in the conviction that all would in some way be made right, she fell asleep.

Claude Magnay wrote for rooms at the Spread Eagle and made eager preparations for his visit to Rilchester, invoking blessings on Lady Worthington's head. He went by an evening train, and by an odd coincidence met two of his Rilchester friends at the ticket office—the precentor and Mr. White, the minor canon.

The precentor liked Claude—every one did, in fact—and, moreover, next to music, he enjoyed nothing more than talking, so he invited him to supper at his house, and kept up a brisk current of talk till the clock struck twelve; then Claude started up, saying that he wished to be early in the cathedral so as to get the morning light.

"It is too late, I suppose, to knock up one of the vergers?" he asked. "I wanted to get the keys; the dean used to lend me his, but I can hardly go around there now."

The precentor at once produced his keys, and followed his guest to the door.

"A beautiful moonlight night," he said, looking out. "I would give something to take you to the cathedral now, but it's against rules to go in at night, and except with regard to Wagner, you know, I am very obedient."

Claude laughed, and said he would be content with six o'clock, then walked back to his hotel for a few hours' sleep and a dream of Esperance.

The morning was as bright and sunny as he could wish. He walked round by the deanery, and looked up wistfully at the windows; then remembering his work, he hastened on to the cathedral, walked up the long, flagged path, and unlocked the south door. Putting down his easel and bag, he gave himself up for a moment to silent enjoyment of the beauty around; he glanced down the long vista of arches, then his eye traveled back slowly till it was arrested at the crusader's tomb. His heart beat wildly, and he hurried forward with eager though noiseless steps. Could it indeed be Esperance? He gazed long and wonderingly at the little figure. She was nestled up into a corner, her head had fallen forward and rested against the tomb, the soft waves of dark hair contrasting with the white stone; her long, black lashes lay calmly, her cheeks were flushed with sleep, one little brown hand clasped Javotte's cross tightly, and her whole attitude and expression were of undisturbed peace. Some slight sound roused her at last; she looked up expectantly, and a glad light came into her eyes as she saw Claude.

"Ah, I am so glad!" she said; "I knew some one would be sent; I am so glad it was you, Claude."

The name slipped from her inadvertently; he colored with pleasure.

"Have you been locked in by accident?" he asked, wonderingly.

Then the sorrowful look returned to Esperance's face; she told him all, and asked his advice. He was much startled and shocked, but he would dwell on Bertha's injustice to her, and the cruelty of shutting her thus into the cathedral.

"That does not matter, it is all over now," she interrupted, "but how am I to tell them at home? What will they say?"

He at once turned his thoughts to has present difficulties, and self-denyinger advised her to go to the deanery as soon ly possible and tell Cornelia, leaving her to break it to the dean. While they were still talking it over the clock struck seven, and Esperance moved toward the door, feeling dreadfully stiff after her hard couch.

"I must go," she said firmly, though she was beginning to tremble at the thought of this hard task. "The house will be open now, and we must lose no time. You are staying in Rilchester, then?"

Claude assented.

"It is very wonderful that you should have happened to choose this day, but things always are arranged just rightly, are they not?"

Claude thought so too, as he watched the little figure till it passed out of sight. And then involuntarily an idea struck him—how would this unlooked-for turn of affairs affect his hopes? Would the deanery people leave Rilchester at once, and bear Esperance with them?

CHAPTER XXXI.

Cornelia was liked one stunned; she heard Esperance's words, felt her caresses, and struggled hard to grasp the meaning of this terrible piece of news, reading over and over again poor Bertha's farewell note. At last she burst into tears; her head was bowed on Esperance's shoulder, and the strong, independent, hardened nature was thankful enough to feel itself infolded by loving, clinging arms. If she had been different, if the home had been a happier one, this would never have happened—there was the sting!

She roused herself at last, and went to tell the dean and Christabel, while Esperance hovered about restlessly, fearing to meet any one, and yet finding solitude almost unendurable.

The dean did not appear at breakfast time; Cornelia sent Esperance with a cup of tea to his study, and she knocked, and entered tremblingly. Her uncle's face was so changed, even in that short time, that she could hardly bear to look at it; his hand shook as he took the cup from her; he looked white and scared, yet there was a curious, dreamy haze in his eyes. She bent down to kiss him, but did not say anything; just as she was turning away, however, she fancied he spoke to her, and waiting, caught the muttered words, "Retribution! Retribution! the child is like her father, too!"

Esperance pondered long over that low ejaculation; did her uncle take this trial as a punishment for his harshness to her father and mother? Perhaps Cornelia had this in her thoughts too; it certainly did pass through her mind that some strange fatality must be attached to marriages in their family. Christabel, after a brief and not very happy union, had returned to her father's house as a widow, her own prospects of happiness had been disappointed, and Bertha had married rashly and disobediently.

It was too late now to think of prevention; all that could be done was to hush up the affair as much as possible, and Bertha was so often away from home, and so few friends in Rilchester, that for the present concealment would not be difficult.

