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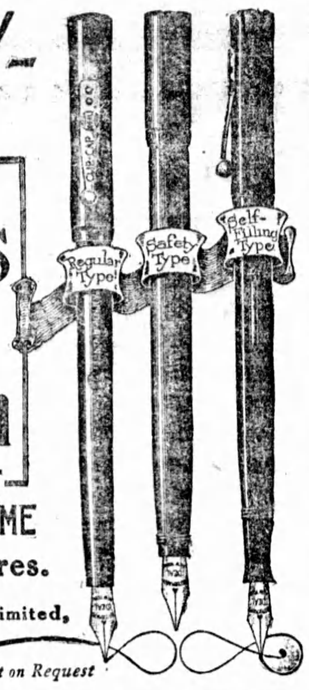

THE LAPSE OF ENOCH WENTWORTH

By ISABEL GORDON CURTIS,

Author of "The Woman from Wolvertons"

CHAPTER XIV.—(Cont'd).

Enoch shrugged his shoulders. "If that is the way you choose to put it, well and good. Seems to me a pity that you cannot drop this altogether and—forget. The future looks bright for both of us. We could easily go back to our old happy life if you would."

Dorcas moved toward the door. "I cannot forget. I promise you one thing, Enoch, I will never speak of it again."

"Thank you," said the man brusquely.

CHAPTER XV.

When the curtain dropped on the last act at a Saturday matinee, Dorcas paused on the way to her dressing-room and glanced out at the stage door. Rain was lashing the street in furious, wild-blown torrents. The few people who braved the storm bent their heads against it and plodded on with determination. Nearby a street organ was wheezing the "Miserere" in pitiful appeal to a heedless crowd at the theatre door.

Dorcas returned to her dressing-room. It was a delightful cozy retreat—Mr. Oswald had seen to that. Alice Volk sat repairing a gown.

"Where's Julie?" Dorcas demanded.

"She's asleep in our dressing-room."

The girl seated herself in front of the mirror and began to remove her make-up. At intervals she glanced over a bunch of letters which lay on the dressing table.

"I used to wonder how it would feel to be famous. Of course I am not famous yet," said Dorcas quickly; "I am merely one of the people you hear of in passing. Still, I cannot grow accustomed to the queer experience of seeing my name blazoned on every housetop when I ride on the L, or finding my picture in papers and magazines. People stop on the street to stare at me; occasionally they whisper my name to some one who is with them. A girl I went to school with wrote the other day and asked for sixteen autographed portraits to give as favors at a party. She was a rich child, and at school she snubbed me unmercifully."

"It's the way of the world," the other woman answered. "A little of it came into my own life."

"It's a queer way," Dorcas continued, "and somehow already I feel blase. The love and trust I have from Julie and you is something worth while."

Mrs. Volk rose to hang up a gown she had been repairing. As she passed Dorcas she bent and kissed her cheek. The girl looked up with a grateful smile.

"Suppose," Dorcas suggested, "we have a little spread right here. I can order a hot dinner sent in. It's a wretched night—What do you say?"

"If I were to speak for Julie, you know how she would enjoy it."

"'Phone to the Beauclerc for a menu. It will be fun."

Half an hour later the dressing-room looked like a small banqueting hall, for the property man had put everything he controlled at their disposal.

"Listen," said Dorcas to the waiter, who stood ready to take their order; "bring us consomme, boiled salmon, celery, cucumbers, and sliced tomatoes, potatoes, string beans, roast chicken, lettuce, almond meringue pie, coffee, and—is that all?" she asked of Julie who stood peering over her shoulder.

"Ice cream and cake," suggested the child.

"Of course," cried Dorcas; "it's so long ago since I was a little girl. I had forgotten that ice cream and cake is much more important than soup."

Julie turned to gaze at the table.

"Isn't it a pity, Miss Dorcas, there are only three of us, when there are four sides to a table."

