FORTUNE FAVORS THE BRAVE;

OR, A LOOK INTO THE PAST

CHAPTER XXVI.

A year had rolled away—twelve long calendar months. It was Christmas time—a good, sensible, seasonable Christmas, with frost and ice in abundance, and a clear, bright, wintry sky above.

London was very full, people were rushing here and there, bent on emptying their purses on the least provocation. There was an air of good nature prevailing; and if some por wretch stood shivering, with blue, wan face, in the gutter, the embodiment of hunger, sorrow and despair, he was, after all, in the minority, to judge by the hundreds of comfortably clad forms that hurried past him, breathing an atmosphere of peace and prosperity.

In two days' time the church bells would ring out the tidings that another Christmas was born, bidding all rejoice.

At one of the largest houses in Grosvenor Square a carriage drew up on this bright December morning, and a girl, carefully wrapped up in furs, sprang lightly out.

"Is Mrs. Crawshaw at home, Batts?" she asked of the footman who opened the door, and receiving an answer in the affirmative, she ran up the handsome staircase with all the assurance of one who was familiar with every nook and corner.

"Not in her boudoir," she murmured, putting her head in at the door of a charming little apartment. "Oh! Janet, there you are! Where is Mrs. Crawshaw?"

"You'll find her in the dining-room, miss. She's been there all the morning."

Dorothy flew downstairs again, and into the room named; there she came to a full stop.

"Well, what is happening?" she queried, as she beheld a perfect avalanche of baskets and parcels strewn on the table and the floor. "Is this an amateur grocer's shop, may I ask, Mrs. Crawshaw?"

Nancy laughed as she came forward and kissed her friend.

"You are just in time to help us, Dolly," she observed. "You have met my cousin, Darcy Hamilton, have you not?" indicating a rather handsome young man, who was apparently very busy.

Miss Leicester's manner was only moderately warm as she acknowledged Mr. Hamilton's greeting.

"So like Nancy! She has forgiven these people their neglect and unkindness to her when she was a poor little baby. Of course, they are very glad to acknowledge their relation, now she is one of the richest widows in England. Ugh! I hate them all!" So declared Dorothy, mentally, giving a vicious tug to her sable boa, as, in obedience to Nancy's commands, she removed her furs.

"Now perhaps you will tell me what all this means?" she inquired again, as she recovered her temper.

Nancy smiled. She had grown into a beautiful woman during the year that was gone. She was still as youthful and fresh as ever, but the girlish simplicity had left her face, and the traces of deep thought and sorrow lived in her wonderful eyes.

Now in her gray gown, made of some soft, clinging material, with her hair piled picturesquely on the top of her small head, it would have been difficult to find a more delightful object for the gaze to rest on.

"I am superintending the arrangement of my poor people's Christmas gifts," she explained. "They are all to be distributed to-night. I don't know what I should have done if Darcy had not offered to come and help me."

"You know I am only too delighted, cousin Nancy!" was the warm reply, spoken honestly; for, despite Dorothy's hard verdict, Darcy Hamilton was a thoroughly good-hearted young fellow, who would have fallen in love just as easily with his cousin when she had been poor and unhappy as he did now when she was a millionaire.

"It seems to me you don't want me to do very much," Dolly observed, after a few moments' chatting, as she watched Nancy giving her orders to the two servants, who were working away like bees.

"Sit still, and let me look at you," Nancy replied, with a proud tender glance at the girl. "That is all I ask."

"You will have plenty of opportunity of doing so all next week, my darling."

Nancy looked round hurriedly.

"What do you mean, Dolly?" she asked. "You know, dear, I told you that——"

"Oh, yes; you told me plainly enough! But that makes no difference. You are coming down with us to-morrow, Miss Nancy, whether you like it or no. So there is an end of the matter!"

"Dolly, dear, it is impossible!"

"Is it—I don't think so!" Then jumping up and flinging her arms round the dainty form, "Darling, you must come—you can't refuse me—and papa—poor, lame papa—he will be broken-hearted if you don't spend your Christmas with us. We shall all be alone—only Merefield is coming, and you don t mind him. Now, you are hesitating, Nancy. Why don't you say 'yes'? Mr. Hamilton, do persuade her!"

