THE MYSTERIOUS KEY

OR, PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.

CHAPTER XI.—(Cont'd)

John Hubbard fully expected to be able to secure bail for himself and to make the most of the respite thus afforded him in feathering a snug nest for himself, in case he should escape conviction; but Mr. Lyttleton had arranged to make the amount of bail so excessive that no one was willing to take the risk and become surety for him; consequently, he was committed to the Tombs to await his trial, while Anna buried herself in obscure lodgings, wisely resolving to be economical with her resources until the fate of her husband should be decided, the trial having been set for about the first of February.

Meantime, Lady Bromley had received an invitation to visit her old friend and schoolmate, Helen Atwood, now Mrs. Ernest Bryant, with whom she had spent those few sad weeks long ago after the news of the loss of the steamer on which her husband had sailed, and was supposed to have been among the lost.

The Bryants were a very happy family, and owned a very lovely home in Brookline, one of the most delightful of Boston's suburbs, Mr. Bryant being a prosperous wool-merchant of that city.

Helen Bryant had often importuned her friend to visit her, but until now it had never seemed convenient for her to do so, although she had long yearned to renew the old-time intimacy. Thus, while her brother and Gerald were absorbed in preparing for the great case of Brewster vs. Brewster, she decided to avail herself of Mrs. Bryant's pressing invitation, and make the long-talked-of visit.

She took Ellen with her, the girl having become quite a handy little waiting-maid and devoted to her kind mistress. She was delighted over the prospect of leaving New York, and uttered a long sigh of relief when the Puritan pushed off from her pier, and she felt that she had thus been cut loose from a menacing danger.

She knew that her aunt had been arrested, and that John Hubbard was also a prisoner, but she had lived in hourly dread of meeting her cousin; and thus New York had become a place of torment to her.

Ever since learning that Lady Bromley's home was in England, she had begged that she would take her there to live with her when she returned, and, as her ladyship had promised to grant her request, if all went well, the girl was beginning to lose something of the anxious, hunted expression which her face had always worn; while, with good fare, neatly fashioned clothing, and the constant companionship of her cultivated mistress, she was fast developing into a hale, well-behaved, and efficient young woman.

The memory of Allison was still most sacred to her, and she still worshipped her in secret. Several times Gerald had caught her upon her knees before the easel, upon which the picture of his loved one rested, gazing with a look of adoration at the beautiful face, while hot tears of grief rained over her cheeks.

He was so touched by this evidence of her affection he gave her a picture of Allison, and it became to her the choicest treasure in her possession, while from that moment Gerald might have asked any sacrifice from her and she would have spared no effort to serve him.

Lady Bromley had promised to spend several weeks with her friend, her visit being limited only by the fact that she must return to New York in time for the trial, when Ellen would be required as a witness for the plaintiff.

Mrs. Bryant and her ladyship were very happy in renewing their early friendship and in reviewing the experience of their school days.

"I made a terrible mistake, however, Helen," the latter observed one day, when they were conversing about her romantic marriage and the exciting events that followed it. "To be sure, all ended well, and my life with my husband was a very happy one; but I have often trembled in thinking of the temerity of that momentous step! I shall never forget the mental suffering which I endured all that year with the burden of that terrible secret on my mind, and I have often wondered how I managed to get through with my studies and pass my examinations creditably.

"Yes, and it was a rash act," her friend gravely assented, "and I have passed a great many remorseful hours in view of having aided and abetted you and Sir Charles; but I was young and thoughtless, and the romance of being associated with such a genuine love-affair was a temptation which I was unable to resist. I do hope you have forgiven me for my share in that sad experience," she concluded, with a regretful sigh.

"You were forgiven from the first, dear," said Lady Bromley, as she brushed some hot tears from her cheeks. "I am alone to blame for it all, and I do not know what would have become of me at that time if you had not proved yourself so staunch and true. Your kind care probably saved my life during that terrible illness which prostrated me upon learning of the loss of the Catalonia. But, ah! I wish I could secretly tell my experience to every young girl who is away from the shelter of her own home, and warn her of the consequences of such a rash act. If a young man really loves a girl, he will wait for her and seek her in marriage in an open, straightforward manner. If I had only been firm and refused to marry Charlie secretly, he would eventually have sought me in my own home, asked for me in a manly fashion, and I should have been spared all that sad experience which we both regretted all our lives."

