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OR, A CURIOUS MYSTERY EXPLAINED.

CHAPTER XXIX.

It is of course a truism that we never fully appreciate what we have, until some trouble or some other loss shows us all that has grown familiar in a fresh light. Fond as he had been of his home before, Frithiof had never until now quite realized what it meant to him. But as each evening he returned from work, and from the severe trial of an atmosphere of suspicion and dislike, he felt much as the sailor feels when, after tossing about all day in stormy seas he anchors at night in some harbor of refuge. Sigrid knew that he felt this, and she was determined that he should not even guess her trouble. It was with her certainly as she went about her household work, with her as she and Swanhild walked through the hot and crowded streets, and with her as she played at Mme. Lechertier's Academy. But there was something in the work that prevented the trouble from really preying on her mind; she was sad indeed, yet not in despair.

Nevertheless, Mme. Lechertier's quick eyes noted at once the change in her favorite.

"You are not well, cherie," she said, "your face looks worn. Why, my dear, I can actually see lines in your forehead. At your age that is inexcusable."

Sigrid laughed.

"I have a bad habit of wrinkling it up when I am worried about anything," she said. "To-day, perhaps, I am a little tired. It is so hot and sultry, and besides I am anxious about Frithiof, it is a trying time for him."

"Yes, this heat is trying to the strongest," said Mme. Lechertier. "Swanhild, my angel, there are some new bonbons in that box; help yourself."

The child was never happier than when hard at work at the academy; even on this hot summer day she never complained; and in truth the afternoons just brought the right amount of variety into what would otherwise have been a very monotonous life.

"Sigrid," said the little girl, as they walked home together, "is it true what you said to Madame Lechertier about Frithiof feeling the heat? Is it really that which has made him so grave the last few days?"

"It is partly that," replied Sigrid. "But he has a good deal to trouble him that you are too young to understand, things that will not bear talking about. You must try to make it bright and cheerful at home."

Next morning (Sunday) was so bright that Sigrid persuaded him to take a walk, and fully intending to return in an hour's time to his translating, he paced along the Embankment. He crossed Blackfriars Bridge and walked further and further, and on to the further bank of the Tower—solid and grim, as befitted the guardian of so many secrets of the past. Even here there was a quiet Sunday feeling, while something familiar in the sight of the water and the shipping carried him back in imagination to Norway, and there came over him an intense longing for his own country. It was a feeling that often took possession of him, nor could he any more account for its sudden seizures than the Swiss can account for that sick longing for his native mountains to which he is often liable.

"It's no use," he thought to himself. "I'll—ill take me the best part of my life—pay the debts, and till they are paid I can't go."

CHAPTER XXX.

Perhaps it was almost a relief both to Frithiof and to Sigrid that, just at this time, all intercourse with Rowan Tree House should become impossible. Lance and Gwen had sickened with scarlatina, and of course, all communication was at end for some time to come. So that, perhaps, the only person who sighed over the separation was Cecil, and she was fortunately kept so busy by her little patients that she had not time to think much of the future.

By the middle of August, Lance and Gwen had recovered, and were taken down to the sea-side. But in spite of lovely weather that summer's holiday proved a very dreary one. Roy was in the depths of depression, and it seemed to Cecil that a great shadow had fallen upon everything.

"Robin," said Mrs. Boniface, "I want you to take that child to Switzerland for a month; this place is doing her no good at all. She wants change and mountain air."

So the father and mother plotted and planned, and in September Cecil, much against her will, was packed off to Switzerland to see snow-mountains and water-falls.

Still, being a sensible girl, she did her best with what was put before her, and though her mind was a good deal with Sigrid and Frithiof in their trouble and anxiety, yet physically she gained great good from the tour, and came back with a color in her cheeks which satisfied her mother.

"By the bye, dearie," remarked Mrs. Boniface, the day after her return, "your father thought you would like to hear the 'Elijah' to-night at the Albert Hall, and he has left you two tickets."

"Why Albani is singing, is she not?" cried Cecil. "Oh, yes; I should like to go, of all things!"

"Then I will tell you what we will do; we will send a card and ask Mrs. Horner to go with you, for it's the church meeting to-night, and father and I do not want to miss it."

