THE NEW INMATE OF HILFONT.

A THRILLING STORY OF OLD ENGLAND.

CHAPTER III.

That night was a violent, stormy November night— blasts of snow driving against the windows, and the fierce gale rushing back through the bare trees, which groaned again, and sending melancholy echoes through the house, kept up a continual conflict of sound through the dark long wintry night. I did not sleep much, but so far benefited by this new interest, lay awake—half amused, half disappointed, and very considerably puzzled—thinking of our visitor. I did not "take to her" certainly at first sight, but I did my best to convince myself that it was, and must be, self-restraint stretched to an unlovely and undesirable extent which made Lucy so calm and self-possessed. "It will be different to-morrow," I said to myself; "when she knows us better, she will know that nothing which is unnatural is looked for here; it will be different to-morrow." But even while I said so I became aware that my heart, instead of opening to her, began to rise in involuntary antagonism against this friendless young creature—though she was friendless and of Derwent's blood. I was dismayed to feel this: I ought to have loved her, received her, been as my husband said, a mother to her. Can any one command love? I became disgusted with myself. Was it not enough that Derwent liked her, that she was his near relation? But reasoning did not improve the matter. At last I found my spirit so unmanageable, so ill-natured, so determined to dislike and condemn, that I turned my head from the light, and obstinately went to sleep.

Our breakfast-room next morning was as pleasant an apartment as could be supposed in such weather. Like all the rooms at Hilfont, it has an admirable view. A great broad snow-covered slope of country, dropping down softly, with every angle cushioned into roundness by that wintry veil; from the heights where we stood, to the lower level of the plain through which the river, no longer in motion, stretched its proper line, with one icebound barge in the centre of the view, and lines of benumbed pollard willows, smitten to their hearts with the apathy of cold, tracing the chilly lines of its further banks. The sky hung low over all, a heavy gray vault of clouds. The trees and scattered houses, and even the far-off pinnacle of the cathedral, far away yonder in Simonburgh, which we could just see, were all distinctly touched and softened with drifts and droppings of the snow. I am always young as regards snow. This landscape pleased me, cold though it was, and within was the bright breakfast-table, with that little bouquet of flowers which Derwent had bound the gardener to provide for me every morning all the year round—a pale, cold cluster of tender blossoms now, yet still flowers; the warm crimson curtains drawn quite back from the window, to let in all the light there was, which was a softened snowy light, pale, yet with a dazzle in it, a light which radiated more from the white ground than the opaque sky—and the merry frost-exhilarated fire cracking with glee like a school-boy—and the sharp air and ice without. I myself entered this room about nine o'clock of that snowy morning, and was hastening to take my place for prayers, when some one rose to salute me—Lucy! Well! it was very proper—she was an extremely good girl. Still one is human one's self, and prefers to see in one's friends something of the weakness of common nature. It was no doubt much better to get up early, to be ready in proper time, to be down stairs before anybody else; still—but of course she was right—I ought to be the last person in the world to blame her.

When Derwent pronounced her "a brick" at breakfast, I am afraid I must have looked rather doubtful. I said I feared she was quite overexerting herself, at which Lucy looked up quite seriously in my eyes.

"Are you displeased, Aunt Clare?" she said; and of course I said, "No, no, certainly not;" and felt very uncomfortable and ashamed of myself. Displeased! why should I be displeased? but certainly I would rather have had something for my companion which was less reprovingly correct and unexceptionable than Lucy.

After breakfast Derwent left us to attend to his own not very heavy business. I sat with my work as near the bow-window as the cold would permit, and watched how the sun came gliding over the landscape, shaking lightly the snow off the branches. Lucy by this time had taken some crochet-work out of her bag. After her night's rest, she was even prettier than last night; and now a languid conversation got up between us, in which the stranger took her full share.

"I daresay you have not much society here, Aunt Clare?" said my young guest, to begin with.

"We are very well off in that respect," said I; "you do not know the capabilities of the country, Lucy."

"I have never lived in the country, in England," said Lucy; "this snow chills me to look at; but you seem to like it, Aunt Clare?"

"I do," said I; "an English winter is just cold enough to be exhilarating; at least, so I think."