"But," continued Mrs Bryant, "I shall never forget that happy day when Sir Charles walked in upon us so unexpectedly to claim his wife, and turned your sorrow into joy. I thought him the grandest fellow alive, and I am sure he was devoted enough to you ever afterward to make up for having tempted you to err in that one instance."

"Yes, we were happy together, and yet the sting of that early mistake will never be entirely obliterated," said Lady Bromley sadly.

She had barely finished speaking when the door of Mrs. Bryant's boudoir was rudely thrown open, and Ellen Carson rushed into the room in a state of great excitement.

"Lady Bromley! Lady Bromley! Oh! come quick!" she cried breathlessly, her face white as chalk, and unable to articulate another word, she sank upon the floor at her mistress' feet and burst into nervous weeping.

CHAPTER XII.

Both Lady Bromley and Mrs. Bryant were greatly startled by Ellen's sudden appearance in such a state of grief and excitement. She was usually very quiet and unobtrusive, moving about her duties with a cheerful alacrity which bespoke her desire to please the woman to whom she owed so much, as well as an increasing affection and sense of gratitude.

"Why, Ellen! what has happened? Why are you so excited?" questioned Lady Bromley, as she bent over the sobbing girl and laid her hand kindly upon her shoulder.

The touch seemed to restore her in a measure, when, springing again to her feet, she seized the woman's hand and tried to raise her from her chair.

"Come, come!" she reiterated almost wildly; "you must come and tell him that I have told the truth."

And by main force she pulled her ladyship toward the door, apparently unmindful of the rudeness of the act or the lack of respect she was thus displaying toward her superior.

"Ellen, stop!" said Lady Bromley authoritatively; "compose yourself, and explain what has caused all this excitement. Has any accident occurred? Do you not see that you have greatly annoyed Mrs. Bryant by bursting in upon us in this turbulent fashion?"

"I know, I know, and I hope you will forgive me, but I couldn't help it," said Ellen, still breathless and panting from excessive emotion; "but I've found her! I've found her!" and sobs that were almost hysterical again choked her utterance.

"You have found whom?" demanded Lady Bromley, astonished, and beginning to fear that the girl had become suddenly deranged.

"Oh! Miss Allison! Miss Brewster! She isn't dead! She wasn't killed! She is out there in the street, and you must come and tell the man that I know what I'm talking about," was the startling and incoherent reply.

Her ladyship had become very pale while listening to this, for of course Ellen's wild words could not fail to send a terrible shock throughout her frame.

She could not credit her startling statement; still, the magnetism of her belief and excitement had its influence upon her, for she knew that something very strange and unusual must have occurred to upset her to such an extent.

She had sent the girl out upon an errand for Mrs. Bryant about half an hour previous, and now it occurred to Lady Bromley that possibly she might have seen some one upon the street who strongly resembled Allison, and so, knowing how she worshipped the memory of her lost benefactress, had been startled into the belief that she had really found her alive.

"Stop, my child!" she said again, in a tone of kind command; "you are so nervous I cannot comprehend your meaning. Now, try to tell me calmly what you mean by having seen Miss Brewster. Of course, you are mistaken. You may have met some one who resembles her, but it cannot be Allison herself. And who is the person whom you wish me to go and talk with?"

"Oh, it is a man who is rolling her about in a wheel-chair. She is sick, and didn't know me, but I am sure she is my lovely, lovely Miss Allison," Ellen emphatically asserted, still greatly excited and trying to pull Lady Bromley from the room.

"Wait a moment, until I get a wrap," said her ladyship, and now visibly trembling herself. She almost flew to her room, seized a seal wrap from her closet, and threw it over her shoulders, and then went swiftly down-stairs after Ellen, who had again rushed below and out upon the street.

When Lady Bromley emerged from the house she saw an elderly gentleman, with white hair and beard, standing quietly upon the sidewalk, while beside him in a luxuriously cushioned wheel-chair in which, well wrapped in soft, bright robes, there sat a beautiful girl, the sight of whom made the startled woman catch her breath sharply and sent a wild look of mingled joy and horror into her eager eyes.

The girl was indeed Allison's very counterpart.

There were the same delicate, clear-cut, faultless features, the same bright, golden-crowned head, although the hair had been cut and now curled daintily all about her white forehead; there were the same great, beautiful blue eyes, and yet they were not the same, for there was a harrowing blankness in them which told but too plainly that reason had been dethroned, while the lovely face and form were thin almost to emaciation.

