Bound for Halifax.

Madeline Harding lay still and calm; her face had no fear in it, no longing to grasp at life as it slipped away from her. She was 42 years of age, and she had known very little happiness. Nor had that little come anywhere near the realization of her childish dreams. On the whole, when she knew that her time was nearly up, she felt glad. The only regret was that she could do no more for others, and that some few might miss her as a friend—until they found one in her place.

The end was very near, when a remarkable thing happened. A slow, fumbling footstep ascending the stairs was followed by the appearance of a stranger in the doorway who, in a hoarse tone, and glancing at the nurse in charge, said:

"I want Mrs. Edward Harding."

His hair was long and as white as snow; so was his beard. His eyes were big and hollow and they had a harshness which made the nurse shrink back when they fixed her with a stare. "I want Mrs. Edward Harding," said the unknown, for the second time; but without moving a step forward from the door, which a startled maid servant had thrown open for him.

"She is here," responded the nurse.

The old man turned to the bed, and his voice began to quaver as he spoke.

"Mrs. Edward," he said, and his hand shook as he laid it on the counterpane, "it's me—the man you saved from a lot of misery! Me, Charles Brown, that swore he'd come back to prove he was grateful. Oh, you poor thing!" he added with a low sob, as light was given him to understand that this was a dying woman, "have I come just too late for you to know me? To be glad I've kept my word? Can't you speak to me? Can't you give me just a look out of those eyes that never turned away when I was in the very worst of my trouble?"

But not a word came; not even a glimmer of recognition flitted across that still, calm face. Then the white-haired man sank down on his knees by the bed.

"She's dead, or next thing to it," he moaned, "and I'm too late! It's just my wretched luck. And I've come so far and I knew she'd be glad, and now nothing matters." He tore open a packet he had carried in his hand and a little bundle of bank notes fell out upon the counterpane. "I was so pleased to bring them back," murmured the man, "to show her I kept my word! And now I don't care for anything."

With which remark he quietly fainted, there, where he knelt, on the floor.

The brothers of the dying woman were looking anxiously at him when he recovered consciousness. But he told them nothing, answered nothing that they asked, and with a dazed look upon his face gathered the bank notes together and replaced them in his breast pocket. Then, with a glance at the lifeless form of the woman who in some unrevealed trouble had probably befriended him, he went away.

He was seen at the funeral, walking behind the mourners. Then he finally disappeared, and the little incident was soon forgotten by the very few who had known anything about it.

I was one of those few; the why and because of that fact has nothing to do with the present story.

A week or two later I took the train from London to Liverpool, and on looking round the compartment at my fellow travelers, I recognized the old man with white hair and beard, who spoke of himself as "Charles Brown" when Mrs. Edward Harding was dying.

His eyes were fixed upon the window by which he had taken his seat, but I am certain that he saw nothing—unless, indeed, he had some mental vision of his own past or his future.

After a while we two had the carriage to ourselves, except for one elderly lady whose capacity for sleeping soundly through a railway journey was nothing less than astounding. I took a vacant place nearer to him, and for the sake of getting into conversation, asked where he was bound for.

"Bound for Halifax," answered the old man, quietly, and then added, "for Canada, you know."

"A fine country, and full of possibilities," I said. "I have sometimes thought I should like to emigrate."

I do not think he was listening; he had fixed his eyes again upon the helped any but deserving men; answered me. After an interval I made another attempt, asking if he had ever before crossed the Atlantic.

"Yes—five years ago," he said. "And I came back a few weeks since to find the only true friend I ever possessed. But I came too late."

Another silence, and then as if moved by some strong and irresistible impulse, the strange old man made me acquainted with his life story.

Told briefly, it was this: He had been a small farmer, like his father before him, in one of the southern counties of England. For years all went fairly well; he married, had children, and was contented with his lot. Suddenly, and from no explainable cause, a run of misfortune set in for Charles Brown. Crops failed, times were bad, his wife and two children died within a week of each other by infectious fever, and at the year's end he found himself heavily in debt and on the road to ruin.

Then, like many another unhappy creature, he tried the consolation of drink, which, as a matter of course, led him from bad to worse. Finally he resolved that to make away with his life was all that remained to be done.

