

# A SHADOWED PATH;

## Or, The Curse Of The Family

CHAPTER XI.—(Continued).

As Judith got away, farther and farther away from home, a sense of peace seemed to fall soft and warm across her breast; and she thought, poor, restless heart, as many another restless one has thought before and since, how blessed a thing it would be thus to move on through gorge and valley, by winding river and waving woods—on, ever on, through life till death! Movement! it was rest and repose to her.

At all events, something very good and pure, welled up in her breast, as she gazed at the Welsh hills and the trickling waterfalls—as she looked through the haze of an autumn sunset on fields where the wheat lay in rich, ripe sheaves, and pasture land, across which shadows of purple and gold were stealing. "How beautiful the world is!" she thought, and she said so to Lillian. Her sister answered, "Yes; and as her head was averted, Judith never suspected she was weeping.

If the girl thought the world beautiful, Mr. Mazingford, however, considered she was more beautiful, when he came out to the front of Wavour Hall, in order to welcome his guests.

The sun shone down on him, as it shone down on everything else that lovely evening, and made him look younger and handsomer than ever, whilst it lit up Judith, in her plain mourning dress, as she stood there assisting Lillian out of the carriage—lit up her pale face, and large bright eyes, and broad, fair forehead.

She had been there before, when a child, but never since Mrs. Mazingford's death; and the widower had effected many alterations after his first wife's decease. Display was his passion; and the house was consequently a succession of exhibition rooms, kept for the admiring gaze of visitors.

As his taste was excellent, and his means ample, there was no establishment in the kingdom better conducted, none where commands were executed with such prompt obedience and unquestioning alacrity, as that of Wavour Hall.

The carriage-horses were regularly subjected to the cambrie handkerchief test; the grounds were guileless of weeds; the gardens were full of the choicest flowers; the lawns were smooth as velvet; the rooms always kept ready for the arrival of unexpected guests. There was no noise in the house save that made by Mr. Mazingford himself, who had a habit of banging doors, and striding heavily across halls—otherwise, the quietude of death reigned in the mansion and around it, and accordingly Lillian said—"It was like Heaven!"

Perhaps it seemed so to her; but Judith sickened of the place; she felt like a prisoner in the ancient house.

There were walls and heights round the gardens, and walls, high and difficult, guarded the estate. The principal, and, indeed, only entrance was defended, so to speak, by heavy iron gates. It was quite a long walk from the hall to this spot, and yet Judith went there almost daily; leaning against the iron railings she used to look up and down the road. She longed to go out on that road, but somehow she never did it, although the old portress daily offered to open the gate for her.

"I am thinking, there must be something wrong with that young lady at the Hall," she observed to her husband; "she stands at the gate with such a worn, troubled look in her face. I wonder if she is right in her mind?"

A month passed away, and then they were going. "I am so sorry," said Lillian, as she and Judith sat in the garden together; "there is such peace here, I wish we could stay here always."

Judith did not answer. She remained for a long time pulling some flowers to pieces, and never moved her head nor rested her fingers till Lillian asked her what was the matter.

"Nothing," she shortly replied, flinging the few buds she held in her hand into a marble basin at her feet.

"And so, Lily," she added, after a pause—"you wish that we could stay here always?"

"Yes, if the place could be our own. Do you not?"

"No," answered Judith, "oh! no, no! and the restless fingers plucked some fresh flowers, and set to work destroying them. When she had bared them of their last leaves, she got up and locked uneasily about her.

At the moment it chanced that a hawk was cleaving the air in pursuit of its prey, and something about the chase attracted Judith's attention, and excited her interest.

"Look, look, Lily!" she cried, "see how the poor thing strives to escape, how it sinks and rises, and doubles and turns. There the hawk shoots past it—ah! he is back on the track again. Look! look now, Lily! how it flies, poor little thing—do you see it?"

"Where?" asked Lillian.

"Where?" repeated her sister, impatiently; "why—there, right above my hand. How stupid you are, Lily!"

"Not stupid, Judith—ah! no, not that."