"I suppose it is because of poor papa," said Lucy, quietly. "We have had to run about everywhere to avoid the winter; even now I cannot help fearing it for his sake, as if he would feel it. I dare say I should like it myself, but I have never been able to think of that before."

"Forgive me, Lucy, I fear I have spoken thoughtlessly," said I, with a great compunction.

"How, Aunt," said Lucy, "I am sure you have said nothing which I could have wished you not to say. I cannot delude myself so far as to think poor papa is not dead, and I don't want you to suppose that I make believe to be cheerful. Do not be overcareful of what you say to me, Aunt Clare. Uncle Derwent told me you were very kind, and I am sure you will never hurt my feelings whatever you may say."

This speech was delivered with such perfect sobriety and quietness that I really could make no answer to it. I sat silent and discomfited, feeling that my young companion took quite the superior place; that the sorrow and distress I had looked for was some merely romantic and visionary folly, possible to some people, perhaps, but not to sensible people like Lucy Crofton. I found an unaccountable difficulty in resuming the conversation, and began to cast in my mind for some safe subject. Lucy, however, saved me even that trouble. She was not destitute of something to say.

"I have often heard papa speak of Hilfont," she resumed; "he was here before Uncle Derwent was married, besides knowing it well in his youth; but he stayed here the whole summer that time. Did you not know?"

"I forget," said I, hastily. I did not choose to let any one suppose that I did not know, not that I cared, but because Lucy looked up significantly, as if she meant something.

"Uncle Derwent meant papa to live with him there. I was not with him, I was with Aunt Hatley, poor mamma's sister," said Lucy, "but I was to have come, and we were to have lived at Hilfont; so papa expected; but that was before we knew you were going to be married, Aunt Clare."

And Lucy gave the slightest sigh in the world. Does anybody wonder that I felt somewhat aggravated? She went on with her crochet so quietly, working and talking without looking at me. If she had been my dearest friend, I must have felt a certain displeasure, whether I would or no.

"I am sorry, Lucy, that I should have come in the way of any of your plans," I said, with a smile, which, I daresay, was not the sweetest in the world.

"Not at all, aunt," said Lucy, seriously. "I am sure we were very glad; Uncle Derwent's happiness was the first thing to be considered. And of course it was only by his kindness that we ever could have been here."

"How does it happen that you call Mr. Crofton uncle?" said I; "the relationship is cousin, I believe."

"Cousin to papa," said Lucy; "but so much older than me that I could not call him cousin, so I called him Uncle Derwent when I was a child. I ought to have asked your permission, Aunt Clare, but it would seem strange to call him uncle and you Mrs. Crofton. May I go on calling you aunt, please?"

"Surely," said I. "It seems natural indeed that there should be some title of relationship. Do you know your cousins, the other Croftons?—they will be here at Christmas. We have to see a good deal of our neighbors about that time: but you must consider yourself quite free to keep apart and quiet for this year if you choose."

"For papa's sake, aunt?" said Lucy, raising her eyes.

I bowed my head in assent; Lucy for this once let her work fall on her knees while she answered me.

"Unless you think it proper, and say I am to do it; I should not mind for myself, it would not do him any good," said Lucy. "If you object to my mourning, I can stay upstairs; but otherwise, please, Aunt Clare, do not think of me as if there were anything particular required. I should like to be just one of the family without any one minding me much, for indeed I do not want to be like a widow, or have any notice taken of me. I will not trouble any one with my grief."

"I only trust, Lucy, that you are not exercising excessive self-restraint," said I, though I confess I no longer found it; "if you are, you will do yourself injury. It is entirely for your convenience and comfort that I make any such suggestion. We shall like the other better, of course."

"Thank you, aunt," said this young philosopher, and so returned quietly to her work. I might be embarrassed and puzzled, but that did not affect Lucy; she knew herself, and she was not much concerned about knowing me.

CHAPTER IV.

"And now that you have seen her, Clare," said Derwent, when we were alone one evening, about a week after our young guest's arrival, "what is your opinion of Lucy now?"

"She is certainly pretty," said I.

