

Face to Face

OR, GERVAISE RICKMAN'S
AMBITION.

CHAPTER III.

Passing footsteps were so rare on the lonely road which led past the Travelers' Rest, that it was scarcely possible for any to go unheard by at least one of the inmates of that solitary dwelling. Ellen Gale had listened for them as a break in life's monotony when in health and actively employed, and now in the long solitary silences of her fading life, they had become the leading events of day and night, and much practice had taught her to discriminate them with such nicety that she could tell from their peculiar ring on the hard road whether they were those of youth or age, man or woman, gentle or simple. Sometimes on a Sunday afternoon there would be a double footfall, light, yet lingering, and she knew that sweethearts were passing, and wondered what the end of their wooing might be. And then at times some memory stabbed her to the heart, and she turned her face to the wall.

"Quant' dolci pensier, quanto disio Meno costoro—"
cried Dante, his pity mingled with something akin to envy, when he met the lovers of Rimini, united forever in the terrible tempestuous hell, whither so many sweet thoughts had brought them. Sitting at the window one bright April evening, Ellen heard the heavy, dragging steps of a laboring man whose youth was worn out of him, and she knew by their ring on the road that they were those of Daniel Pink, the shepherd. "You go on, Eln," cried her father, skeptically, when she told him who was coming, "you can't tell by the sound."
"I war'n't she can," corrected Mam Gale, Jacob's mother, who was moving about before the hearth-fire, busy with ironing, "terble keen of hearing she be, to be zure."

Ellen smiled with innocent triumph when she perceived the weather-beaten form of the shepherd turn in at the wicket, and clank with a heavy angular gait over the large flints with which the court was pitched, followed by his shaggy dog.
"Ay, here ee be, zurely, Jacob," said Mam Gale, looking up from her ironing with a slow smile. "Come on in, Dan'l," she added, raising her voice to a shrill pitch. "How be ye?"
"Evening," said the shepherd, stumbling heavily over the flagged floor of the kitchen, and dropping himself onto a settle by the fire, while Jacob Gale, briefly acknowledging his entrance by a sullen nod, and a "Warm s'evenin'," kept his seat on the opposite side of the fire, and smoked on.
"How d'ye zim, Eln?" asked the shepherd, after some minutes' silence, during which the click of Mam Gale's iron and the song of the kettle on the fire were heard.

Ellen replied cheerfully that she was better, wonderfully better, and hoped to get out in a day or two; and she looked yearningly out of the window, where she could see the blue sky and some martins, who were busy building a nest in the thatched eave above with much happy twittering and fuss.
"Ay," growled her father, shaking his head, "they be always like that in a decline, when they be look for death."
"Ay," cried Mam Gale, lugubriously, "poor things, they thinks they be pretty nigh well; toward the end they perks up. The many I've seen goo, shepherd."
"Ellen med get up May hill," added Jacob, thoughtfully. "If she do, Annesley zays she med last on droo the summer."
"She's took for death, Nellie is," said Reuben, lounging in, dropping himself languidly upon a bench, and looking hard at his sister, who listened with a tranquil smile.
"When be ye gwine to 'Stralia, Reub?" asked the shepherd.
"Bain't gwine avore Ellen's took," he replied.
"And he bain't gwine then, Dan'l," added Mam Gale, suspending her ironing. "What call have he to goo vlying in the vace o' Providence, when's time's come vor'n to goo? Downright wicked I calls it."

"Well, Annesley zes Reub'll hae to goo long wi' 'others if he bides at home, mother," said Jacob, doubtfully.
"Zims as though you med zo well hae a chance to live, Reub," suggested the shepherd, taking the tankard Reuben brought him, and applying his bearded face to it; after which he paused, smacking his lips and pondering deeply upon the flavor of the draught before venturing upon another.
"If I've got to die, I med so well die at home," returned Reuben, slowly; "not but I med so well live," he added, dubiously.
"Let him go, father," said Ellen. "There is no call for him to die, Miss Lingard's known lots get well in 'Australia. Everything is different out there."
"I med so well live," repeated Reuben, wistfully.
"Everythink's upside down out there," said Mam Gale, contemptuously; "the minister he zes to me, ee zes, folks walks along head downwards over there, ee zes."

"And that's what William Black zes, zure enough," echoed Jacob, solemnly. "His brother went out 'Stralia; ee zes as

how the zun rises evening when folks want to go to bed, and goes down agen mornings, when 'tis time to get up out there."