"And it was she—the lady who didn't live to see I'd kept my word—that saved me," he said. "I had asked one and another to give me a helping hand to get out of the country to somewhere that would open a fresh chance; but it was no use. One—a parson he was, too, who had married me and my poor Annie and baptized our children—said he never helped any but deservinb men; another had too many claims—he was the nobleman of whom I rented my farm. It was the same all round. No one ready to start a man afresh, and that was how I made up my mind that, as there seemed no way to live, the best way out of my difficulties was to die. So I cleared out of the old home, selling my stock, and all that was left me, and then, with a few clothes done up in a bundle, and a matter of twenty shillings in my pocket, I made for the sea. It was only a walk of a few miles to where the boats started to cross the channel, and I meant to take my passage at night and just pitch myself overboard when I got half way."

"And this lady—how did she help you?" I asked.

"I'm coming to it," answered the old man. "As I've begun, you shall hear my story to the end. A dark night it was, though not stormy. There didn't seem to be many passengers and the few there were had all gone below, or at least I thought so. 'Now's your chance. Don't be a coward!' said I to myself, and I got away to the stern of the boat, where there was no one to look and I was just going to take the leap when I felt a hand on my arm and saw the figure of a woman rising up from a corner where I hadn't known there was anybody.

"'Don't be desperate,' she said in a quiet, kind sort of way. 'At any rate, tell me just what the trouble is. I'll help you if I can.'

"At first I wouldn't; but she began persuading me, and at last I found myself telling her everything as though I'd known her all my life.

"'In your place, I would not give in without another try,' she said when I'd made a clean breast of everything, 'and I believe that for a new life there's nothing like a new country. Why not go to Canada?'

"'Because I can't,' I answered, and then I pulled out the few shillings I'd squared up every ter paying my ticket from Dover. 'That won't take me to Canada,' I said, 'nor to anywhere else that I know of. Better let me drown myself, ma'am—there's no coin wanted in the next world, I'm thinking, supposing there is a next world.'

"'Oh, I can't let you be a coward!' said the lady, and so kindly! There wasn't any quoting texts, or preaching at me, or telling me I was a miserable sinner. I expect she knew it wasn't the right moment for anything of that sort. 'I live just a short railway distance from where we shall land,' she said, 'and though mine is only a little home, I have a spare room where I shall be pleased for you to sleep for a night or two while we arrange things.

"'I am not rich, but in three days I could lend you enough money to go away to that big country where men like you are wanted, and are sure to get on. Will you go? When you grow rich you can pay me back.'"

"'Will I go? Yes, that I will!' said I; and I felt a big lump come in my throat that choked back all the thanks that my heart was full of.

"So she took me to her home and made me feel as welcome as though I had been one of her own friends, and in a week's time I was gone—with a right good will, too, to succeed and make something better of my life."

"And did you succeed?" I said.

"Yes. I've nothing to complain of," answered the old man, "except that she didn't live to hear all I had done. But I had paid her back before the year was out; and in two more years I'd squared yp every debt I'd left behind me. And then, when money kept on coming in, I wrote to her that I was going to give myself a trip across the big herring pond, to show her I'd not been quite unworthy of her kindness, and to ask her if there was any other fellows as unfortunate as I had been who could be set going by a few of my bank notes. But I was too late."

"And now what are you going to do?"

"I'm just going back again," answered the man. "There's nothing else I can do. I've been reading over some of Mrs. Edward Harding's letters—she used to write to me every now and then. And I think that's what she would advise if she could speak to me. And the money I have here"—he touched the breast pocket of his coat—"and what I can make, shall go to help those that are down on their luck, same as I was when she held out her kind hand to me aboard that channel steamer."

