THE MYSTERIOUS KEY

OR, PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The twelfth of April, the date set for Allison's wedding, was mild and beautiful—an ideal April day.

At an early hour the florists and decorators took possession of her stately home, and before evening it was turned into a magnificent temple of floral beauty.

The church, also, where Allison had been in the habit of attending was tastefully adorned, and redolent with perfumes, which was like a fragrant benediction upon the consummation of her happiness. Nothing had been omitted to make the occasion one befitting the marriage of the petted darling of Adam Brewster, the late wealthy banker.

After the discoveries of two evenings previous, a little change was made in the programme of the service. Mr. Charles Manning had been asked to give the bride away; he had been considered the one best calculated to officiate in this capacity, for Allison had always regarded him as a relative, and had been particularly fond of him and his family.

But, after learning that the sweet little bride-elect was her daughter, Lady Bromley begged that she might be allowed to usurp this privilege.

"Gerald, she is mine—I am fond of you both, and I want to give her to you," she had pleaded.

Mr. Manning, therefore, cheerfully resigned in her favor; Allison was greatly pleased with the arrangement, and everybody regarded it as most appropriate.

There were no bridesmaids. Gladys Manning had been chosen to act as a floral page, and, preceded by the ushers, walked before those two beautiful women down the broad aisle to the altar, scattering a profusion of flowers in their path as she went.

Lady Bromley's jewel-casket was again opened for this occasion, for surely, she thought, she could not withhold anything that would add luster to this important event, and thus the magnificent diamonds which adorned her person, together with her stately bearing and proud, beautiful face, attracted almost as much attention and admiration as the bride herself.

Allison's wedding-gown was both rich and elegant, yet characterized by an airiness—the effect of its trimmings of lace—that was just suited to her youth and style of beauty.

She was veiled from head to foot in tulle, with no ornament, save a great cluster of orange-blossoms which fastened her veil in place.

Lady Bromley performed her part with a stately self-possession that was charming; the glance which she lifted to Gerald as she gave him her only treasure being most impressive, and then she remained standing beside Allison throughout the remainder of the ceremony.

As the young wife turned from the altar, leaning upon the arm of her husband, her face—her veil having been thrown back—gleamed like a pure pearl which had caught the tints of sunrise, and many an eye grew moist from an impulse of peculiar tenderness, in view of the thrilling incidents which had threatened and been crowded into the life of the lovely girl during the last sixteen months, while every heart rejoiced in her present happiness and the brilliant prospects before her.

Gerald, of course, also received his share of attention, and it began to be observed that he bore a strong resemblance to his father in his erect, stalwart figure, his self-contained manner, his well-shaped head, and a certain rectitude of a purpose that was expressed in his firm, clear-cut features. It was an occasion of unusual interest, from every point of view, and as the eager throng followed the bridal-party to the Brewster mansion, the glamor of romance surrounding it was the theme upon every lip.

The papers of the previous day had announced and enlarged upon the wonderful discovery of Allison's origin, and this revelation, of course, added a hundredfold to the interest which everybody experienced in the happy couple.

A brilliant reception followed the ceremony at the church. Allison was her sweet, natural self; she did not appear to be in the least conscious that she was the cynosure of all eyes—the central show-figure to be admired and stared at, and greeted every one with a sincerity that was charming, while her husband appeared a veritable Brewster of the Brewsters.

Two days later the happy couple, Mr. and Mrs. Lyttleton, with Lady Bromley and her maid, Ellen Carson, sailed for Europe on the Germanic, to be absent indefinitely.

Mrs. Pollard was left in charge of the Brewster mansion, and was to be retained as housekeeper by young Mr. and Mrs. Brewster upon their return.

As Mr. Lyttleton had prophesied, there was very little difficulty or delay in settling the Bromley estate after the appearance of Allison upon the scene, with the many indisputable proofs that she was the child of Sir Charles and Lady Bromley, and thus the only legitimate heir to the property.

At first there was an attempt to make it appear that she was a pretender, but when all the facts were disclosed, Mrs. Bryant having joined her friends in London a few weeks after their arrival there, to give her testimony regarding her connection with the case—it was found useless to prolong the suit, and the other claimants were obliged to withdraw all pretensions to the estate.

After the rendering of the decision of the court, the whole party spent a couple of months in traveling and sightseeing, visiting important points in France, Switzerland, and Germany.