"I war'n't 'tis a terble zart of a place," added Reuben, mournfully. "Christmas-time," William zes, 'tis hotter than hot summer waether."

"Zo they zes," added Mam Gale dubiously. "Volk zays there's winter right in the middle o' summer there."

"That's a big un to swallow," commented to Jacob, rising slowly and going to the hearth to knock the ashes out of his pipe.

"How do the carn grow if they gets winter waether in zummer-time?" asked the shepherd, after profound meditation.

Reuben doubtfully supposed that it grew in the winter, and silent meditation followed, broken only by Mam Gale's reiterated assertions to the accompaniment of the clicking iron that "volk med zo well be buried comfortable in Arden church lytten, as goo about head downward out there."

"A-ah!" growled Jacob, before leaving the room to receive an approaching customer. "I don't hold wi' these yer new-fangled notions, volk used to die natural deaths right zide uppermost in my young days."

"Zure enough, Reub," added his grandmother, "we never yeard talk of 'Stralia when I was a gal. Me and my vather we never went further than Medington in all our hard days. Vust time I went I was a ooman growed. I lows I did stare when I zeen thes hops and all the Johns and Molls in market bready to bargain (to be hired for the year). Many a Middlemess I've a bin in Medington zence, but I war'n't I never star'd that hard no more."

"My missus," observed the shepherd, seizing an opportunity for which he had long been waiting, and diving deep into the recesses of his garments for something which he extracted with difficulty, "she ben in Medington to-day. She buyed these yer aranges vor ee, Eln. And he produced two large ripe oranges, for which Ellen thanked him heartily.
"I'm that thirsty after the cough," she said.

"My missus zeen 'em in Medington, and she minded ye," the shepherd said, apologetically, looking with a beaming face at the oranges, which from long propinquity to it were almost as warm as the good fellow's heart; "I ain't only dree pence," she zaid, "and Ellen Gale med so well hae 'em when she can get 'em. Hreckon they're sweet."
"It was very kind," replied Ellen; and the shepherd sunk into a pleased silence, and gazed steadily at the pretty fading girl and at the oranges on the window-sill before her bedside the bunch of wall-flowers and polyanthus he had silently placed there on his entrance.

"Mis'able zet on vlowers, my missus is," he continued. "Let the vlowers bide longside of the taties," she zes, "vlowers don't ate nothing. Taties is vlower enough vur me."

"Flowers don't do here," Ellen said, "it is too keen. The doctor zays it's too keen for me, but healthy for sound chests."

"Zome thinks Doctor Annesley ain't wold enough for his work," the shepherd zaid; "Davis is the man for wold."

"If Annesley ain't wold enough a'ready, he never will be, Dan'l Pink," retorted Mam Gale, with decision. "He've a helped dree on us off. I don't hold with new-vangled things. Give me a doctor what hev zeen all our folks off comfortable."

"I hreckon Davis hev buried a tidy lot," urged the shepherd in a controversial tone. "Come to that, he and his vather avore un have helped so many under ground as Annesley and his vather put together."

"Ah! you med talk, Dan'l Pink," retorted Mam Gale, tossing her ironed linen aside with scorn, "but you want vind a cleverer dacler than ourn in a week o' Zundays. S' vather, wold Annesley, was cleverer drunk than any of 'others sober."

"You med well zay that, mother," added Jacob, returning at that moment; "you minds when he come in one wet day and dranked a pint of best spirits straight off. Zes to me, when he went away, he zes, 'Don't you never marry a ooman with a tongue, Jacob Gale, or you med want to wet yourn with summat stronger than water.' Didn't zim no drunker than Dan'l there, that a didn't."

"I never yeard the wold chap dranked avore," said Daniel, meditatively.

"You med live to make wuld boans, Master Pink, and there med be a pover o' things left you never knowed," commented Mam Gale, attacking one of Jacob's best shirts with a virtuous fury that made her iron rattle loudly. "There's a vast o' things to know in this yer world, I war'n't, let alone 'other."
"It wasn't knowed, not to zay in a general way," added Jacob, "wold chap knowed how to carry's liquor and a didn't drink reg'lar. Married the wrong ooman, that's where 'twas."