In a moment bird and hawk were forgotten, and Judith was kneeling at her sister's side. There was something in Lillian's tone which frightened her, and it was with a tear trembling under her smile, that she asked with affected gaiety—

"If not stupid, then what are you?"

"Going blind," was the answer.

Like one crushed, Judith remained immovable for a few minutes. She had sunk on hearing her sister's reply from a kneeling to a half-sitting posture, and with hands clasped together in her lap, she remained gazing in Lillian's face till a touch from the invalid's fingers brought her back to mental life once more.

Then she heard all—heard how the bright earth and sky, the fields, and trees, and flowers, were growing dimmer day by day to the eyes of the sufferer, whose one great joy had been to gaze upon them; then Lillian told her how the disease, though not incurable, was to her as hopeless as if science and skill had discovered no remedy for it.

"I must submit," the patient creature concluded, "and I think I can do so now, although I felt it hard at first. Mr. Jones feared, and Mr. Mazingford's doctor is certain, that in six months I shall be quite blind; and that was the reason, Judith, why I felt a little sorry to leave this place, which is so peaceful and quiet."

"But the disease can be cured," cried Judith; "did not some one say it could?"

"Yes, if we were rich, perhaps; but as we are not, Judith, I will consider the evil as irremediable, and indeed it won't be so bad after all. There, darling, you know the worst at last, and why I wanted to come here; and now having told you I feel happier; it is over, and will never have to be said again. Kiss me, dear;—just one thing more—you will not forsake me ever, Judith?"

"Never, so help me Heaven!" and thus the restless spirit chained itself, and the firm hand cut the last plank asunder, and the proud, high will subdued the rebellious heart for the last time, and Judith had accomplished the hardest task we poor mortals can have set us here.

That night when Mr. Mazingford sat alone in his library after all his guests had, as he thought, retired to rest, Judith came gliding in.

There was a flush on her cheek, and a bright, bright light in her eye, and Mr. Mazingford as he looked at her thought there was not another woman in England so beautiful as she.

Something, an olden phantom perhaps, had entered the apartment with her, and stood betwixt the pair; and Judith, as she spoke, kept eternally stretching out her hand, as if to push that spectral shadow aside.

"I told you this morning," she began, "that I could not marry you—that my heart and soul and everything worth giving or having, were dead and buried, lying under the green sod that covers Marcus Lansing's grave. I told you my love for him was no girlish fancy—that it was a love for life, in death. I said I could never love you, nor become your wife, but now—"

He placed her in a chair, and standing before her, asked her to go on. It was the hour he had longed for come at last; but even then he felt she had an advantage over him.

Girl as she was, with her slight figure bending and rocking, with that restless right hand pushing for ever that something so determinedly aside; with her voice trembling and bosom heaving, with her eyes dilated with emotion, in the midst of her suffering, surrounded by the wrecks and ruins of her pride, she was victor still!

Perhaps it was the utter unselfishness of the love which prompted her thus to barter away her freedom, that flung a halo of nobility around the mercenary transaction; perhaps it was the very price she fixed upon herself which made Mr. Mazingford feel he was getting her cheap.

Other than as a buying and selling business she would not speak of it; so plainly she started her terms, so fairly she named her price, that she stripped the transaction of all character of meanness, of all personal degradation.

She did not fear to state her motives, and accordingly she told her story so concisely and withal so mournfully, that he, not she, was the one humiliated by marrying.

With an intuitive knowledge of the nature she had to deal with, the girl wished his part of the compact fulfilled so far as might be before their marriage; but Mr. Mazingford had many and plausible reasons to urge against such an arrangement; and at length Judith, seeing the impossibility of the thing, gave way, and agreed to become his wife—any time.

And when she said this, she got up as if in a kind of despair, and hurriedly left the apartment. Out of it after

her filled the shadow, the haunting phantom of old; and twice on the broad staircase Judith turned to face that which pursued her. She saw nothing, however, but Mr. Mazingford, who stood at the bottom of the flight following her with his eyes. When he heard the door of her room close at last behind her, he went slowly back to the library, and flung himself into his usual seat.

With glance fixed on the smouldering fire, he sat there for long pondering. Perhaps the fulfillment had not equalled his expectations; perhaps the shadow had a word or two for his ear also, but with the morning's light came a different mood—the mood of gratified selfishness and unbounded triumph.