"I will if I can. I should like her to be with you above all things, Miss Leicester: I am sure it would do her good," the young man answered, promptly.

Nancy's face wore a constrained expression; she could not bear to refuse these dear ones, and yet to go back to the Hall—was she strong enough to bear the memories that must come?

As her cousin spoke she woke from her musings.

"I am afraid I must say no, Dolly, darling; I have asked Darcy to spend his Christmas with me, now that Sir John and Lady Hamilton are away, and——"

"Oh, don't think of me, Nancy!" began Darcy.

"Is that your only excuse?" cried Dorothy. "Why, that is easily settled. Of course, Mr. Hamilton will come, too. Oh! no, no; I won't listen to anything more; I just command you to pack up at once, both of you, and be prepared to travel down with daddy and me to-morrow. Oh! how lovely it all is!" and Dorothy executed a dance descriptive of joy, which came to a premature stop as Nancy inquired, hurriedly:

"And you will really be alone, Dolly, dear?"

"Really; only Merefield. There is no one else to come; Aunt Priscilla is away, so is Derry, and Aunt Anne can't come, for the very good reason that she has not been asked. Daddy agreed with me that we would dispense with the usual crowd of cousins this year. I don't mean anything rude, Mr. Hamilton; you must put it all down to my delight at having captured this most aggravating young person. Now, Nancy, beware; play me false and—well, I won't even breathe what my vengeance will be like, or I shall frighten you into fits!"

And with the Dolly flung her arms about Nancy, and again kissed and hugged her wildly.

"And now I must go. No, don't trouble to come to the door to see me off, Mr. Hamilton; stay and help to get all this work done, or we shall be having some horrible excuse about having to remain, etc. Good-bye, darling; you have made me so happy! What! you will come, Mr. Hamilton? Well, if you catch cold, it is your own fault, and if you are ill at Ripstone you won't enjoy yourself a bit. Take care of Nancy, and——"

And so, laughing gaily, Dolly flitted out of the room, and Nancy was alone.

"It must have happened some day, I suppose," she said to herself, with a heavy sigh, as she stood gazing into the fire; "but I wish I could have refused Dolly. She thinks to make me very happy. How little she knows!"

* * * * *

Dorothy, determined that there should be no slipping through her fingers at the last moment, went herself to fetch Nancy and escort her to the station.

She found Dr. Grantley with Mrs. Crawshaw, and a spot of excitement on Nancy's cream cheeks.

"Uncle Henry has come home, Dolly!" she explained, hurriedly; "dear old Uncle Henry! I shall be so glad to see him again!"

She could never forgive herself for having been made to doubt Henry Chaplin's integrity for one instant, and her warm, generous heart turned with a double wealth of love to the weak, kind, courteous student, who had been her best and oldest friend, when she discovered how she had wronged him.

Dolly's face fell.

"And—and now you won't come with us! Oh, Nancy!" she said, with tears of disappointment.

"Oh, yes, she will," declared Dr. Grantley, decisively.

"Mr. Chaplin has gone to spend Christmas with his wife and children in ——shire, where, thanks to this good Samaritan's generosity"—with a touch on Nancy's shoulder—"he will find, let us hope, not only a comfortable, but a pleasant home."

Dorothy's face beamed.

"Oh! if Mr. Chaplin wants to see her before she returns, there is plenty of room at the Hall."

"Are you going to put up all my belongings, Dolly?" Nancy asked, with a faint smile.

"Yes," was the prompt reply, "if that will ensure you being there."

And then, after having tried hard to press Dr. Grantley to join them, and having accompanied Nancy while she went to send her uncle a loving telegram, with Christmas greetings, Miss Leicester drove off in triumph to the station, where Sir Humphrey, looking hale and hearty, despite his lame leg and crutch, and Darcy Hamilton were awaiting them.