"Ay, she was a vest too good vor'n," added Mam Gale; "her family was high and her ways was high, and he knowed he wasn't the biggest man in his own house. That's the way with men. They

can't abide to be second best in-doors, whatever they med be out-doors."

"Zure enough, a ooman didn't ought to be better than a man, 'tain't natural like," commented Jacob. "It's agen the Bible; vur why? Eve yet the apple, and Adam he thought he med so well jine in."

"Let he alone vur that when he zeen 'twas a hripe un," commented Mam Gale, severely.

The shepherd was so struck by Jacob's observation, that he remained silently gazing at the window, through which the glories of an April sunset could be seen diffused over the wide reach of sky, for five full minutes, while his rough-coated dog, who had followed him in and lain tranquilly dozing at his feet, roused by the thoughtful look on his master's face, sat up and watched him, hoping for a signal to move.

While the shepherd gazed thus, he observed a change in Ellen's face, which was just before him, framed by the scanty cotton window curtain, the wicker bird-cage above and the piece of sunlit green outside showing through the small panes—a change like that in the sky when the red flush of sunset spread across it a moment before, a brightening of hue and a sublimation of expression which led him with awe. "She's a-thinking of kingdom come, where she's bound before long," he reflected.

But it was a more tangible gladness, though it parlock of the deepest charm of that undiscovered land, the joy in what is higher and dearer than self, which thus transfigured Ellen's pretty, hectic face; it was the sight of two figures whose outlines were traced upon the pink-flushed sky, two young figures followed by a stately deer-hound, which evidently followed an accustomed path; they talked as they went, their faces lighted with the changing rose-tints of the tranquil evening.

"Miss Lingard! so late!" exclaimed Ellen.

"And young Mr. Annesley, visiting there long with her," commented Reuben, rising and looking out.

"I hreckon she've vound somebody to keep company with at last," added Mam Gale, comprehending the situation at a glance. "She hain't somehow drawed the chaps on avore. Personable she be and pleasant spoke as ever I knowed. But 'other one hevs all the sweet-ear's. Menvolk never knows what's what."

Little did Alice imagine the construction that would be put upon this innocent evening stroll. Reuben's disinclination, or rather that of his friends, to the emigration scheme Paul and Alice had arranged together, had been discussed in family conclave that day, and Edward had again brought forward his suggestion that Reuben, if still sound, should enlist in an India-bound regiment and thus get the benefit of a few warm winters. Alice had just started to broach the subject that evening, when Sibly suddenly suggested that Edward had better follow her, and thus explain clearly what he intended.

"A capital idea," added innocent Mrs. Rickman. "You will soon overtake her if you make haste."

He did not wait for a second bidding, and Alice had not crossed the first field before Edward was by her side.

He was to leave Arden next morning, and the consciousness of this brought something into his manner that he would not otherwise have suffered. He spoke of his prospects, the earliest date at which he hoped to be promoted, and the chances of remunerative employment open to him, and Alice listened with a courteous attention, beneath which he hoped rather than saw something warmer. He returned to the Swiss tour projected by the Rickmans for the Autumn, and to his own intention, favored by Mrs. Rickman, of making the same tour at the same time, and they both agreed that, to make the excursion perfect, Paul, whose mother was to be of the party, should manage to be "with them."

Nothing more of a personal nature was said, but they each felt that this evening walk made a change in their lives, putting a barrier between all the days which went before and all that were to follow after. They strolled slowly along in the delicious air, pausing to see the purple hills dark against the translucent western sky, the coloring of which spread upward first gold, then primrose and pale green edged with violet, to clearest blue, just flecked by little floating clouds like cars of gold and pearl; pausing to look eastward across the plain to the line of gray-blue sea; and to listen to some deeper burst of melody from the woods and sky; pausing, above all, at the chalk quarry, a mysterious melancholy place, haunted by legends and traditions. Standing, as they did, on the highroad leading past the wide entrance to it, they saw a broad level of white chalk, broken here and there by a milky pool, a small tiled hut and dark shadow-like spots, upon which a slow accretion of mould had encouraged a faint green growth, half moss, half grass, and surrounded by an almost semi-circular wall of grey chalk cliff with a narrow, dark outline of turf, drawn with sharp accuracy between it and the sky. This cold, pale cliff was shaded and veined here and there, where no quarrying had been recently done, by such beginnings of vegetation as clouded the ground, and broken further by one or two black spots, which were caves, haunted by grewsome traditions. Some ravens flew croaking from their holes in the cliff face with a grim effect, which the swallows darting about in the sunshine and the larks singing above could not wholly neutralize.