"I thought you would say so," said my innocent husband, with guileless gratification. "I have just been thinking upon that point. Do you know, Clare, I don't think you could do a better thing than make up a match between Lucy and Harry Crofton—they'd suit each other famously—not too much sentiment about either of them, you know—and—well, no one can tell—I thought differently some time ago—but there's the chance that they might be our successors in Hilfont, Clare."

I listened with a swelling breast. I could not either answer him nor see him for a moment. It might have been different—Oh, heaven! that might have been!—for then in the midst of my great burden resentment rose in my breast. I could almost fancy those two indifferent young people, who as yet did not know each other, were the supplanters—God forgive me!—of that dearest unconscious soul who had his inheritance in Heaven. It was unwise of Derwent: but he did not know how hot and terrible were the tears that blinded my eyes—it was to him a sadness only, a hope disappointed—he took my hand and soothed me tenderly; he did not know how all day long, and every day, I went about the house in a dumb show, thinking of other things by fits and starts, but of that always. There was this difference between him and me, but he did not know it, and meant no harm.

When I could speak at last, I thought my voice had hardened down into something toneless and harsh. "I am not a match-maker," I said.

"That is true," said Derwent; "but this is a special case. You are very little of a matchmaker, Clare—almost less than one would suppose a married woman, who was happy herself, ought to be. I fear your maiden establishment at Estcourt made you skeptical of the necessity; but this is a peculiar case."

"They will all meet at Christmas," said I. "They are very suitable in age, and Lucy is portionless, and will appear to your brother a very bad match for his son, which will doubtless have its weight in attracting Harry. If you could persuade his father to warm him against her, I should think that would be conclusive so far as Harry is concerned."

"Don't be satirical, Clare," said Derwent, laughing, yet looking a little pained. "And what of Lucy?"

"Oh, Lucy will not object to have a house and rank of her own," said I; "and, I should think, is quite disengaged, and very likely to be pleased with Harry Crofton. It seems a perfectly natural and likely arrangement without any match-making."

"It scarcely seems to please you, however," said Derwent, looking at me closely for a moment. "Perhaps I have spoken hastily, Clare; make friends—you know I would not give you pain for the world."

"Yes, I know that very well; but there is always some one point upon which everybody is unreasonable; and this was mine."

"Lucy tells me," said I, after a pause, "that she and her father expected some time since that they were to live here."

"Yes," said Derwent, with that honest glow of feeling which brightened his whole face; "at a certain period of my life, when I did not care two straws what became of Hilfont or myself either, I once told old Crofton that he might set up his headquarters here if he had a mind, or break up the old house to bits if he had a mind. I was a Clareless man, and cared nothing for anything. I believe for one summer they were here."

"Lucy thinks I rather came in the way of a very pleasant prospect," said I. "I am not sure that she quite forgives me for it."

Derwent laughed, looked at me a little doubtfully. "But you think he is a good girl, don't you?" he said.

"Oh, certainly, a very good girl," I answered; and so conversation ended for that night.

But even Lucy's virtues were y rather against her with me. She was a very good girl; she was first down-stairs in the morning; she was read to do anything in the world to save me trouble. At breakfast she was quite anxious to help, and persuade me to eat; later in the day became still more concerned about my exercise, and labored to induce me to go out, with amiable wiles and expedients, which she was evidently rather complacent of, and satisfied with, but which "aggravated" my temper very considerably, and often drove me to take refuge in my own room, in sheer despair. She herself walked every day, practiced every day, and every day did so much crochet or embroidery; she took an interest in the conservatory, and had a fancy for birds, and liked light reading. Altogether she was not only a very pretty but a very proper young lady. She never contradicted anybody, and was always pleased with what everyone suggested. It was hard to find out Lucy's own will about anything; but she had a way of getting her will which was ingenious in the highest degree. Everybody who saw her congratulated me on my new acquisition—such a pleasant companion! And Lucy hearing afar off—one's ears are sharp when one knows one's self spoken of—grew more smiling, more "attentive" to me, more anxious about my comfort than ever. She thought she was doing her duty, I verily believe, and pleased herself with the thought that she was a very useful person, and of the greatest importance to Aunt Clare.