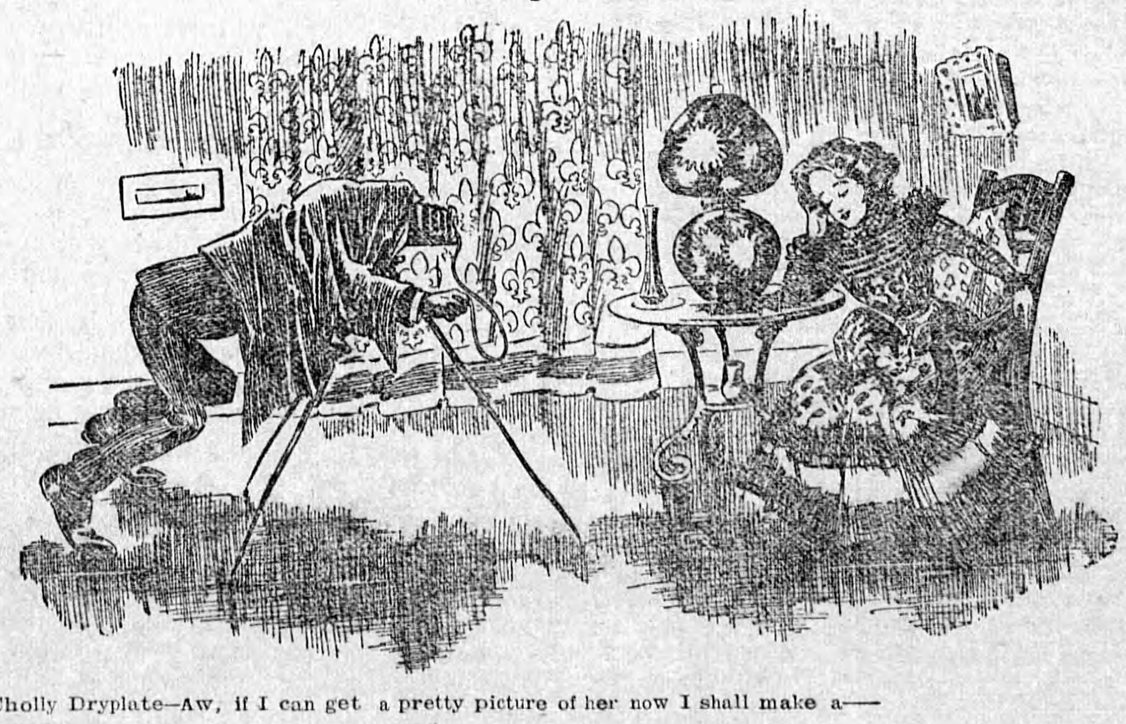
I had taken a fancy to this Charles Brown, and I lingered a day or two in Liverpool, and finally saw him on board the ship bound for Halifax.

"I'd like a few flowers put on her grave," were his last words to me. "If you should be over there, perhaps you wouldn't mind seeing to it. I'd like to show her just a little of what I feel—only somehow I fancy she knows all about it."

"I believe she does," was my answer as we clasped hands.

THOSE SLIPPERY POLISHED FLOORS.

(A Warning to Amateurs.)



Cholly Dryplate—Aw, if I can get a pretty picture of her now I shall make a——

——decided hit !

CARE OF MANURE.

During the warm season, when the farmer is too busy with his crops to care for the manure heap, loss occurs more readily than in winter. Rains wash away the richest portions of the manure if it is exposed while the summer heat may cause rapid fermentation and the nitrogen escape in the form of ammonia. The proper course to pursue is to keep all the manure under shelter and have the bedding or other absorbent materials in a fine condition in order that the liquid portions may be absorbed. Should heat occur force a crowbar into the heap in several places and pour cold water into the manure. The closer the manure is packed, and the air excluded from the interior, the less liability of the manure becoming overheated. Manure from the poultry house should be collected daily and kept under shelter. Mix it well with dry earth and keep it on as long as is possible, as it gives the best results when it is fresh. The supposition that it is equal to Puruvian guano is erroneous, as guano is produced by birds that exist upon animal food, while the barnyard fowls subsist mostly upon grains. It is profitable to save the droppings, however, and they should be considered in estimating the profits.

KNEW HER ABILITIES.

A savage dog was sniffing about a market place in search of something to eat. He came too close to a choleric gardener from the suburbs and received a kick, whereupon he fastened his teeth in the leg of the kicker, greatly to that person's consternation, and the terror of the assembled customers.

The wife of the gardener, who was assisting him in disposing of the stock of vegetables on hand, did not lose her presence of mind. She immediately picked up a stone and prepared to hurl it at the animal.