(To be continued.)

PRACTISING ON HER.

Miss Pert—Are you fond of dancing, Mr. Heavyfoot?
Mr. Heavyfoot—Yes, awfully!
Miss Pert—Then why on earth don't you learn?

About the Farm

DON'T DESPISE SMALL THINGS.

Why is it the general run of farmers make so little provision for and devote so little study to, poultry? If the hens receive any care at all it is usually from the women folks.

In spite of all the neglect and abuse the hen is about the best profit-maker on the farm.

How easy it is to get roped in. Some smooth talker comes along and tells about a mine that a few men own. All it needs is a little more capital to equip it, then, ah, me! money will be pulled out at a rapid rate. What per cent. of profit ever comes back to the farmer who puts money into the other fellow's mine? Fortunately, indeed, if anything ever comes back. But right before his eyes is an industry that is only waiting for better attention, equipment and development to return enormous per cent. of profits. The despised hen is making a better per cent. of profit, neglected though she be, than ever comes to the outside stockholder of a mine. Give her her dues and she will give you better per cent. of profit than the inside stockholder of a mine gets.

One hundred per cent. on the investment is not at all uncommon with a well-cared for flock of hens.

SELECT BEST BREEDS.

The vigor of farm poultry must be kept up in order to have profitable stock, as weak stock does not thrive or lay well. There is a mistake made in calling for extremely heavy weights in a breed. Select birds of standard weight and get them thick-fleshed and solid.

The active, alert hen is the layer. Select eggs from your best layers for hatching, and use pure breeds by all means, as they dress more uniformly and will give best all-around satisfaction. Do not overfeed laying stock, and make them take lots of exercise.

A very light mash of clover chaff, bran and oats ground fine, mixed stiff, is good in the morning, as it is readily assimilated by the fowl. Do not feed more than a quart to a dozen hens, feed all whole grain in litter, at noon give vegetables and meat in some form. Boil odds and ends of butchering. Keep hens well supplied with grit and clean water. Don't allow male birds with laying hens. Have eggs clean and sorted for size and color. If the seller can guarantee his product to be strictly fresh, a much better price will be paid.

CARE OF BROOD SOWS AND PIGS.

In the experience of the writer in a northern latitude, it is just as easy and safe having the pigs come along at any time during the winter as at any other times of the year. But this practice requires warm, dry, comfortable quarters, and with these and suitable feed and care I have had no trouble. Get good sows and keep them raising pigs—two litters a year—without regard to the months or seasons. And the pigs cared for in this way from the time of leaving the mother so are healthy, and grow right along without regard to outside conditions because they are independent of them.

At six to eight months old these pigs have been fitted for the market without once leaving their comfortable quarters in a large warm stable.

When such conditions can be provided—warmth, a good bed, and plenty of suitable feed along with the needed care—there should always be success with the pigs, but where these conditions do not exist or cannot well be supplied, then it is safer and better to have pigs farrowed at the beginning of spring. In all cases secure good breeding stock, and keep it up to a good standard of excellence. Get the breed that promises best.

Do not forget that any breed, however good, if little attention is paid to its improvement, will soon begin to deteriorate in value. That is the price that will have to be paid for thoughtlessness or neglect, while on the other hand, well-directed and persistent effort can hardly fail of receiving a corresponding reward.

WITH THE LIVE STOCK.

In many sections the cost of feed may be greatly decreased by attaching a feed-grinder to the windmill.

Stock to thrive and do well must relish their food. Let them go to their meals with a hearty appetite. Consider palatability.

There is profit in gentleness to your domestic animals, but aside from that kind treatment is their right, and a man who will not treat his stock kindly is so far a tyrant and a robber.

By growing rough feeds with a high percentage of protein such as alfalfa, clover, cow peas, etc., the feed bill can be cut down materially and animals afforded a well-balanced ration that will give good results. Think of these things when seed time comes.

One thing in favor of baby beef ready for market lies in the fact that where there is a slump in the market the stock can be made to put on flesh at no loss. This is not true with the finished 2-year-old that has its growth.