Cecil could make no objection to this, though her pleasure was rather damped by the prospect of having Mrs. Horner as her companion. There was little love lost between them, for the innate refinement of the one jarred upon the innate vulgarity of the other, and vice versa.

It was a little after seven o'clock when Cecil drove to the Horners' house and was ushered into the gorgeous drawing-room.

"My dear," exclaimed Mrs. Horner, entering with a perturbed face, "did not my letter reach you in time? I made sure it would. The fact is, I am not feeling quite up to going to-night. Could you find any one else, do you think, who would go with you?"

Cecil thought for a moment.

"Sigrid would have liked it, but I know she is too busy just now," she remarked.

"And oh, dear, far better go alone than take Miss Falck!" said Mrs Horner; "I shall never forget what I endured when I took her with me to hear Corney Grain; she laughed aloud, my dear; laughed till she positively cried, and even went so far as to clap her hands. It makes me hot to think of it even."

"I always enjoy going anywhere with Sigrid," said Cecil. "It seems to me that her wonderful faculty for enjoying everything is very much to be envied. However, as there is no chance of her going to-night, I will call and see whether one of the Greenwoods is disengaged."

So with hasty farewells she went off, laughing to herself as the cab rattled along, to think of Mrs. Horner's discomfort and Sigrid's intense appreciation of Corney Grain. Fate, however, seemed to be against her; her friends the Greenwoods were out for the evening, and there was nothing left for it but to drive home again; or else to go in alone and trust to finding Roy afterward. She decided to go alone, and writing a few words on a card asking Roy to come to her at the end of the oratorio, she sent it to the artiste's room by one of the attendants, and settled herself down to enjoy the music, secretly rather glad to have an empty chair instead of Mrs. Horner beside her.

All at once the color rushed to her cheeks, for, looking up, she saw Frithiof crossing the platform; she watched him place the score on the conductor's desk, and turn to answer the question of some one in the orchestra, then disappear again within the swing-doors leading to the back regions. She wondered a little that Roy did not come to her; or, at any rate, send her some message, and at the end of the last chorus began to feel a little anxious and uncomfortable. At last, to her great relief, she saw Frithiof coming toward her.

"Your brother has never come," he said, in reply to her greeting. "I suppose this fog must have hindered him, for he told me he should be here; and I have been expecting him every moment."

"Is the fog so bad as all that?" said Cecil, rather anxiously.

"It was very bad when I came," said Frithiof. "However, by good luck, I managed to grope my way to Portland Road, and came down by the Metropolitan. Will you let me see you home?"

"Thank you, but it is so dreadfully out of your way. I should be very glad if you would, only it is troubling you so much."

"You will be giving me a real pleasure," he said. "I expect there will be a rush on the trains. Shall we try for a cab?"

So they walked out together into the dense fog, Cecil with a blissful sense of confidence in the man who piloted her so adroitly through the crowd.

At last, after much difficulty, Frithiof secured a hansom, and put her into it. She was secretly relieved that he got in too.

"I will come back with you if you will allow me," he said; "for I am not quite sure whether this is not a more dangerous part of the adventure than when we were on foot. I never saw such a fog! Why, we can't even see the horse, much less where he is going."

"How thankful I am that you were here! It would have been dreadful all alone," said Cecil; and she explained to him how Mrs. Horner had failed her at the last moment. "You have not met my mother since she came back from the sea. Are you still afraid of infection? The house has been thoroughly painted and fumigated."

"Oh, it is not that," said Frithiof; "but while this cloud is still over me, I can't come. You do not realize how it affects everything."

"It does not affect your own home."

"No, that's true," said Frithiof. "It has made me value that more, and it has made me value your friendship more. But, you see, you are the only one at Rowan Tree House who still believes in me; and how you manage to do it passes my comprehension—when there is nothing to prove me innocent."

"None of the things which we believe in most can be absolutely proved," said Cecil. "I can't logically justify my belief in you any more than in our old talks I could justify my belief in the unseen world."

"Do you remember that first Sunday when I was staying with you, and you asked me whether I had found a Norwegian church?"

"Yes, very well. It vexed me so much to have said anything about it, but you see, I had always lived with people who went to church or chapel as regularly as they took their meals.