"I expect we shall have a pitched battle between Janet and Baines," Dorothy declared, laughingly, as they were all driving through Ripstone village to the Hall, a few hours later, amid the courtesies and respectful greetings of the tenants. "You have no conception of what jealousy there is harbored in my maid's honest breast for your abigail, Mrs. Crawshaw."

Nancy made no reply. She had grown very pale and her deep-blue eyes wandered over the well-remembered spots with a look of pain in them so great that it distressed Dorothy. She said nothing, however, judging it kinder to leave the girl alone.

"It will bring back all the old horror and trouble at first," she thought to herself, "but that will soon pass."

But she had no knowledge of how much suffering this journey through Ripstone village meant to Nancy, for she knew nothing of the brief romance that had been born here in the summer that was long dead, buried and forgotten, and so she was ignorant and unconscious of how great a sacrifice of feelings Nancy had made when she had consented to join their Christmas party at Ripstone Hall.

"Welcome home, Nancy dear—welcome home!" said Sir Humphrey, as he stood, hat in hand, at the open door of his well-loved house "There's a good piece of mistletoe somewhere about, I am sure, so you must not be angry if I steal a kiss."

"Twenty if you like," Nancy answered, lifting her sweet red lips to his; then she was kissed by Dorothy, and then she found herself in a crowd of servants, who greeted her with warm though respectful words of welcome.

A mist of tears rose before her eyes, and her lips quivered, but Dolly was quick to create a diversion.

"Your old room, Nancy," she said; then, as she slipped her hand through Nancy's arm, she whispered: "Here is Baines. Now for a good free fight. I saw Janet rearing her head like a Trojan a moment ago."

The quiver turned into a smile, and the tears were bravely kept back as Baines was greeted, and then the two girls were alone in the dear, old, well-remembered bedroom.

"Oh, darling! I am so glad to have you here—so glad!" cried Dorothy, with real joy ringing in her tones. "It is like old times, Nancy. It makes me so happy!"

And then, when she had gone round and seen all was as it should be, Dorothy, anxious that Janet's feelings should not be hurt, herself went to see to the good creature's wants, and Nancy shut the door and was alone.

What a flood of memory, bitter and sweet, came to her as she stood in this little room—the unconscious happiness that preceded the birth of love—the few brief hours of ecstasy—the shock that cut that ecstasy short—the mental agony that followed. How it all came back to her! The gardens and grounds that had lain bathed in the summer sunshine now stretched cold and barren in the winter's rime before her—a fit emblem of her desolate heart.

(To be continued.)

THE AMEER'S VENGEANCE.

When Sir Charles Euan-Smith, who died not long ago in England, was in the market place of an Afghanistan town he was fired at by a native. He lodged complaint with the Ameer, who appeared to take no notice of the incident, merely remarking, "That's all right." Sir Charles complained again and met with the same reply. He still thought that the Ameer was treating a serious matter with less consideration that it deserved, but thought it advisable to say no more on the subject. About a week afterward he was invited by the Ameer to ride with him. They rode for some distance outside the town and passed gibbet after gibbet. At length Sir Charles said: "Your Highness has been busy of late." "Oh, no," replied the Ameer, "they are your little lot." He had taken all the members of the would-be assassin's family and hanged every one of them.

NIAGARA DISTRICT NEEDS PROTECTION.

Enough Peaches in Georgia Alone to Supply America.

The relationship between Canada and the United States as regards the fruit industry, and the manifest need of a Protective tariff for Canadian fruit growers have been clearly shown in a series of articles by Dr. George Charles Buchanan of Beamsville, Ont., President of the Ontario and Western Co-operative Society. Dealing with the Niagara peninsula Dr. Buchanan says:—

There are in the Niagara Peninsula about 350 square miles of land on which fruit can be well grown, not counting such districts as Ancaster and Dundas. Between Toronto and Hamilton there is another 100 square miles; in all at least 288,000 acres.