The gentleman bowed courteously as Lady Bromley went quickly down the steps to his side, her face alarmingly pale.

"Madam, I trust you have not been needlessly disturbed or excited," he observed, as he noticed her emotion, "but this young girl," glancing at Ellen, who was gazing spell-bound at the figure in the chair, "met us at the corner yonder, when she became almost frantic upon seeing my charge, whom she insisted she knew, calling her 'Miss Allison' and 'Miss Brewster,' and weeping with joy over her discovery. Then she begged me to come here with her to see a lady who, she said, would explain it all to me. She was so violently in earnest I was constrained to comply with her request."

With her eyes wandering continually from the speaker to his charge, Lady Bromley listened almost spell-bound to the above explanation.

"Is—is she your daughter?" she gasped, as he concluded.

"No, madam, and a strange hope sprang up in my heart the moment this girl, upon meeting us, fell upon her knees beside the carriage in a perfect ecstasy of recognition and began to address my poor Alice. But, unfortunately, as you perceive, she is not in a condition to recognize any one, since an accident, several months ago, deprived her of her reason.

"An accident! Ah!" breathed her ladyship, her heart leaping into her throat. "Oh, sir," she added faintly, while she put out her hand to steady herself by the stone post near which she was standing, "will you kindly tell me about it? For, indeed, it is not strange that my maid should have been startled, as the young lady does resemble to a remarkable degree one who has long been regarded as dead by her friends."

The gentleman lost color at this, and looked excited.

"If," he said, "you will walk a block or two with me, I shall be very glad to tell you all that I know regarding the poor child's history. I do not like to have her sit still here, for, although the day is unusually fine, Alice is still very delicate, and we are exceedingly careful not to let her get chilled."

"Certainly, I will accompany you," Lady Bromley replied. Then, turning to her maid, she added: "Ellen, go to my room and bring me a hat."

And the girl, with a sorrowful but adoring look at the invalid, darted away to do her bidding. She was back again in a few moments, when her mistress, hastily tying the hat upon her head, signified her readiness to move on, while Ellen reluctantly went back into the house.

"You called her Alice," Lady Bromley remarked, but with lips that were so rigid that it was with difficulty that she could articulate.

(To be continued.)

SHE CAN'T BE BOTH.

It's not possible for a cow to be a remarkable success along two lines at the same time. She can't make milk and meat from the same feed. It's an impossibility.

SMALL WAGES FOR WOMEN

REVELATION OF THE "SWEATING" SYSTEM IN LONDON.

SadFacts Brought Out by a Poor Seamstress's Attempt at Suicide.

A poor little seamstress attempted suicide in London, England, recently. She jumped into the Thames and was ignominiously fished out, not drowned and not in the least repentant. When questioned as to reasons for her act she had only one to give. She simply could not keep body and soul together by working her hardest at her trade, and in utter fatigue she had decided to end her struggles.

There was nothing very new in her story, but when she explained that she always had plenty of work to do, the only difficulty being to live on the prices paid for her labors, London was roused from its apathy long enough to protest against the "sweating" of women thus revealed.

The House of Lords once defined sweating as a condition under which work is carried on in unsanitary surroundings and for low wages. There are those who would add that it is a condition of labor which does not give the laborer, in return for a fair day's work, enough to maintain himself and his family in decency and comfort.

In England it is women who are the greatest sufferers from sweating. Their average wage, taking it all the year round and allowing for sickness and slackness, is not much more than

$1.75 A WEEK.

The Lancashire textile trade average is $3.75 and in some districts as much as $6; but this comparatively high rate is pulled down by the East End home worker, who earns anything from 62 cents to $1.10 a week.

In the unskilled women's trades there is no standard by which wages are computed. For instance, one famous firm of cocoa manufacturers pay women filling bags with cocoa 28 cents a thousand bags, and exactly the same work is done for 16 cents for another firm. In East London there is a firm whose girls earn $3.50 a week by packing tea. In the same locality there is another firm, the head of which is a well known sportsman and yachtsman, where the earnings of the girls average only $1.78 a week.

The manager of a tinplate factory recently fixed time rates at $1.50 a week for his women workers and he openly gave the reason that they had taken advantage of piecework rates to make too much. Some had earned $4!