Dorcas laughed. "I'll let you pick out a guest for us, Julie. Who shall it be?"

"Well, let me think." The child paused. "There's Dick—Dick would do anything for us. He's only a call boy, but he's nice. Then there's Robertson. He loaned us the chairs and table. Robertson's the nicest man in the Gotham—almost. We could have had Brunton, but she's just going out. Then there's Mr. Merry. I believe," she added decisively, "I would rather have Mr. Merry than anybody."

Dorcas bent to rearrange a knife and fork.

"How do you know Mr. Merry is in?"

"He is," cried Julie. "He called me into his dressing-room when I passed and gave me these." She unclasped her hand to show three caramels squeezed into a sticky lump.

"Would your mother like to have him here?"

Julie did not wait for her mother to answer.

"Of course, Mother and I love him."

"Well, you may be our messenger. Tell him he is invited to dine with three ladies. Dinner will be served in ten minutes."

Merry returned with Julie clasping his hand.

"This is unexpected! When the young lady tapped at my door, I was debating whether it was worth while going to eat in the storm."

It was a gay little party. Dorcas ordered the waiter, to set the dishes on the hot radiator, then she sent him away. Julie took her place delightedly.

"You're a clever waitress," said Merry.

"I used to plan to be a waitress when I was grown up," said the child, while she gathered plates neatly on a tray. "That was before I went on the stage. Playing the little 'Cordelia' is nicer than being a waitress."

"It means getting rich faster," said Merry gravely.

"Of course," agreed Julie. "Still, it must be delightful work to be a waitress. Before we found you, Mother and I used to go mornings to a little restaurant to get hot cakes, and I loved to watch the waitresses. Some of them. They had lovely hair and cunning little muslin aprons."

Merry laughed. "You were wise to decide on 'Cordelia.' "

"I know that. I would be quite happy to be 'Cordelia' with you, even if I didn't get any money for it. Of course, though, it's lovely to get my salary envelope once a week, and to have nice rooms at Mrs. Billerwell's, and all we want to eat, and clothes and shoes. I am growing rich—I have a bankbook?"

"Really?"

"I have four hundred dollars in the bank."

"Four hundred dollars!"

"When I have two thousand I am going to buy a little house out in the country. Mother and I picked it out one day when Miss Dorcas took us driving. We will keep chickens and a pony and a cow, and have cherry trees and radishes and pansies in the garden."

"I will come and board with you," said Merry, "if I don't have to milk the cow."

"Oh, Mother," cried the child impetuously, "I never thought of keeping boarders before!—only we can't charge Mr. Merry much."

"May I come too?" asked Dorcas.

"Oh, that would be lovely!" Julie laid down a chicken bone she held between her fingers to elap her greasy little hands joyfully. Merry was telling a ridiculous adventure which had once befallen him on a snowbound train when he was interrupted by a timid knock at the door.

Julie rose to open it. She turned to look back at her mother with a bewildered glance. A small, odd figure stood motionless in the doorway—a little boy with serious, brown eyes. His straight, yellow hair was cropped in a fringe about his eyes, then it waved upward. He wore a black suit with long, tight trousers. A round jacket, over a white shirt, reached to his waist. In his hand he held a hat like a small saucer.

"Hullo, David Copperfield, where did you come from?" cried Merry.

"That isn't my name." The child had a soft English accent. "I have heard of David Copperfield, but I'm not 'David,' Sir, my name is Robin Tully."

"Come in, Master Robin Tully," said Merry, "and have dinner with us."

The child stared at them steadily. but did not move.

Dorcas jumped to her feet. "Oh!" she whipsered, "the poor little boy is blind!"

The child stood moving his darkened eyes about as if to place her voice, then he came straight toward her, groping with both his hands. He had tucked the small, flat hat beneath one arm. Dorcas lifted him to her lap and laid his cheek against her own.

"Mother," he whispered as he dropped the hat and clasped his arms tightly around her neck.