Not all of this is peach land, not even probably 20 per cent. of it. But very little of it is of no use for any fruit. Much can be made fine peach land by drainage, or good apple, plum or grape land; some is only good for berries, but all of it is in a good fruit climate. The unplanted land is waiting to double or quadruple in value, whenever the market demands more fruit.

It may be assumed that the value of this land for general farming is not over $100 per acre, and that for fruit purposes it is worth $500 per acre; although much of the peach land is worth $1,000 per acre; and that where it has to be drained, draining will average about $20 per acre.

It can further be stated that peach land at $1,000 per acre is known to pay a good return on the investment in the hands of practical growers. If we take the very low estimate of 10,000 acres planted at $500 per acre we have a value of $50 000,000 for the orchard and berry lands.

Now as our home market grows, and in our home market we have no competition, every acre of this 288,000 has potentially the same value, and fully half is unplanted.

There are in Canada about 8,000,000 people, the United States claim 93,000,000. However that may be, our present soft fruit acreage is fully equal to supplying Canada. It is safe to say there is not over 12,000 acres of peaches in Eastern Canada. If this supplies 8,000,000 people it would take 150,000 acres to supply 93,000,000 people, but there are 180,000 acres of peaches in Georgia alone.

ANGRY SAMOAN WOMEN.

Armed With Whips and Sticks They Attacked a Male Critic.

The latest news from the South Seas brings a story which illustrates, in a fashion at once comic and serious, the chief difficulty of the German empire-builder in Samoa, to wit, the readiness of the German settler to intermarry with the native women. The white population of the German colony is about 500, and there are already about 1,100 half-castes. Of the twenty married German officials, no fewer than twelve have Samoan wives. As the native girls nearly always speak English and refuse to learn German, the frequency of these mesalliances causes particular disquiet in colonial circles in the fatherland. In April last a German settler named Michaels took it into his head to express these truths in a letter to the colonial newspaper, adding that quite apart from race considerations the Samoan women made inefficient and unworthy wives. Seldom has an author had more gratifying proof of his power to arouse interest and inspire action. The very next morning a deputation of several hundred Samoan women of various shades waited upon him armed with whips, sticks, and gardening tools. The police were just in time to rescue Michaels by taking him into custody. But the dusky amazons scored in spite of the police, for the authorities had to bundle their calumniator out of the island as the only means of preventing serious trouble.

HOW FIREFLY LIGHTS.

To find out just how and why the tiny firefly is ableat will to transform itself into a living lamp a series of very interesting experiments have just been conducted by F. Alexander Dermott and Charles G. Crane of the Hygienic Laboratory of the United States Public Health and Hospital Service in Washington. The investigation necessarily called for consderable delicate microscopical study of the light producing organs of the firefly. It was found that the insect produces its light by oxidation, that is, by practical combustion.

A woman who visited the British museum recently inquired of an attendant: "Have you no skull of Cromwell? I have been looking all round for a skull of Oliver Cromwell." "No, madam," replied the attendant. "We never had one." "How very odd!" she exclaimed; "they have a fine one in the museum at Oxford!"

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THE FARM

Useful Hints for the Tiller of the Soil

FEEDING COWS FOR MILK.

In ninety-nine cases probably out of a hundred where cows in a herd are not producing satisfactory profits the results are due to a lack of system in the management. In the first place the breeding of the herd may be at fault, but this is not always a criterion, and the farmer is not justified in jumping to hasty conclusions. The cow is really a machine for the purpose of turning roughage, meal, grass, roots, etc., into milk. One does not know whether or not a machine has profitable capacity until it is put to the test. If a farmer weighed the milk of his herd of, say, ten cows and fed the cows alike, he might come to the conclusion that all the cows were doing well, or he might come to the very opposite conclusion, that they were all unprofitable. In both cases he might be wrong. The only correct basis on which to estimate the yield of a herd of cows is individual performance. Then he knows that certain cows are making good use of the food they consume; others are making poorer use, and perhaps still better use. As soon as the question of individual production is solved he is at once in possession of the data necessary to determine whether or not he is feeding the cows, so they will have a chance to show what they can do. Many farmers feed cornstalks, hay and some roots, and expect their cows to yield large quantities of milk. Often the quantity of hay is limited, and the whole ration is wheat bran, cornmeal and oilmeal mixed equal parts by weight. This should be fed twice daily. Each cow should receive as many pounds of this grain ration a day as she produces pounds of butter fat in a week. For example, if a cow produces nine pounds of butter fat in seven days she should be fed nine pounds of grain a day, or four and a half pounds night and morning. If one does not know how much butter fat his cows are producing or how much milk each individual yields he is in the dark as to how each should be fed. When the meal ration is setled, then the roughage, whatever form it takes may be fed with a liberal hand. If the ration be well balanced good cows will do justice to themselves and yield profit to their owner, even on dry feed.