This trip was followed by a visit to Bromley Court, a magnificent estate located in Essex County.

But while sojourning here, her ladyship decided that she could not remain in England to be separated from her daughter, while Allison, whose interests were, of course, identical with those of her husband, and who, by education and inclination, was purely American, could not think of making her home abroad. Thus it was finally decided, after long and serious discussion, to dispose of the estate, if it could be advantageously accomplished, and transfer all their interests to their native land.

This was not difficult, since the Bromley relatives were very anxious to secure the Court and retain it in the family, and under the long-preserved family name.

An amicable and most satisfactory arrangement was made, and the transfer accomplished in a manner which resulted in establishing a very friendly intercourse between the families, who always thereafter exchanged delightful visits once or twice every year.

Gerald and his bride returned to New York about the middle of October. Lady Bromley, of course, made her home with her daughter, between whom and herself the tenderest relations now existed, Gerald also receiving his share of her ladyship's regard, while his respect and admiration for her continued unbounded.

Ellen Carson, who was a permanent fixture in this delightful household, considered herself the happiest and most fortunate individual in existence. Her affection for and devotion to both Allison and her mistress was both remarkable and touching, and under the careful and patient instruction of the latter, she was acquiring a fair education, and becoming the most efficient of maids.

Later, to her great delight, she was installed in the nursery, to care for the little one who came to add its charms to the already almost perfect household; and, as the years went on, she nursed in turn, with unswerving faithfulness, the four children who were the pride and hope of their fond parents.

John Hubbard served out ten weary years of his sentence, a broken-spirited man, when a gradual decline was followed by death, which released him from the torture of imprisonment.

Mrs. Alan Brown was discharged from prison at the end of a year, when she found an asylum with her daughter, Mrs. Hubbard, who, having acted in accordance with her husband's advice, had established herself in business, and was making a very comfortable living.

Later she married a respectable florist, when she removed to the country, where, becoming actively identified with her husband's interests, she led a busy life, and was quietly happy with the man of her second choice. Her mother lived only two years after this event. Thus, with no one to remind her of the wretched past, the memory of her early poverty, with its shadow of crime, gradually grew fainter and fainter, until it came to seem simply like an ugly dream-phantom, which had paused threateningly over her for a time, then swept onward into oblivion.

The Lymans and Bryants frequently exchanged visits with the Brewsters in New York, the friendship between Mrs Bryant and Lady Bromley growing more tender, as advancing years and freedom from care gave more time to spend with each other, while the former felt almost as if she had been absolved from an unpardonable crime, in the restoration of Allison to her birthright and her mother.

"I never forgave myself," she once remarked, as she suddenly clasped the young wife in her arms, with an impulse of gratitude, "for my share in that romantic, but terrible, episode of your mother's early life. Oh! if girls could only realize what misery they entail upon themselves and others by swerving from a straightforward course and practising deception, they would save themselves many bitter tears and regrets."

The Mannings again established themselves in New York, after the artist had completed his work in Boston. Allison told them that this was all that had been needed to complete her happiness, and the closest friendship always thereafter existed between the two families, "Cousin Annie" invariably being her referee upon all important matters of a feminine nature, whenever Lady Bromley was absent from home.

Gerald continued his connection with Mr. Lyttleton as a student, as previously arranged, and, after two years of diligent study, was admitted to the bar, where he became an ornament to his profession, and eventually an authority upon legal questions of a complicated nature.

His aim was not so much for pecuniary emolument as to achieve a rigid administration of equity, and he never spared himself in his efforts to win the victory for those clients who had fallen victims of the trickery of unprincipled sharpers and rogues.

He and Allison, with their interesting family, always spent a portion of each year at Lakeview—the early summer and late fall—which was their favorite home, and where their children never wearied of listening to "mamma" while she rehearsed the story of the never-to-be-forgotten lawn-party, where "papa" had made such a hero of himself in rescuing pretty Gladys Manning, who was now fast approaching young ladyhood, from drowning in the lake.

The swan-boat still figured conspicuously upon it, and one of the greatest treats to which the young Brewsters aspired was to sail, with their parents, to the very spot where Gerald had leaped from the craft, and live over, in its rehearsal, the thrilling experience of that daring and gallant exploit.

The villa at Newport was sold, as Allison had desired, and another purchased, farther up on "the bluffs."