Pephaps it was well for them all that their thoughts were necessarily diverted by the dean's illness; it seemed anvisable that they should all go away as scon as possible, and this making a convenient pretext, it was arranged that Cornelia should go with her father to Germany, where he was to take a course of baths, while Mrs. Mortlake went to visit some of her husband's relatives, taking Bella with her.

Esperance was sent to the Priory. It was a great relief to her to be there once more; the strain of the last few days had been great, and the quiet of old Mrs. Passmore's house seemed doubly restful. She had only been there a few hours, however, when, from her retreat in the garden she heard the front door bell, and fearing some visitor from Rilchester who might ask tiresome questions, was a little vexed. The servant came across the lawn to her.

"Mistress would be glad if she would step into the drawing-room."

She obeyed, not very willingly, and the surprise was all the greater when, on going in, she found the visitor to be Claude Magnay.

Mrs. Passmore was in the middle of the stock remark which old ladies seem to enjoy making to young men—"Remember him? of course she did, why she had nursed him in long clothes!"

Esperance stood for a moment holding her brown straw hat in her hand, her face was glowing, and her heart beat quickly. Mrs. Mortlake had told her not to go into Rilchester more than she could help in order to avoid questions; she had not been to the cathedral that day, and somehow she had so missed the bright morning greeting and the few words which had always passed between her and Claude when she went in to service. Claude came forward eagerly to met her, and the couple spent a pleasant afternoon.

Claude reminded her of her promised sitting, and she referred prettily to Mrs. Passmore, whereupon Claude took the speaking-trumpet, and succeeded in making grannie understand that he wanted to paint Esperance. This seemed quite to gratify the old lady, and before he left it was arranaged that he should come every afternoon to carry on his work.

Of course while he painted they talked, and Esperance, who was never quiet for long at a time, talked too, and blushed, and showed the most puzzling varieties of expression, sometimes even forgot herself so far as to gesticulate, so that had she been an ordinary model, Claude would have been enraged; as it was, however, he was all the more delighted, and in spite of her delinquencies, the picture was a great success. He found it very hard now not to tell her of his love, but he remembered Lady Worthington's advice, and with a sigh resolved to respect French customs. He asked her instead for Gaspard's address in Dickoya, hoping she might perhaps guess why he wanted it, but she only looked provokingly innocent, and began to talk of coffee plantations.

One day, however, when he walked out to the Priory, he found Esperance unmistakably grave and sad; he even fancied she had been crying. In the course of the afternoon it transpired that Mrs. Mortlake had sent for her; Bella was poorly, and they were going at once to the seaside.

"I do not want to leave grannie," she explained, regretfully; "it is so quiet and happy here at the Priory. Besides, to-morrow is my *jour de naissance*, and we were to have a fete."

But the tears were not altogether for the lost fete, and, after all, the eighteenth birthday proved a day of strange, dawning joy. Claude came to say good-bye to her just before she started, bringing with him some equisite flowers. He would not have ventured to do so at another time, but the fete day made a happy excuse, and his parting words sent a glad thrill through Esperance.

"You will not be at the sea-side all the summer, I hope, for I shall be in Rilchester again in two months' time."

Her presence would make a difference to him, then She was lad to have the railway carriage to herself that day, for she could not help bursting out into little ecstatic snatches of song.

* * * * * *

Gaspard had had a rough, cross-country ride on his mare Blanchette. It was Sun-morning, and he had been to a store twelve miles off to service; now he was coming back to Mr. Seymour's bungalow very hot and tired and hungry.

Mr. Seymour was standing at the door as he dismounted. He himself did not manage to get to a Sunday service more than once or twice in a year.

"You have had a hot ride, Gaspard,"—the name of De Mabillon was too long to please him. "I hope your parson gave you something very superfine in the way of sermons to make up for it."

"Two in one," said Gaspard, with a yawn, "lasting just an hour, and out of a congregation of thirty, twenty-two were nodding before the end."

Mr. Seymour made a gesture of compassion, then held out two letters.

"The post has come; there is a reward for you."

Gaspard took the letters, scrutinizing them eagerly while he led Blanchette round to her stable, then, having handed her over to one of the coolies, he entered the bungalow, threw himself back in a wicker chair and opened Esperance's letter. He was much startled by her news of Bertha's marriage, and shocked to think of her night of loneliness and terror in the cathedral; but the end of her letter reassured him. He liked to think of her with kind old Mrs. Passmore, and with Claude Magnay to enliven her every afternoon; there was a brightness of tone, too, about her writing which made him feel happy about her. However much she tried to make her letters uniformly cheerful, he always managed to find out in what mood they had been written, and about this letter there was an unusually buoyant happiness.