Oh, young people! Oh, young ladies! I am an old lady, and may advise you thus far—don't do good to your fellow-creatures; don't try to be benefactors of households when Providence sends you on a visit! I can't tell you what amount of exasperation one good girl, bent upon doing her duty, and exercising a beneficial influence on all around her, may produce if she tries; but I know from my own experience how great it is, and I was in a perfectly easy and uncomplicated position If I had been like many wives in the heat and burden of common life—sometimes teased by my children, and sometimes a little out of temper with my husband—matters might have been a great deal worse. As it was, Lucy was certainly quite pleased with herself. She never helped me to bread-and-butter without a delightful quiet consciousness in her face that she was exemplifying the Christian duty of loving her neighbors, and was meritoriously ministering and attending to her Aunt Clare.

It turned out that she did not know her cousins the Croftons (except the Croftons of the Manor, whom she had seen abroad), and she was rather curious to hear about them, as was natural.

"Is Mrs. Reginald Crofton coming, Aunt?" she said to me one day. We saw her in Paris two years ago. I suppose she was pretty when she was young?"

"Pretty when she was young? Kate Crofton! How old do you suppose she is now?" said I.

"Nay, I cannot tell," said Lucy; "but she is married and has babies, and of course one expects her to be oldish. But I like her very much, Aunt Clare."

"She is not coming," said I. "Mr. Crofton's brother, Robert Crofton comes always with his family. There are four of them. Harry, the eldest; then Mary, a little younger than you; and Frank and Edward, two little boys. They are a very nice family. They are the next in succession after Mr. Crofton. You will like them, I have no doubt."

"Oh I am sure I shall," said Lucy. "I liked Mrs. Reginald so much; and are these all Aunt Clare?"

"No there is Mrs. Fortune, Mr. Crofton's sister, and her two children, and the Croftons of Stoke. These are all your relations. I expect, besides, some young friends of my own—Alice and Clara Harley, who are about your age, from Estcourt, and Bertie Nugent, a young cousin from Sandhurst."

"I am so glad; I never had companions I cared for of my own age," said Lucy; "but I fear it is selfish to think of that. Will not a large party like this be very fatiguing to you?"

"I think not," said I; "I am very well; you are too symphetic, my dear."

"Papa used to say rather theother way," said Lucy, with a faint laugh. "He said I was not sympathetic enough. I am glad you do not find me so, Aunt Clare. And may I ask, please, these young ladies from Estcourt—are they some of your orphans, aunt?"

"*My* orphans; I do not quite understand you, Lucy. They are the daughters of the late [illegible] them is [illegible] afraid to [illegible] me reassure you [illegible] gentlewomen, and [illegible] can not permit anyone [illegible] the Harleys."

"Aunt!" cried Lucy, "am I not an orphan and dependant on you? If Uncle Derwent had not brought me here, I should have been very thankful to get admittance to Estcourt, for I suppose you bring them up for governesses?"

I was very much provoked, but it was in vain to be angry. "When did you hear of Estcourt, Lucy?" I asked.

"Oh, from Mrs. Reginald, aunt. Poor papa was very ill then, and I knew I should soon be destitute; so I always thought, if nothing else appeared, that you would take me in there. It is so generous of you aunt! But I am grieved that you should think I would look down upon the Miss Harleys. How am I any better than they?"

But, in spite of Lucy's humility, I could not help feeling extremely annoyed. Was it possible that their education at Estcourt should put a charity-child reputation upon my dear girls?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HER WORSHIP RULES THE ROOST.

The Woman Mayor of a New Zealand Town Calls Down Unruly Councillors.

Mrs. Yates, the "Mayor" of Onehunga, in New Zealand, is troubled apparently with one or two unruly councillors, and has some difficulty in keeping her team in order. At a recent meeting, reported in the new Zealand Herald, the proceedings are described as "lively." The question under discussion was an outbreak of typhoid fever in the borough. At an early stage in the discussion Mr. Tapp expressed the opinion that certain correspondence had been kept back.

The mayor, with much firmness, said: "I insist upon an apology from you, Mr. Tapp, for making that remark, and shall adopt a similar course with any other councillor so expressing himself."