For Judith grew more lovely every hour, the rich flush deepened on her cheek, and the bright light still brighter in her eye; and she was to be his, this young, beautiful creature, to have and to hold. The very fever which was upon her had a fascination for him; had she been a weak, reed-like, submissive being, he would have flung her contemptuously aside, but the spirit she carried in her he longed to grapple with and bend.

When he was lord and master over her, when she looked up to him, and acknowledged a higher monarch than herself; when her will was moulded to his will, then, Mr. Mazingford felt the desire of years would be accomplished.

And he fancied the moment they were married this would be the case; wherefore the preparations were hurried on with most unusual haste; he would not hear of a return to Llandyl Hall, nor did Stephen wish it either. Out of respect to Judith's feelings, and the short period which had elapsed since her father's death, the wedding was a strictly private one; and before the girl had well recovered from the first horror of being engaged, she found herself fettered hand and foot—pledged—married—a wife.

Lewis Mazingford was her husband, and that was the first intimation Miss Ridsdale received of what was going on.

"Now Heaven help the poor deluded creature!" cried the lady, as she dropped her niece's letter; "for she has made herself miserable for life."

So Judith Renelle at last became Judith Mazingford!

### CHAPTE RXII.

After the first six months of married life Mr. Mazingford found matrimony a very different sort of thing to what he had expected; and before two months of his second married life had passed, an uneasy conviction stole over him, that he had "caught a tartar." Not a virago nor a shrew; but a girl of rather tender twenty, possessed of an indomitable will and an unconquerable temper; influenced by no child's fancies, few feminine weaknesses, incapable of being ruled by anybody, or of being won by him.

Her heart, she had said, on that well-remembered night, when she offered herself to be his wife for a price, "her heart was lying under the green sod that covered Marcus Lansing's grave," and Mr. Mazingford soon discovered it were quite as hopeful a task for him to try to move the pyramids as to endeavor to dig it out of the old Welsh churchyard and obtain possession of it himself. The experiment of winning love after marriage, which hundreds have staked their lives' happiness on—had tried and failed in, like the rest; wherefore he was dissatisfied, for no man, let him be what he will, likes to have a wife who merely endures his presence. There are many who will contemptuously fling the great gift of love aside, but still they feel it a pride to be able to dispose of the article. She did nothing he could find fault with, and yet she irritated him every hour in the day; she asked no comfort, or indulgence for herself, but she took all for Lillian as a matter of right. "It was for Lillian," he felt every hour of the day, "she had married;" and luxuries, and delicacies, and attention for Lillian she would have.

He never repented wedding her, it is true, but he longed with the longing of old to break the proud spirit, to bend the strong will, to make Judith Mazingford his submissive, dutiful wife.

Still for so far there was peace in the land, and in many ways the husband's unbounded pride and vanity were gratified. His wife was the handsomest woman in England, and it rejoiced his soul to see chance visitors gazing at her as though marvelling at the exceeding grace and beauty, and rarity of the gem; he had managed to set, nobody exactly knew how, amongst his collection of household treasures.

Congratulations followed in on him from every quarter. Mrs. Mazingford's beauty was talked of on all sides; the fame thereof reached even the metropolis. People, who had previously forgotten her existence, now came forward to claim relationship and acquaintance with the mistress of Wavour Hall. Sir John Leslock sent presents of pearls and diamonds, and Miss Leslock added her marriage gifts and a most affectionate letter to her dear cousin. Judith really stood aghast at the number of people who suddenly counted kindness and friendship with her—thanked them for their presents with what courtesy she might, and despised them all in the depths of her heart.

There were but two honest expressions of opinion concerning the marriage, which ever reached the ear of either bride or bridegroom. The first was uttered by Stephen in Wavour parish church, when, with a malicious chuckle, he wished Mr. Mazingford "joy of his bargain;" the other by Mrs. Berbig, who sent really a most kind and tender letter to the girl, concluding with

a heartfelt hope, that "she might be happy;" these two, for Miss Ridsdale said nothing, were the only genuine remarks Judith or her lord ever heard on the subject.