He opened the next one more leisurely, wondering whom it was from, then seeing the signature, was glad and yet surprised that Claude should write to him. His bronzed face wore a startled expression as he slowly deciphered the large, irregular characters. He read on, however:

MY DEAR DE MABILLON,—When we parted I did not know how very soon I should have to come upon you for that promised favor, which you were so pleased to have suggested to you last summer. I am taking you at your word, however, and am going to make a very serious and great request, but first for a little explanation. I was staying at Worthington Hall last Christmas, and saw your sister twice. I realized then for the first time how much I loved her, and since then time has only stregthened these convictions. I write now to ask if you will consent to my proposing to your sister? I shall not dwell upon my love for her—I cannot write of it, and I believe you will understand me. I think I could make her happy, and most earnestly beg that you will allow me to speak to her. With regard to money considerations, you already know that I am not rich, but I am in receipt of a small yearly income from invested capital, and am making a good deal from my pictures so, that I think I would insure my life or do anything you like. I shall await your reply very anxiously. My request is a very great one; but I know you too well not to feel certain that you will grant it, if there is no real obstacle in the way. Yours most truly,

CLAUDE MAGNAY."

Gaspard's face was a strange mixture of thankfulness, joy, and regret when he put down the letter. He liked Claude exceedingly, and felt that he could give Esperance to him more willingly than to most men, but in any case her marriage would involve a certain sense of loss to himself. There could be no happy visions of a home in Ceylon now. But Gaspard had unlearned his selfishness in a hard school, and he loved Esperance far too much not to rejoice in this prospect of happiness for her. Before the Sunday was over he had written a brotherly letter to Claude, inclosing another to be given to Esperance when he had spoken to her; and somehow the more he thought over this new suggestion the more he liked it, nor had he much doubt what Esperance's answer would be.

(To be Continued)

CANINE WISDOM.

A Terrior Who Cures Herself of a Rattlesnake's Bite.

Among the valuable dogs owned by J. F. Cooper, of Ben Lomond vineyard, is a family of thoroughbred wire-haired terriers. These little creatures are very bright, and among other achievements are quite expert at snake killing. That they have an intuitive knowledge not only of how to kill snakes, but how to heal themselves if the snake gets the better of an encounter was proved not long since by an incident noticed by some of the employes.

The mother terrier having discovered a rattlesnake ready coiled for a spring placed herself at a safe distance and began barking loudly for an assistant. One of her family of terriers responded to the call, when the two dogs placed themselves one on either side of the rattler, barking at it and slowly approaching it from opposite directions until within about striking distance for the serpent. The exasperated rattler at last sprang at the younger dog, when the mother in great fury pounced upon the snake. The terriers seize the serpents about midway of the body and shake them without mercy until life is extinct.

In this case the mother terrier attempted the usual mode of procedure, and was fairly successful, but the fangs of the snake in some way struck her, inflicting a wound It was evident to those watching her that her sufferings began at once, but she did not lose her head with fear. She made for a bunch of snake weed not far off and ate freely of it. Her next move was to a pool of water that made a small muddy spot. Into this she plunged, rolling herself about in every direction and covering herself with mud. The onlookers gave her up for lost, but the canine physician had healed herself, and the next morning was entirely all right, as if she had never met his rattlesnakeship in deadly combat

A Curious London Charity.

Educational Food Fund is the singular and ambiguous name of a fund promoted by the Bread and Food Reform League and the London Vegetarian Society for the excellent purpose, among others, of providing food for poor children in the elementary schools. It is a very harmless proselytising that accompanies this charity when addresses are delivered to the children explaining the advantages of cereals and pulses, and when they are induced to sing "The Staff of Life is Wheat-Meal Bread." They sing for their dinners, after all, and the propagandists have the earnest belief that they confer an immense boon on the poorer districts of London by thus spreading the knowledge of cheap foods. The first report of the fund states that the experimental half-penny dinners for school children organized in conjunction with the London Schools Dinner Association have proved most successful. The teachers report that the children thoroughly enjoy the vegetarian soup and wheat-meal bread provided, and that the system organized by the two societies give maximum benefit and minimum trouble. The dinners have also proved such good means of encouraging the supply of wholesome, nourishing food through ordinary trade channels that it is hoped the system will be largely extended next winter.—*London Daily News.*

Capture of Whales.

An exciting scene was witnessed off Hillswick, in Shetland, on Friday night. A large shoal of whales was observed sporting in the bay and many boats were speedily manned and put off. After much trouble the whales were nearly all driven ashore or killed, the total catch being estimated at nearly 160. Some of the whales were killed in deep water and sank, but twenty came to the surface next morning and were secured. It is anticipated that all of them will be cast ashore in a few days.—*St. James' Gazette.*

It Pays to Advertise.

First Burglar—Well, you're a bright 'un.
Second Burglar—What's the matter?
"The paper says there was $500 in money in the drawer you got that gold watch from, an' you missed it"
"That's so? I'll go back after it to-night."

Rules For Picnics.

First—Do not take more than one girl.
Second—Do not take any girl.
Third—Do not go to the picnic.

—"There is a strange looking female at the gate, Jupiter," said Hebe. "She wants to see you." "Is she unarmed?" "Yes." "It must be Venus of Milo. Let her in."

The shah of Persia has a great desire to visit America, and may come to see us next year.