"Martha," yelled her husband, "don't throw it at the dog. Throw it at me! Throw it at me!"

She did, and the dog fell.

Such is the value of presence of mind.

Lady (engaging servant)—"Why did you leave your last place?" Servant—"I couldn't put up with the way one of the young mistresses used to copy me, mum." Lady—"What do you mean?" Servant—"Why, I had a private soldier for a sweetheart, and what must she do but go and get a hofficer for hers."

Manchester has four public picture galleries, a greater number than any other English town except London.

FARM·FIELD AND GARDEN

PROFIT IN HOGS.

One cannot hope to make swine a profitable farm product unless he goes permanently into the business. Too many who try to make money from swine find it unprofitable one year, and abandon it, or because after two years of fair success the third season proves unsatisfactory, they conclude that the best days for the business have passed, and they try their hand at something else. As a continuous business, carried on, not one or two or three years, but ten, fifteen and twenty years, it has no superior, and the man who pursues it thus will get his sure reward. Each succeeding year we learn more about the work, and find out where we make mistakes, and where we could have made improvements. We become so familiar with the whole subject that we are competent judges as to whether we should raise this or that breed. We also grow accustomed to anticipating the markets, which is a great deal in these days of fluctuations. Then, too, we learn how best to feed the animals—how to get the most from every ton of feed.

GRASS OR HAY.

If one is going into swine breeding for a continuous industry, he can then well afford to start out with the best bred animals he can afford, and by the intelligent system of selection and breeding, he will in time grade up his flock to a standard of excellence which his neighbor cannot equal except at great cost. When a man starts in each year or two to purchase new breeds and high-bred swine, it is a costly experience, and he hardly reaps much reward from it. There is quite a difference, however, when he deliberately adds each year a little new blood to his stock, increasing the quality as well as the quantity. The outlay is thus small each season for pure-bred animals, and the returns correspondingly good.

Likewise in regard to food, it requires a policy of continuous farming along certain lines which will enable one to look years ahead. The grass, forage and grain crops that can be planned for an intelligent rotation system will all help toward the same general end. The cost of feeding will thus up to a certain point be steadily reduced. One finds good pasture fields established in the course of time, land made rich and fertile for corn and grain through a rotation of crops, and hay and forage crops prepared ahead of time for each winter. In the course of time the work becomes almost automatic, and the swine produce profits on the average from year to year that must prove satisfactory.

COMMON SENSE IN FEEDING.

All kinds of cows, including dual purpose cows, to produce the best returns, must needs be fed on what may be termed common sense principles. In the first place, they must be well fed. While excess of flesh over that amount which will best conduce to the end sought is wasteful, any lack of flesh below what conduces to the same end is more wasteful, since it increases so much relatively the food of maintenance. As a rule the great mistake in the average herd lies in keeping the animals young and old, too low fleshed.

In the second place, they must be fed on foods to the greatest extent possible produced on the farm, given in due balance, approximately as to their constituents, and grown and handled in a way that will involve the least possible labor on the part of man that will adequately secure the desired end. In other words, these foods will as far as practicable, be grown in mixtures, the threshing and grinding being done by the cow.

And in the third place, while the animals will be liberally fed, they will also be fed grain in what may be termed a rational way. No farmer can afford to drive the machinery of milk production in his cows so fast that in a few years the machine is worn out. This, of course, is done by excessive grain feeding. The city milk man may afford to do this, but the farmer cannot. His cow should be good for ten years of free production in the dairy every time barring accident or disease.

TO MAKE HOGS PAY.

The summer season is the time to make pigs pay. They then need no protection against cold, are not stunted in growth, and demand but little attention. Grass is the cheapest and best food for pigs, and they will thrive and grow upon such diet, as grass contains an abundance of mineral matter, which promotes the growth of bone. Grain is deficient in lime, which is essential for the growth of all young stock. Clover contains more than twenty times as much lime as corn. To feed corn to pigs in summer is to supply them with a kind of food which they do not require, as growth at this season is more to be desired than fat. Those who make a profit from hogs depend largely upon the pasture, freedom and the privilege of selecting a variety of the pigs and warding off disease.

In every 1,000 British men there are 35 widowers; in each 1,000 British women there are 78 widows.