HOW MANY TO AN ACRE.

The number of cattle to be grazed per acre must be determined by the experience of the farmer himself. Under no circumstances is overstocking to be practised, if the supply of grass proves defective, sell offff the supernumerary animals; if the feed be abundant, buy more stock or convert the excess of grass into hay. It is an undecided question whether it is right or not that cattle, sheep and horses should be allowed to feed together in the same field. There are many farmers who will have no such trinity, and others who positively object to sheep. Twelve of the latter to the acre is the rule. By horses are understood, not working horses that are too worn out to roam about in search of food, and that prefer the soiling plan, but colts which are all for play and disturb the other occupants. Cattle do not bite the grass clean; sheep eat the heart out of clover, thereby killing it; they also pick out their food daintily; the horses nip, as it were, between both. Sheep fold the soil, which is no small gain, but are not liked by either cattle or horses. There is still another matter to be decided and which influences the number of cattle to be maintained. Are they to be soiled or left to graze? The latter is the least troublesome, but fewer head can be kept. In soiling the green stuff must be cut twice a day and left some hours to heat down. That implies a great deal of carting away manure. But then there will be more stock supported. If the cattle be left out during the summer nights in a paddock that outdoor relief will be prized. The milking can take place in the stable as well as in the field. In the rich grass land of Normandy the cattle are there fed by the picket plan. Every animal has a tether of six or nine yards that works on a swivel, so that this surface of fodder must be fed bare; the herder changes the sweep of the tether twice a day. At night the animals are housed. The water is specially supplied from pumps to the troughs.

A FINE MEMORY.

Blinks, after inviting to dinner his friend Jinks, who had just returned from abroad, was telling him what a fine memory his little son Bobby had.

"And do you suppose he will remember me?" said Jinks.

"Remember you? Why, he remembers every face that he ever saw."

An hour later they entered the house, and, after Jinks had shaken hands with Mrs. Blinks, he called Bobby over to him.

"And do you remember me, my little man?"

"Course I do. You're the same fellow that dad brought last summer, and ma was so cross about it that she didn't speak to him for a whole week."

LUCKY MISTAKE.

Grfocer Sent Pkg. of Postum and Opened the Eyes of the Family.

A lady writes from Blookline, Mass.:

"A package of Postum was sent me one day by mistake.

"I notified the grocer, but finding that there was no coffee for breakfast next morning, I prepared some of the Postum, following the directions very carefully.

"It was an immediate success in my family, and from that day we have used it constantly, parents and children, too—for my three rosy youngsters are allowed to drink it freely at breakfast and luncheon. They think it delicious, and I would have a mutiny on my hands should I omit the beloved beverage.

"My husband used to have a very delicate stomach while we were using coffee, but to our surprise his stomach has grown strong and entirely well since we quit coffee and have been on Postum.

"Noting the good effects in my family I wrote to my sister, who was a coffee toper, and after much persuasion got her to try Postum.

"She was prejudiced against it at first, but when she presently found that all the ailments that coffee gave her left and she got well quickly she became and remains a thorough and enthusiastic Postum convert.

"Her nerves, which had become shattered by the use of coffee have grown healthy again, and to-day she is a new woman, thanks to Postum." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich., and the "cause why" will be found in the great little book, "The Road to Wellville," which comes in pkgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.