"Well, do you know I was wrong; there is a Norwegian church down near the Commercial Docks at Rotherhithe. It is too far for Sigrid and Swanhild to go very often, but to me it is like a bit of Norway planted down in this great wilderness of houses," he said. "It was strange that I should have happened to come across it so unexpectedly, just at the time when I most needed it."

"But that surely is what always happens," said Cecil. "When we really need a thing we get it."

"You learned, before I did, to distinguish between needing and wanting," said Frithiof. "But I, you see, had to lose everything before understanding—to lose even my reputation for common honesty. Even now it seems to me hardly possible that life should go on under such a cloud as that. Yet the days pass somehow, and I believe that it was this trouble which drove me to what I really needed."

"It is good of you to tell me this," said Cecil. "It seems to put meaning into this mystery which is always puzzling me and seeming so useless and unjust. By the bye, Roy tells me that Darnell has left."

"Yes," said Frithiof, "he left at Michaelmas. Things have been rather smoother since then."

"I can't help thinking that his leaving just now is indirect evidence against him," said Cecil. "Sigrid and I suspected him from the first. Do not you suspect him?"

"Yes," he replied, "I do. But without any reason."

"Why did he go?"

"His wife was ill, and was ordered to a warmer climate. He has taken a situation at Plymouth. After all, there is no real evidence against him, and a great deal of evidence against me. How is it that you suspect him?"

"It is because I know you had nothing to do with it," said Cecil.

He had guessed what her answer would be, yet loved to hear her say the words.

(To be continued.)

On the Farm

Succulent Food for Stock.

Just as one enjoys eating an apple occasionally—especially during the winter, when less fruit and vegetables are used than during the summer—just so the live stock in the winter, when their rations consist largely of dry feed, need and appreciate some form of succulent food. There is very little added expense in supplying animals with a reasonable amount of succulent food, either in the form of roots or silage. For a herd of twelve or more cows, this succulent food is most cheaply supplied by the use of silage; but for the smaller herd, or for a man without a silo, roots afford an excellent substitute for silage.

By care in preparing the soil and growing the crop, from fifteen to twenty-five tons of roots, like mangels, rutabagas or stock carrots can be grown per acre. They can be stored under the feeding-alley or in a pit outside of the barn, at very little expense. Twenty tons of roots will supply ten cows twenty pounds per day each for 200 days, and can be grown and harvested at a cost of less than $40. The nutrients contained in twenty tons of roots are worth $30 when bran is worth $20 per ton; so the feeding value of the roots is sufficient to pay for the cost of production, beside the additional advantage of their supplying the succulence needed by the animal.

Planting Seeds of Fruits.

Large seeds like peaches and plums may be planted in the fall, and they will freeze sufficiently during the winter to cause them to sprout readily in the spring. Small seeds like the apple, grape, etc., should be mixed with sand in the fall or early winter, and placed in a shallow, open box. The box should be set flat, on the ground on the north side of a building where it will keep moist and remain there all winter to freeze and thaw as often as it will. The contents of the box should never be allowed to dry out. Very early in the spring just as soon as the soil in the garden will do to work, the seeds should be planted in rows and covered very lightly. The seeds may be separated from the sand with a sieve, but this is unnecessary as sand and all may be sown in the row. Take care that the seeds do not become dry before they are planted. Apple seeds begin growing very early, so that care must be taken to get them in the ground before sprouting begins.

In the Poultry Yard.

It is a mistake to keep late hatched pullets of the large varieties for winter layers. These are always the late moulters. A hen changes her coat at the same time each year.

If convenient separate the fowls into several bunches. They will lay more eggs than if crowded together in one house. For instance if a hundred hens are kept, divide into four or five flocks and have a separate house or apartment for each flock.

Don't forget to store plenty of cabbage for the hens. They take the place of grass better than anything else with the exception of green rye. In case the cabbage crop is a failure then by all means sow a patch of rye in the fall.

Save all the turnips, rutabagas, pumpkins, etc., that can be conveniently stored for winter poultry food. They may be fed either cooked or raw. Cooked vegetables, of course should be mashed and thickened with ground grain. Always remove the seed from pumpkins.

Raise More Sheep.