During this period the light had been fading by almost imperceptible degrees from Lillian's eyes, and when the spring blossoms came again upon the earth, all—the bright sunshine and the April showers, the drooping snowdrop and the bustling buds—was darkness to her.

Almost impatiently Judith had waited for this consummation—impatiently, because, till total blindness came, no operation could be attempted; and with even a greater longing than the poor sufferer herself, she desired the arrival of that day, when the cure might safely be commenced. She hungered and thirsted for the gift of sight to be restored to her sister; with feverish anxiety she watched every stage of the disease, and then, when at length total blindness fell on the mild, dark eyes, she affirmed that not a day, not an hour should be lost.

But Mr. Mazingford was not exactly of her opinion; having obtained his prize beforehand, he was slow to pay the required price for it—he found Lillian's was likely to be a most tedious and expensive case; he was wearied and jealous of her, angry at the manner in which she engrossed every spare moment of Judith's time—envious of the devoted love his wife lavished on her.

He thought her recovery in any case extremely doubtful, and felt, in brief, very reluctant to spend money on the chance. Perhaps he imagined if she were out of the way, Judith would be more easily managed; at all events, he was tired of and provoked by her—by Lillian, but for whose misfortune he had never called Judith by the name of wife. At first he staved off the entreaties by an assurance that he could not leave Wales until the autumn. There was to be a contested election during the course of that summer, where he had been invited, and meant to stand as Conservative candidate. He must stay in the country, to spend money, and bribe voters, and intimidate electors; while as for Judith—her presence would be required as much as his—it really was an impossibility for him to do as she wished just then, and he said he was, indeed he was, very sorry.

Whether Judith believed this assertion or not, she chafed under the delay exceedingly, and suggested that an oculist should be brought down to Wavour Hall. To this plan Mr. Mazingford opposed the ridiculous expense of such a proceeding; but not finding that argument produced much effect on his wife's understanding, he brought forward another which proved more efficacious, viz.—that once in London it would be easier to discover the "right man" than in the country, where they would have to rest satisfied with one opinion, and that, perhaps, imperfect.

(To be Continued.)

## About the Farm

### PERMANENT PASTURES.

"Permanent pastures," writes Prof. C. A. Zavitz, of the O. A. C., "have never occupied as prominent place in the agriculture of Ontario as they have in the agriculture of Great Britain. The scarcity of labor and the great development of our live-stock industry are factors which are causing some of our most thoughtful farmers to consider the advisability of securing a first-class permanent pasture, instead of relying so much on timothy for pasture purposes. Fields which are located long distances from the farm buildings, or which are difficult to work on account of the presence of steep hillsides, crooked rivulets, low spots, etc., might be converted into permanent pastures, and thus prove of great economic value. This arrangement would not interfere materially with the regular crop rotation of the farm. From more than twenty years' work in testing different varieties of grasses and clovers, both singly and in combination, I would suggest the following mixture for permanent pasture on an average soil in Ontario: Alfalfa, 5 pounds; alsike clover, 2 pounds; white clover, 2 pounds; meadow fescue, 4 pounds; orchard grass, 4 pounds; tall oat grass, 3 pounds; meadow foxtail, 2 pounds; and timothy, 2 pounds; thus making a total of 24 pounds of seed per acre. These varieties are all very hardy. Some of those used in Great Britain are not permanent in this country. None of the smaller-growing varieties, such as the blue grasses and the bent grasses, are mentioned, as there is scarcely a farm in Ontario in which the Canadian blue grass, the Kentucky blue grass or the red-top will not grow naturally. The varieties here recommended are strong, vigorous growers. Some of them produce pasture very early in the spring, and others later in the season. Most of the varieties are superior to timothy in producing a growth during the hot, dry weather which occasionally occurs in the months of July and August. The seed can be sown in the early spring, either alone or with a light seeding of spring wheat or of barley. Such a mixture as this, when well established on suitable land, should furnish a pasture, abundant in growth, excellent in quality, and permanent in character."