Mr. Tapp denied accusing her worship of suppressing correspondence. He must have been misunderstood.

The Mayor—I won't allow any councillor to insinuate that I keep back correspondence.

Mr. Tapp—You quite misunderstood me, Mrs. Mayor.

Afterward Mr. Tapp insisted upon speaking when he was ruled out of order. The Mayor said: "I am the person to dictate, not you."

Mr. Tapp—Oh! no you're not.

The Mayor—Don't answer me back.

Mr. Jackson, having moved a resolution, entered into a lengthy dissertation on sanitary matters in general. As Mrs. Yates has made a regulation that the mover of a resolution shall be allowed only five minutes to introduce it, she drew attention to the fact that Mr. Jackson had spoken seven minutes. Mr. Jackson laughed, and said the council had no power to make such an absurd regulation, and in any case it did not apply to any one replying. He would insist upon his right of saying what he had to say, and did not intend being talked down.

The Mayor—Mr. Jackson, are you defying my ruling?

Mr. Jackson—Yes, in this matter.

The Mayor—Then I order you down.

Mr. Jackson said he would not be gagged.

The Mayor—Then I rule you out of order, and if you don't obey, we might as well dissolve.

Mr. Jackson—Well, I shall certainly not obey you. You yourself have wasted most of the seven minutes, and must not interrupt me.

The Mayor—You have rambled away from the subject.

Mr. Jackson—If I did, you forced me.

At this point the bickering ceased and the businesss proceeded in quietness.

A New System of Play.

Struck by the fact that the present crowding of houses in cities is unfavorable to the free exercise of children in play, such as prevailed when man lived in a more scattered way, Prof. A. T. Skidmore has sketched a scheme for the evolution of a new system of play. Even under the prevailing conditions the way for the development of proper play is just as open as for anything else while its development requires the genius of thought and well directed business enterprise. The professor's plan rests upon the principle that play is the exercise of the faculties as such, the doing for the sake of the doing. It is nature working toward her end in the child by prompting to the free, objectless exercise of those expansive powers which he sees at work in real life. If he sees this way open and is given the needful facilities he will imitate so closely in miniature the activities of the age to which he belongs that his play will not be a nuisance, so discordant as to be intolerable. The greatest objection to this theory, as it appears to us, is to make the boy a man before his time by "prompting" him to give up all the old fashioned sports and be merely imitative of his elders in the ways and methods of advanced life. It remains to ask what is he going to do when he becomes a man?

The Paris Loan.

A correspondent of the London Times gives an interesting description of some of the scenes attending the popular subscription to the Paris municipal loan of about forty million dollars. The city hall, the mairies, and the great financial establishments where subscriptions were received were besieged as early as two o'clock in the morning, and the long lines of people lasted during the greater part of the day. One rough was noted as having cleared $7 by selling his place in the line, then going to the rear and selling his place again when he got near the door. At one mairie, where 4,000 persons had assembled, the Mayor admitted 900 of them and announced to the rest that the subscription was closed, thus giving them the opportunity to "try their luck" elsewhere. The applicants for single bonds, or quarters, will receive more than 200,000 bonds, leaving only 380,000 for allotment among the other applicants. The correspondent says the loan was covered more than eighty times over, which materially differs from a former statement that the applications were for about thirty-five times as many bonds as will be issued.

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[illegible] in calming the surface of [illegible] sea, the original discovery of which was accidental, has of late been the subject of scientific investigation, and it is now possible to choose such oils as are best suited for the purpose, and also to point out the source of their peculiar power over the waves. The statistics collected, show, by the reports of sea captains themselves, that many a vessel has been saved not only from serious injury but from foundering, by the use of a few gallons of oil slowly trickled into the sea. The influence of the oil is frequently described in such reports as wonderful, magical, and almost incredible. It is not difficult to see upon what this calming effect of oil depends, although the complete explanation of it involves a mathematical process of demonstration. The oil acts like a thin skin drawn over the water, resisting the tendency of the latter to break into spray under the force of the wind. The danger to a ship from storm waves arises from the breaking of the waves. As long as their surfaces are smooth and their crests unbroken, the vessels rides them easily and safely. But when they break and secondary waves are formed, it is quite otherwise. Then the ship plunges into the foaming walls upreared around it, with frame-racking shocks; immense masses of water thunder down upon its decks, sweeping everything clean, and sometimes even the strongest hulls and the best seamanship are unable to prevail in the contest. This is the danger that the spreading of oil over the waves removes.