But she never passed the other dwelling without a shiver or repugnance, and never entirely recovered from her antipathy to the spot until the dwelling was burned, and another, entirely different in style of architecture, was erected upon its site.

Doctor Ashmore must not be forgotten, for Allison always remembered his kindness on the day of Ellen Carson's accident, with gratitude and pleasure, and early renewed her friendship with him after her return to New York.

Once, several years later, when she was spending an afternoon in Central Park with her children, and Ellen as an attendant, she met him, and called his attention to the faithful, womanly appearing girl, and thanked him again for his services upon that memorable occasion.

"That, with later kindnesses, Doctor Ashmore," she remarked, with her charming smile, "was the stepping-stone to a new life for one who otherwise might have gone the other way and never known the meaning of the word happiness."

"Ah, but, Mrs. Brewster, you forget the gentler, sweeter influence which first turned her steps in the right direction—the commendation belongs not to me, but to yourself," the eminent surgeon returned.

In the "old Winchester lot" in that little town in Rhode Island, Gerald caused to be erected a fine memorial to the self-denying woman who had so tenderly cared for his heartbroken young mother during her sore trouble, and who afterward so cheerfully devoted the remainder of her life to him.

The place was a sacred spot to him; he had the date of his mother's death inscribed upon the space left for that purpose, and always had the lot cared for in the nicest possible manner.

The mystery of "The Golden Key" is a mystery no longer, and the tiny bauble unlocked for Allison a "Heritage of Love."

THE END.

NO TIME FOR FIREWORKS.

The brave ship was wallowing in the waves that threatened to engulf her at any moment.

Hastily the captain ordered a box of rockets and flares to be brought to the rail, and with his own hands ignited a number of them in the hope that they would be seen and the passengers and crew rescued.

Amid the glare of the rockets, a tall, thin, austere-looking individual found his way to the skipper.

"Captain," said he, "I must protest against this foolhardiness. We are now facing death; this is no time for fireworks!"

IN 1915.

"Mother may I go aviate?"
"Yes, my darling daughter;
See that you steer the airship straight
And don't land in the water."

FROM PAIN TO PLEASURE

SHOWING THE EXEREMES OF LIFE IN ONE DAY.

A Visitor to Jamaica Tells of Sad Scenes and Pleasant Days.

Once I saw the extremes of human pain and pleasure in a single day.

In the morning I breakfasted with the medical officer in charge of the leper asylum at Spanish Town, in Jamaica, and afterwards accompanied him on his rounds through that institution. All lepers in the colony are segregated there, unless their friends can guarantee effective private isolation to the authorities, says a writer in London Answers.

When we entered the gates, two little mulatto girls—dusky, lively children of five or six—ran up to us, laughing merrily. One caught hold of the doctor's arm, and gave him a bunch of white jessamine she had picked in the garden. Evidently he was a great favorite.

"Good-morning, Mabel!" he said. "See what I've got in my pocket!"

She dived her little hand in, and found some sweets. Then they both scampered away, triumphant.

CHILD-LEPERS!

"Are they——" I began; but I could not speak the word of them.

"Yes, they are lepers, and by law they must be confined here." His face grew very stern and thoughtful. "It is hard to see men and women day by day dragging out this most miserable of lives. But to see these young children stamped with the same curse, and to know that in time they, too, will become ghastly parodies of humanity——! Unless we can discover the cure. I have been experimenting on them with a serum I prepared, but the results, so far, are not conclusive."

We went into the pretty, flower-bedecked chapel—the gift of an English lady who happened to visit the settlement when touring in Jamaica. A negress was kneeling before the altar in silent prayer. The hands she clasped were almost destitute of fingers; her upturned face, though terribly mutilated by the progress of the leprosy, had the spiritual beauty of one who walks among things unseen.

"She was a deeply religious girl when she came here," the doctor whispered, as we went out into the burning sunshine "and she has never changed."

DRAGGLING OUT LIFE.

We walked about the grounds, and chatted with many of the inmates, who seemed pleased to see a visitor—a rare sight in a place which the natives cannot even speak without shuddering.

Some showed hardly any signs of the disease; others had lost almost every outward trace of manhood. But there was no distinction between them; they all talked, worked, or played together freely, for all were lepers. What the worst were the others would become, unless from some other cause death intervened. Leprosy, unfortunately, does not kill.