"Dear little boy," she said softly, "I am not your mother. I wish I were."

He loosened his arms and passed his soft fingers over her face. Dorcas pillowed his cheek on her breast and whispered tender, foolish things to him between her kisses.

Merry took one of the child's hands between his own. "What is your mother's name?" he asked gently.

"At home her name is Mrs. Tully. I have a letter for her, George, who brought me here, told me to show it to somebody, and they would take me to her."

He put his hand in the inside pocket of his tight coat and drew out a smeared envelope. Merry read it aloud: "Miss Zilla Paget, Gotham Theatre."

Dorcas turned to look at Merry with unspoken pity in her eyes. "Your mother is upstairs. We will take you to her in a few minutes."

Julie crept close to Merry. She stood by his side, gazing curiously at the blind child.

"I did not know Miss Paget had a little boy," she said.

"Neither did I. Run upstairs, dear, and ask if she is in her dressing-room, but not one word to her or to any one about this boy."

Roblin laid his creek against Dorcas' face.

"I wish you were my mother," he murmured.

"You may have me as your friend." The girl kissed him softly, in response to which his chin trembled.

"Does your mother know you are coming?" asked Merry.

"No, I'm to be a surprise. George said I'm a sort of Christmas present."

Merry's eyes turned anxiously to Dorcas. He shook his head, and there was a perplexed frown upon his face.

Julie came in. "Miss Paget is not in her room. Emiline says she is out taking dinner with a gentleman."

Roblin jumped to the floor and began to grope about for his hat. Merry lifted it and put it in his hand. "You must stay here till your mother comes in."

"Of course, for you are just in time for dinner," said Dorcas. "We have lots of good things left—chicken and tomatoes and ice cream."

"His shoes ought to be changed," suggested Mrs. Volk; "they're awfully wet."

"Nothing is wet but my goloshes," answered Robin. He bent to take them off. "When we left the train, George brought me here under an umbrella."

(To be continued).

ON THE FARM

Washing Milk Cans.

The matter of washing cans by city dealers, while only a small part of the daily operations, is a very important one. Many different methods are used by various dealers in caring for the cans after the milk is removed from them. Some of these methods are as follows:

1. Returning the cans unwashed.
2. Rinsing with water (either hot or cold).
3. Rinsing out by means of hose with either hot or cold water. This is quite common at some plants but is not satisfactory.
4. Rinsing out with hose and then steaming with live steam.
5. Washing the cans out by means of washing powder and hot water and a hand brush, then rinsing.
6. Same as 5, with an additional rinsing with boiling water or steaming.
7. Cleansing by means of machines of various kinds.

One of the simplest of these machines is a jet machine, by means of which sprays of cold and hot water and of steam are successively forced into the can. Some of these simple machines also have dryer attachments, by means of which a draft of dry air is forced into the cans. Another type of machine is the brush machine, by means of which the cans are brushed out with washing powder and water and then rinsed. They may be steamed after washing by a spray of live steam. Some of the largest machines are fitted with powerful pumps, and the cans, in an inverted position, are run through the machine and sprays of soap and water, rinse water, hot water and steam are successively forced into them under considerable pressure. After being thus washed and sterilized they are also dried in the modern machines.

In justice to the farmer the dealers should give considerable attention to this question of washing the cans. If the cans are allowed to go back unwashed to the farmer it is a very difficult and often an impossible task for him, with his facilities, to clean them. Even a rinsing with cold water is better than nothing, though of course it is not satisfactory. It does not matter what method is used, so long as the cans are well cleansed and sterilized. The drying of the cans is also an important factor. Not only does this leave the can in a much better condition, but it will also preserve its life, as it helps to prevent rust. It is also important that the cover be thoroughly cleansed and sterilized as well as the can. It is not a good plan to put the cover onto the can until the latter is dry. When the covers are not put back on the cans immediately, the cans should be kept in a clean place where there is no dust or contamination. The covers should be placed tightly on the cans before they are returned.