### DIRECTIONS FOR SEEDING TO ALFALFA.

"There are different ways of laying down a plot or a field to alfalfa, and we would suggest the following method as one which is likely to give very excellent results," says Prof. C. A. Zavitz, O. A. C., Guelph, in his bulletin on Alfalfa or Lucerne. "Select land having a clean, mellow, fertile surface soil overlying a deeply-drained subsoil having no acidity. Use large, plump seed, free from impurities and strong in germinating power. Inoculate the seed with the proper kind of bacteria, providing alfalfa has not been grown successfully on the land in recent years. As early in the spring as the land is dry enough and warm enough to be worked to good advantage, make a suitable seed-bed, and sow about twenty pounds of alfalfa seed per acre from the grass-seed box, placed in front of the grain drill, and about one bushel of spring wheat or of barley per acre from the tubes of the drill. Smooth the land with a light harrow or with a weeder, and, if it is very loose and rather dry, also roll it, and again go over it with the harrow or the weeder. As soon as ripe, cut the grain, and avoid leaving it on the land longer than necessary. Give the alfalfa plants every opportunity to get a good start in the autumn, in preparation for winter. If for hay, cut each crop of alfalfa in the following year, as soon as it starts to bloom. In curing, try to retain as many of the leaves on the stems as possible, and to protect the crop from the rain. Never cut or pasture alfalfa sufficiently close to the ground to remove the crowns of the roots, and thus injure or possibly kill the plants. If these directions are followed, the alfalfa may be expected to produce large and valuable crops for a number of years without reseeded."

### FARM NOTES.

There is a bright prospect ahead for the farmers who know, and the opportunity to know is within easy reach of every wideawake boy who has the necessary industry and perseverance.

This is the season of the year when we need to keep the axles of the wagons well cleaned and oiled. Putting on more oil is not enough. Wipe off the old, hard, gummy oil off, and make the spindles shine before you put on the oil. This makes the wagon run easier, and so helps the team.

The farmer is only incidentally interested in the violent fluctuations in stocks, which occur periodically and which are brought about for speculative purposes. There are other and larger questions affecting agriculture than the operations of the stock gamblers. The help problem, the question of transportation and the extension of our export trade are concerns of real importance.

Cut seed-potatoes into pieces, having two or three eyes each. If you fear scab, soak the seed two hours in a solution of one-half pint formalin diluted with fifteen gallons of water. Have the pieces quite large, as a large piece insures sufficient strength to support the sprout till the plant can begin to draw nutriment from the soil. Make the rows about three feet apart, and drop single seed about fifteen inches apart in the row. Do not get the hills so close together as to prevent the proper maturing of each plant. Use a good brand of potato manure in the rows.

### LETTING GO OF A GRUDGE.

#### A Frenchman's Opinion on What Makes the British Great.

To a writer for the New York Times a French soldier expresses his amazement at the ability of the British soldier to shake hands with his enemy after a fight, whether he is conquered or a conqueror. He declares that the Latin races have so little of this virtue that they hardly understand its existence.

One day the Frenchman, who was in South Africa during the Boer War, saw two British officers walking through the camp with a Boer, all three engaged in earnest conversation. He turned aside so as not to have to salute one who, he supposed, had come to give information in regard to the Boer outposts. Presently he met one of the two officers.

"Be sure to be on time for luncheon," said the Englishman. "Were going to make a noble spread for the Boer you saw with us."

The Frenchman's anger broke out. He declared that he would not sit at meat with a traitor.

"Who's a traitor?" retorted the officer, much amazed. "The poor man's captured, and as he's had such beastly bad luck, we thought a lunch would cheer him up."

"From that day," remarked the Frenchman afterward. "I saw what made the British great. The Boer War was carried on with the bitterest feelings between the two nations. To see the English now, building up the country in the same spirit that moved the officers of that regiment, is a wonder to us Latins."

"We do not forget and forgive easily. When my Italian friends are annoyed with me, they still reproach me with the murder of Conrad of Hohenstaufen by Charles of Anjou in eleven hundred and something."

### MISTAKEN.

"Ah, I see you are married," exclaimed the merchant.

"No, sir," replied the applicant for a position. "I got this scar in a railroad accident."