The doctor told me that he had known lepers die of old age, and I saw more than one man there over seventy, and an old woman nearly eighty. Some had been in the place the greater part of their lives.

"Is there much pain this morning?" the doctor asked of one very bad case.

"The pain never seems quite to leave me now," was the patient answer, as the man went on deftly weaving a basket; "but it is a bit easier."

In most cases there is, fortunately, no very acute pain—at all events during the greater part of the course of the disease.

But, enough. Everything that could be done to brighten the lives of the wretched dwellers in this house of pity and of pain was done by the Government and by private charity, yet some of the things I saw there cannot be written down.

On the afternoon of that same day I went to a garden-party, given by Lady H——, the Governor's wife, in the beautiful grounds of King's House—an earthly paradise which would be hard to beat even in the tropics.

Wandering along narrow, moss-covered pathways, between huge masses of blosom-laden bushes, and trees covered with wondrous orchids, talking the while of "home" with a sweet-faced girl, who still had the English bloom on her cheeks, and the English energy in her manner, it was hard to realize that, only a few hours before, and a few miles away, I had witnessed sights that would have saddened her young life for many a day, perhaps for ever.

WHERE IGNORANCE IS BLISS.

"What a delightful land this is!" she exclaimed, as she buried her face in a great cluster of the roses that rioted in color all around us. "How happy all the people seem to be—even the poorest of the negroes!"

I responded to her mood, and did my best to make her afternoon enjoyable. She laughed like a happy child at the absurd antics of a few of us in an impromptu burlesque of a gymkhana on the tennis-lawn. She delighted in talking to mild-mannered, sun-tanned men, who had been in wild places and done bloody deeds, which they carefully sub-edited for her benefit.

She inspected with reverent awe the treasures of King's House, with its relics of by-gone naval heroes who made the Empire. She felt, like Charles Kingsley when he visited the West Indies, that all the beauty and glamor and romance she had read about and dreamed about had come into her life at last. I do not think I ever saw man or woman more frankly, gloriously happy than she was that afternoon. The English reserve, the society manner, were completely forgotten for once.

"Well, dear child," said her hostess, when at length she regretfully said good-bye, "I hope you have had a nice time!"

"Oh, it is all perfectly heavenly!" she sighed. "I wish I could stay in Jamaica for ever! Everything is so beautiful here, and everyone is so happy!"

Lady H——, who was herself a ministering angel among the poor and the sick and the outcast, smiled sadly at me.

Can This Man Read Your Life?

The rich, poor, exalted and humble seek his advice on Business, Marriage, Friends, Enemies, Changes, Speculation, Love Affairs, Journeys, and all events of Life.

MANY SAY HE REVEALS THEIR LIVES WITH AMAZING ACCURACY.

Free test Readings will be sent for a short time to all our Readers.

Has the veil of mystery that has so long shrouded the ancient sciences been raised at last? Can it be that a system has been perfected that reveals with reasonable accuracy the character and disposition of an individual, and so outlines the life as to assist in avoiding errors and taking advantage of opportunities?

Roxroy, a man who has for twenty years been delving into the mysteries of the occult, making a scientific study of the various methods of reading the lives of people, seems to have reached a higher round in the ladder of fame than his predecessors. Letters are pouring into his office from all parts of the world telling of the benefits derived from his advice. Many of his patrons look upon him as a man gifted with some strange, mysterious power, but he modestly asserts that what he accomplishes is due alone to an understanding of natural laws.

He is a man of kindly feeling toward humanity, and his manner and tone immediately impress one with his sincere belief in his work. A huge stack of grateful letters from people who have received readings from him adds to other convincing proof as to his ability. Even Astrologers and Palmists admit that his system surpasses anything yet introduced.

The Rev. G. C. H. Hasskarl, Ph.D of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, in a letter to Prof. Roxroy, says: "You are certainly the greatest specialist and master of your profession. Everyone consulting you will marvel at the correctness of your detailed personal readings and advice. The most sceptical will consult you again and again after corresponding with you once."

If you wish to take advantage of Roxroy's generous offer and obtain a free reading, send your date, month and year of birth, state whether Mr., Mrs. or Miss, and also copy the following verse in your own handwriting:—

I have heard of your power
To read people's lives,
And would ask what for me
You have to advise?