It is to German investigators that we owe the discovery of the active agent which enables oil to exercise its calming effect upon the sea. This agent is oleic acid, an ingredient found in lard, olive oil, and many other oils. Those oils that possess the largest proportion of oleic acid are the most effective in controlling the waves. It is hrough its gradual separation from the rest of the oil and its diffusion in the water, that oleic acid acts. When a drop of oil rests upon water, the oil flattens out through the effects of its own weight. At the edge of the flattened disk of oil the oleic acid tends most rapidly to dissolve in the water, and the very act of dissolving evolves energy which causes the oil to spread still farther, thus keeping its edges constantly in contact with water that has not yet became charged with oleic acid. This spreading continues with great rapidity, until all of the oleic acid has been dissolved. Sometimes the layer thus formed does not exceed a twelve-millionth of an inch in thickness!

The discovery of the essential part played by oleic acid explains why petroleum has never been found so efficient as other oils, olive oil for instance, in smoothing waves; for petroleum contains a comparatively small proportion of that ingredient. The German investigators would recommend the use of pure oleic acid except for the fact that it freezes at about 18 degrees above zero, and consequently is useless in very cold weather. They have found, however, that a mixture of oleic acid and alcohol remains liquid at only 5 degrees above zero, and they accordingly recommend such a mixture as being the best wave-calming means yet discovered. Almost any animal or vegetable oil is better than petroleum. Soap water has been found effective if a soap containing plenty of oleic acid, which all soaps do not contain, is used.

CHINESE IMMIGRATION TO CANADA.

The Celestials Have Paid Poll Tax to the Amount of Over Half a Million Dollars.

Since the adoption of the Chinese Immigration Act in 1886, 10,106 Celestials have entered Canada, paying poll tax to the amount of over half a million dollars; 242 Chinese came in exempt from any charges, being either diplomatic agents or scientists. From the 10,348 immigrants arriving since the Act went into force there should be deducted 6,098, who, on leaving the country, took out certificates of leave, or registered for leave prior to June 30, 1893, all of whose certificates had become cancelled by limitation, and a further number of registrations are outstanding still available for return, leaving the net balance of less than 4,250 arrivals in excess of departures. These figures cannot, however, be taken as evidence of that increased Chinese population of the country since the Act went into force, as many leave with no intention of returning, and consequently do not register. The figures are also valueless in estimating the present number in the country, as there exists no reliable evidence as to the number in the country at the time the Act went into force. The census of April 5, 1891, gives the total number of Chinese in the Dominion at that date as 9,129, to which add 6,384 arrivals since that date and deduct 909 outstanding certificates of leave, and of registrations for leave that have been issued since then, and there remains a balance of 14,604 as representing the number in the country on June 30, 1893, less those who have left without reporting, of which no reliable estimate can be given.

A New York Tenement Calamity.

A New York, despatch says:—A terrible explosion, followed by a fire, occurred at 4.30 o'clock Thursday morning in a distillery on the ground floor of a double tenement house, No. 129 Suffolk street, resulting in the death of Lizzie Yaega, aged 4 years and serious injuries to four others. Twenty families tenanted the building. The explosion and fire cut them off from the stairway. Fifteen children were thrown from upper windows. Some of the older persons escaped by creeping on the narrow ledge of the second storey to the window of the next house.

Explained.

Two countrymen stood staring at a fashionable hatter's window, contemplating with mingled surprise and admiration a newly patented hat, in the inside of which a small mirror was carefully concealed.

"I wonder, now, what is the use of that looking glass inside that hat?" at length exclaimed one of them.

"Well, you must be a stoopid!" replied his companion, with a supercilious air; "why, so that whoever buys the hat may see if it suits him of course?"