None of our readers are as dull but that they can see the importance of putting pigs on the market at from six to ten months old. None are following the old-time method of marketing 2-year-old hogs other than old sows. Now then, the fellow who has mastered the pig situation ought to understand the profits

in baby beef production. Do you see the point, brethren?

AGRICULTURAL NOTES.

The man who raises scrub stock usually raises scrub grain.

Don't burn the straw. Use it for bedding for the stock and return it to soil to renew fertility.

Thorough preparation is half the cultivation. Our farm readers will realize this in growth of crops next season.

There is no play connected with earning a living, neither is there any play work connected with any department of farm work.

Those spongy places in the road may be successfully drained with tile. Drainage is the first essential in the improvement of a road.

A winter evening can easily be made the most profitable division of the day by reading agricultural literature and planning details for next season's campaign.

A farmer should watch the market. A good seller is usually a successful farmer. With this watching seek to prepare for the market a prime article which will bring a high price on its merits.

WHERE KISSING IS COMPULSORY.

Odd Customs of English Villages—Grateful Austrian Maidens.

The charming country town of Hungerford, in Berkshire, has an annual kissing day each April, when it celebrates its Hocktide festival, says London Answers. Then certain duly appointed officials hold a court, collect the tithes and claim a kiss from the woman of each house they have to visit during the ceremony. The two fortunate officials thus appointed are known as "tully men," or tilde men, and usually there is no small competition for the honor among the eligibles of Hungerford. The custom is hundreds of years old, and neither husband nor wife, as a rule, objects to the advent of the tully men, with the inevitable result.

Once every five years the good town of Newcastle on Tyne has been in the habit of holding a festival known as "barge day," on which day the Mayor and Corporation go down to the river in a fine state barge to claim the rights of the town to certain dues at an appointed spot. Then the procession returns up the river to a well known stone, where the Mayor selects any woman he likes from the large crowd generally there and kisses her before the assembled company, and—let it be said softly—before the good Mayoress herself. His Worship then gives the favored woman a sovereign as a present, while the Mayoress, to show that there is no ill-feeling, adds a gift of her own, such as a sachel, purse or other appropriate article.

Not only is it the duty of the Mayor to do the kissing in this fashion, but the appointed Sheriff, not willing to be left out in the cold on such occasions, also duly carries out a similar privilege. He chooses another lady, and after saluting her gravely—or otherwise—he also hands to her a useful present. This curious ceremony, which is supposed to take place quinquennially, was last performed, I believe, in the year 1901. But, of course, it always rests with the Mayor for the time being whether it shall be performed.

When the pretty Thames town of Maidenhead takes it into its head to have a "beating of the bounds," the steward appointed for that purpose is always accompanied by a large crowd of curious people. These help him, or think they do, when he has to climb over houses which stand in his path, or to get through windows under which the bounds pass. Also when the party meets any man by chance during its progress, it proceeds gravely to "bump" that individual; but if the person met should be a lady, she is given the choice as to whether she will be "bumped" or kissed.

Nor is our own country the only one with such compulsory kissing ceremonies. Halmagen, in Austria, has an annual fair on St. Theodore's Day, at which every man present has the right to claim one lady and to kiss her without her having any right to object. This strange custom is the outcome of a raid which was once made on the town by Turkish brigands, who carried off all the women as captives. But a band of men travelling in the district chanced to meet the captors and forced them to give up their victims, who were then kindly escorted to their homes and friends. In grateful remembrance of the day the maidens of Halmagen annually offer their lips modestly and freely to the strangers who frequent the town during the fair of St. Theodore.

WHAT TO CULTIVATE.

Some Little Habits Easily Cultivated Which Adorn Men and Women.

A good memory for faces and facts connected with them, thus avoiding the giving of offence through not recognizing or bowing to people, or of saying to them what had better been left unsaid. An unaffected, sweet, distinct, and sympathetic voice. Learn to be appreciative of the natural mellow tones possible to every woman, and avoid the shrill ones that are so tiring to hear.

Cultivate the charm of making little sacrifices quite naturally, as if of no trouble to yourself.

Cultivate the habit of making allowances for the opinions and feelings of others as well as their prejudices. We cannot all see matters from the same angle in this world. If we did, ours would be a very dreary, monotonous old globe.

Cultivate the art of listening without impatience to prosy talkers, and of smiling naturally at the twice-told tale or incident. It really will not hurt you to hear it over again, and then remember that you are never so charming as when you are making other people think they are interesting.