Some of the large dealers who operate country stations not only wash the cans in the city, but also rewash and sterilize them when they arrive at the country plant. This is owing to the fact that the covers may be removed from the cans during the trip back to the country and thus the cans may be contaminated.

Considerable experimenting has been carried on by the Dairy Division in regard to sterilizing cans. Bacteria counts were made from cans receiving ordinary washing and rinsing. The results showed that the cans contained from 300,000 to 18,000,000 bacteria per cubic centimeter, with an average of 4,600,000. To 10 gallons of milk put into one of these cans there would be added more than 100 bacteria per cubic centimeter, as an initial contamination from the can alone; that is to say, that is the least number that would be added. With a little steaming these same cans could be rendered practically sterile.

One dealer who had recently installed a modern washing machine had some tests made by his bacteriologist on the results obtained. From the preliminary tests made less than 200,000 bacteria were found to the can and no undesirable types. Before the machine was installed, counts from the old one which had a much less efficient steaming device, ran as high as 20,000,000 bacteria to the can and some were undesirable. Of course the large dealer must have a machine that will do good and rapid work, but the main result to be obtained is a clean, sterile and dry can regardless of the machine used. The main means to accomplish this is thorough cleansing with washing powder and water, rinsing, sterilizing with live steam, and rapid drying, then cover the can and keep it from contamination.—U. S. Dairy Division.

Cleaning Grain at Threshing Time.

In a bulletin entitled "Grain Screenings" issued by the Dominion Department that the loss entailed in shipping Western grain uncleaned amounts to considerably more than half a million dollars. The following account of an experiment by a Western grower should be of value in connection with the problem of eliminating the waste due to the shopment of grain subject to a dockage on account of screenings.

A monitor cleaner and a five horse-power engine to run it were purchased and both mounted on an extra strong wagon gear. A 15-foot ordinary grain elevator was attached to the elevator wagon or bin. Another box wagon received the screenings (mostly broken and shrunken grain). The cost of the entire outfit, including operation, repairs and interest on capital, was $1,195. The grower calculates that he saved on his 80,000 bushel crop 1,600 bushels of broken and shrunken wheat worth $960, freight on which to the terminal elevator would have cost $220, and haulage to the local elevator $64. He thus has a profit of $49. The out fit paid for itself in one year and he says is as good as when it started.

This experiment, it is argued, proves that cleaning the grain on a large farm is practicable where one has his own outfit. On a medium sized farm where the threshing is hired out, it could not be done in the case of grain hauled directly to market. When the grain is stored on the farm before hauling, cleaning is practicable and advisable. The really practicable way for the whole country generally would be that the threshing outfits should include a grain cleaning attachment, as many of them now do a sheaf loading machine.

Any ordinary threshing machine if fitted with proper screens and carefully operated is capable of removing many of the smaller weed seeds that now constitute a considerable percentage of elevator screenings.—Seed Branch, Ottawa.

Dairy Notes.

It is hard to make some men realize the great influence of a good, pure-bred sire in a herd. The sire is more than half the herd. If he is richly bred, every heifer inherits from him good butter traits.

Sires should be selected from families of cows with rich records.

A good price for a superior bull is money well invested. The difference between the price of a strictly high-class sire and an inferior one is made up in the first lot of calves.

Keep the old bull that has proved his merit.

Fill the silo as soon as the corn is fit. When the kernel begins to glaze is the right time. The more ears there are on the stalk the better the ensilage.

A silo is one of the best investments on any farm. It means the succulence of pasture all winter.

This means an increase in cream and milk production at less cost.

Now is the time to turn off unprofitable cows. If after a good trial any cow is below the standard in capacity, send her to the butcher.

Feed windfall apples, with the grain ration, and watch the results. Don't let a single apple go to waste; there is feeding value in every vegetable; get the good there is in it. Little things help to round up the profits.

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