The average wage paid to waitresses in tea shops or restaurants throughout the country does not exceed $2.50 a week. On this the girls must keep up a neat and well dressed appearance. Then wages are likely to be interfered with and even if "necessary" reduced.

Many firms don't pretend to pay their girls a living wage. The head of a large company was asked recently how he expected the girls in his employment to live on $1.50 a week.

"I don't expect it," he answered. "Immediately we hear that a girl has lost her father or that she has no outside means of support she is discharged."

This same firm employs what it calls "half day waitresses." They work from 11.30 a.m. till 6.30 p.m. for $1 a week.

ALL TIPS ARE FORFEITED.

The lot of the home worker is the worst of all. Miss Mary MacArthur, secretary of the Women's Trade Union League, gave a picture of the home worker in the East End in an interview.

"So terrible is their life that I wonder that they take the trouble to exist at all," she said. "Here is a single room in a Stepney slum. The furniture consists of a table, a chair and a bed. The unfinished trousers at which the woman stitches serve as a blanket at night.

"She slaves from daybreak until her eyes fail, and she never earns more than five shillings a week. She sustains herself mainly, almost entirely, upon weak tea. Some days she drinks fourteen cups, making the same tea leaves do serivce again and again. That is one of the women slaves of England, and there are thousands in similar plight.

"I know many women who make men's shirts at 1s. or 9d. a dozen. I have even found the actual worker making at 8d. a dozen shirts which had originally been given out at 1s. a dozen.

"There is a girl in Woolwich. She has one child, aged 2 years, entirely dependent upon her. She is a shirt finisher and does buttoning and buttonholing by hand. She is paid 5s. a dozen for collars. Remember, this is high class work. Cotton costs her from 3d. to 4d. a week. Her average earnings are 4s. 6d. a week, or from ½d. to ¾d. an hour.

"Every day she has to spend an hour and a half in fetching her work, as it is only given out in small quantities. Sometimes she has worked with hardly any break

FOR TWENTY HOURS,

from 6 a.m. until 2 a.m. the following morning. The rent of the room is 1s. 6d. a week.

"All this she told the Parliamentary committee. The members of Parliament were aghast. Some were incredulous. "But how do you live, you and the child?" asked one M. P. 'We don't live," the woman replied with a passion in her tone I had never heard before. 'Often we have no food at all.' "

Miss MacArthur contends that goods are not sold any cheaper when made by sweated labor. She tells of a fur-lined motor coat marked at $105 which was made for $1.88 by sweated labor and of a $5.25 night dress for which the home worker who made it for 5 cents—63 cents for a dozen of these night dresses. The employer of the girls who made these night dresses said he could not pay more as there was no profit in his trade.

There are many persons who are struggling to organize and help the women workers of England. There is a scheme for a trades board which shall fix a legal minimum wage, and there are other propositions which will help to do away with the present sweating system if they are ever put into practice.

A QUESTION OF BALANCE.

The Persian Carriage Is a Cranky Conveyance.

The kajarah, a travelling-carriage of Persia, consists of two cage-like boxes, suspended one on each side of a mule. The interior of these boxes sometimes boasts a little low seat, but as a rule is innocent of any such luxury. In "Behind the Veil in Persia and Turkish Arabia," Mrs. M. E. Hume-Griffith tells of these carriages and of the troublous experiences of their occupants. Two persons of about the same weight must sit one on each side, or the result is disastrous.

I remember once being with a large caravan. In one of these kajarahs was travelling a government official and his wife. He was very tiny, she was quite the reverse, the result being that the little man was gnerally up in the air, while the opposite side of the kajarah was weighted down nearly to the ground.

They made all manner of experiments in their endeavor to strike the balance, gathering stones and depositing them in the higher side, tying bags of fuel to the outside of the kajarah, but all of no avail. At last, in disgust and anger, the woman jumped out without giving her husband any warning. The result, to the onlookers, was ludicrous.

The wife refused all that day again to enter the kajarah, preferring to walk, till one of the muleteers offered her a seat on the top of one of the baggage mules. Her husband was soon balanced with stones picked up by the wayside, and travelled for the rest of that day in peace and comfort. At the end of the stage, however, his wife would not speak to him or cook his dinner for him, and the man came to one of my husband's assistants, and begged him to act as mediator. Even among Moslems there are some strong-minded women.