Fifteen or twenty ewes, and a ram, will constitute about the right-sized flock with which to begin. They must have abundant shelter from rain and snow; but it need not be in a warm barn. Wet, whether from above or underfoot, is to be scrupulously guarded against by the sheep-owner. Exposure in a cold rain is bad for a horse or steer; it is doubly bad for sheep. The sheep sheds should be on a high, well drained site—indeed, sheep should be allowed to run over no low, wet land, no matter how attractive the herbage thereon may be.

Except that the ram should have a little grain now and then, to maintain his virtility, and the ewes a little at lambing time, the flock will require only pasturage for the greater part of the year, with clover hay or like roughage for winter feeding. The farmer with only himself and a child or two to carry the burden of caring for animals, will often find the keeping of sheep more advantageous than the keeping of cattle.

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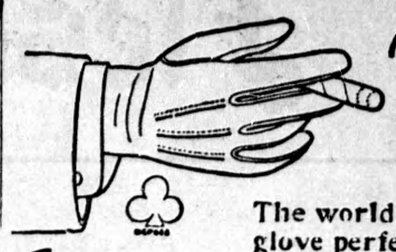

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THREE AMUSING STORIES.

"King Edward In His True Colors," by Mr. Edward Legge.

"King Edward In His True Colors" is the title of a book that has just been published from the pen of Mr. Edward Legge, which is aimed to controvert the life written by Sir Sidney Lee, in the Dictionary of National Biography. Here are two or three amusing stories from it:

"At Marlborough House one night in the eighties the King, who was then Prince of Wales, was playing billiards with some of his guests. 'H.R.H.' was not in particularly good form, and, after a rather bad shot, one of the younger men shouted, to the amazement and disgust of the others: 'I say, Wales, pull yourself together!' The Prince made no reply, but beckoning to a servant, said: 'Call Mr. ——'s carriage!'"

"Etiquette prescribes that those who are invited to meet sovereigns, or their heirs-apparent, should wear, when they possess them, the orders of the visiting monarch, or his representative for the time being. The Marquis de Soveral, when he was once commanded to Sandringham, where some of the members of the Royal Family of Greece were staying, was seen by King Edward at the dinner to be wearing the wrong decoration. His Majesty quietly removed his own Greek Order, and under cover of the table cloth affixed it to the nether end of the Marquis's waistcoat. None of the party perceived this timely, good-natured action, the amusement being divided between the King and the then Portuguese Minister."

"An American soldier was once asked what he thought of the Prince of Wales. 'What do I think of him?' replied the sergeant in a burst of enthusiasm. 'Why, Albert Edward gave me my first start in life! When the Prince was over here on a visit to the President, a grand review and luncheon was given in his honor right here in Boston. A friend of mine, a Mrs. Brown, was there, and was fairly 'gone' on the young Prince, like everybody else. They all raved about him. After the luncheon she said to me, 'Oh, corporal, can't you give me something that the Prince of Wales has touched. I don't care what, as long as it's something, if it's only a fish-bone.' 'Well,' I said, 'I'll get you those duck bones that I see there on the Prince's plate!' I went over to the table where the Prince had sat, picked up every one of the duck bones that he had left on his plate, and passed them on to Mrs. Brown, who gave me three dollars for the prize, and went her way as proud as a Thanksgiving turkey. I then strolled around the table, collected all the bones which the other people had left, made them up into little parcels, and traded them off to my friends as the real, original duck bones that the Prince of Wales had left on his plate! It was a regular cinch, and I cleared forty-eight dollars by the deal! That's how I got my first start in life from your Prince, the loveliest young gentleman I ever struck."

HERO OF LIGHT BRIGADE.

Sir George Wombwell Celebrates His Eightieth Birthday.

Sir George Wombwell, who has just celebrated his eightieth birthday, has been described as the Major Pendennis of our day. He withstood all the horrors of the Crimea, rode with the Light Brigade without turning a hair and even still is envied by men half his age for the skill of his tailor and the way he wears his clothes.

His home is Newburgh Priory, in Yorkshire, a historic mansion which holds more secrets of history than many places of greater fame. Sir George, who married a daughter of the sixth Earl of Jersey, celebrated his golden wedding a couple of years ago.

Sir George took part in the great charge immortalized by Tennyson, and after having two horses shot under him and falling into Russian hands he escaped and returned to camp with "all that was left" of the heroic brigade.

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