Be sure to give your correct name and address and write plainly. Send your letter to ROXROY, Dept. 37, No. 177a Kensington High-street, London, W., England. If you wish, you may enclose 10 cents (Canadian stamps) to pay postage, clerical work, etc. Do not enclose coins or silver in letters.

THE MINER'S V. C.

Just as there is a Victoria Cross for brave soldiers, so there is an Edward Cross for heroes of the mine. This was instituted two years ago, and shows on one side a King Edward head, and on the other a miner succoring his fainting mate. Struck in silver, the miner's medal is attached to a dark-blue ribbon with a yellow edge, and is a prize coveted by every hardy pitman in Great Britain.

Marie—"I think Chollie is a delightful dancer; he's so light on his feet!" Lillian—"When you're better acquainted with Chollie, you'll discover that he's light at both ends.

About the Farm

FILLING THE SILO.

The silo is no longer an experiment, as all those who have fed silage properly will agree. The round silo, whether the same is made of wood, metal, concrete or brick, has overcome many of the difficulties which were encountered in keeping silage in the old-fashioned or square silo. The present form of the silo is probably as perfect a form as will ever be devised. Thus, in selecting a silo the main point at issue is the cost.

There is now no longer any doubt as to the right method of filling the silo. With the perfection of silo-filling machinery many of the troubles attending this operation in the past have disappeared.

If a long spout is hung from the end of the conveyer so that the silage falls in the centre of the silo in a large pile and the surface of the silage next the wall of the silo is kept tramped, and water added as necessary, there will be no danger of the same spoiling. The question as to how mature corn should be before using for silage is much less in dispute than it used to be.

Now it is generally accepted that the best silage is made from corn that is quite mature. If a dent variety, the dent in the kernel should commence to show. A good many of the unsatisfactory results in storing silage in the past have undoubtedly been due to the use of corn that was too green. An argument which we might mention in favor of silage in addition to those which we have already mentioned in the present high cost of feeds.

All grains and feeds of all kinds are higher in price than they have been in the past and the prospects are that they will continue to be high for some time. There is no way that we know of to supplement high priced grain in dairy feeding except by the use of silage. We, therefore, believe that every dairyman, and every farmer who has young cattle on his hands, can well afford to consider the silo as a valuable adjunct in his feeding operations.

LIVE STOCK NOTES.

Never compel a horse, much less a growing colt, to stand day in and day out on a hard, dry floor, without exercise.

Arrange to have two sheep pastures so that the flock can be changed from one to the other each week. The sheep relish a fresh, clean pasture. If you can do no better, put a fence through the old one.

The task of training a colt requires patience. Lessons must be repeated time after time in order to make sure that the colt is learning and that he does not forget. It is a wise precaution to hitch the colt with an older horse that has a good gait. The colt is thus apt to acquire a like step.

Much has been said of the utility of birds as insect scavengers, but there are no better insect destroyers to be found among all the feathered tribes than domestic poultry. The farms where hens and turkeys are allowed free range, are invariably found remarkably exempt from harmful insects. The free range of the place is not only the best way to derive the most benefit from fowls, but it insures the greatest exemption from most of the large insects, such as grasshoppers, cutworms, cabbage and cornworms, and nearly all large larvae and grubs that infest the crops.

FARM NOTES.

The best way to dispose of bones of all kinds is to grind them. The finer they are ground, the sooner they become available to the plant. If they are treated with sulphuric acid they are almost immediately usable by the plant as food.

A good deal is said about cover crops just now, and many kinds are recommended, but most writers make the same mistake farmers do in growing soiling crops, i.e., thinking plants will grow large on poor soil. It does not pay to buy high-priced cow peas, crimson clover, Canada peas or red clover to sow on land so poor that it will not yield a load to the acre.

An essential feature in plowing is that the broken connection of the inverted furrow-slice with the subsoil will soon be repaired. It is well known that the moisture in the soil comes to the surface by means of a natural law called capillary attraction. The same process may be observed in a sponge where a part of it is in water, or where a bit of blotting paper is used to take up spilled ink. Strawy manure plowed under will in a dry season hinder the re-uniting of top and bottom soil, and the capilliary attraction remaining broken, moisture is denied to the growing crop, and the season, or the manure, or Providence is blamed.

A bad imitation of w[illegible] better than the real