I have travelled many miles in one of these kajarahs, and found them very comfortable and restful, even after riding for hours. When travelling by night, I have slept for hours at a stretch in one of these kajarahs, the steady, measured walk of the mule favoring slumber. Sometimes, however, the monotony is broken by the mule suddenly dropping to its knees, and you find yourself deposited on the ground, shot out like an arrow from a bow.

FIRST HAT WEARERS.

Beginning of Custom—Obliged by Law to Wear Woollen Cap.

Charles VII. on his triumphant entry into Rouen in the year 1449, we are told, astonished the whole city by appearing in a hat lined with red silk and surmounted by a plume of feathers. It was the first time the citizens had ever seen a hat, says the London Chronicle.

From the entry of Charles's into Rouen the beginning of the custom of wearing hats in Europe is dated. It was all very well for the rich citizen to follow the example of royalty, but when the clergy began to sigh for similar splendor it was regarded as a falling away from grace. Priests or religious persons were at last forbidden to appear abroad in anything except "chaperons made of black cloth with decent coronets."

A still more striking development took place in the sixteenth century. By the statute of 13 Elizabeth every person above the age of 7 years, and under a certain degree, was obliged on Sundays and holidays to "wear a woollen cap—made in England and finished by some of the fraternity cappers," under the penalty of three shillings fourpence for every day's neglect. They understood how to support native industries in those days.

LONDON'S SMOKE PROBLEM.

It is Attributed to Open Fires in the Homes.

The smoke problem of London is chiefly due to the domestic fire grate, and for that reason the conference and exhibition held there in the winter of 1905 were productive of little visible result. To an Englishman the open grate with its smoky flame is one of the most essential features of his domestic happiness and comfort.

Unfortunately no modified form of open fire grate which will burn bituminous fuel without smoke has yet been devised, although many experiments have been made in this direction. Since the American method of heating rooms by hot air or by steam pipes is unpopular in England, and the coke or anthracite stove is equally unacceptable, the only hope that London may in time possess an atmosphere equal in clearness to that of New York or Berlin lies in the use of partially coked fuels like coalite, or in the extended application of a cheap gas for heating purposes.

Progress is no doubt occurring in both these directions, says Cassier's Magazine, and this will grow more rapid as the supplies of these two forms of fuel are increased and cheapened The domestic smoke problem in fact not only in London, but in other large towns and cities of the United Kingdom is likely to be solved along these lines.

POOR OLD BACHELOR.

In Time of Illness Bachelor is Different Being.

The bachelor, whether man or woman, has a magnificent time in days of physicial well-being. Then he or she exults unkindly over married friends who cannot go whither they will or do what they will, or who must of necessity consult the claims of others in the important matters of meals and hours. But when illness comes—say a nasty attack by that unprincipled fiend influenza—the lonely man suffers. There is no one to bother him with inquiries which may be irrelevant, but are always tender; no one to see he is supplied with food every hour whether he wants it or not, to bring him the papers, and to put violets on his dressing-table; no one to pat his pillow, to bathe his head with eau de cologne, and tell him he is a darling old sham, not half as bad as he pretends. The only subject to occupy his mind is his own miserable condition, and the stupidity of the hireling James, who will forget to keep up his fire. The bit of sole he fancied for dinner was swimming in grease, and he nearly wept when that big idiot, who never does more than he is told, could not find him a clean pocket-handkerchief. The bachellor, free as air, enjoying the amusements of life, is a totally different person from the bachelor crouched in an easy-chair, wishing in vain for somebody to come and look after him.

Men who own electric plants are satisfied with light harvests.

Libby's Food Products

Libby's Vienna Sausage

Is distinctly different from any other sausage you ever tasted. Just try one can and it is sure to become a meal-time necessity, to be served at frequent intervals.

Libby's Vienna Sausage just suits for breakfast, is fine for luncheon and satisfies at dinner or supper. Like all of Libby's Food Products it is carefully cooked and prepared, ready to-serve, in **Libby's Great White Kitchen**—the cleanest, most scientific kitchen in the world.

Other popular, ready-to-serve Libby Pure Foods are:—

Cooked Corned Beef
Peerless Dried Beef
Veal Loaf
Evaporated Milk
Baked Beans
Chow Chow
Mixed Pickles

Write for free booklet,—"How to make Good Things to Eat". Insist on **Libby's** at your grocers.

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