

A SHADOWED PATH;

Or, The Curse Of The Family

CHAPTER XXIII.

Living amongst the very poor as Judith Mazingford did, her means, small as they really were, went a long way towards alleviating the distress of those with whom she came in contact.

She had abundant charity, a generous heart, and above all, discrimination and good sense; so that, having once permitted her thoughts to wander out beyond the circle of her own individual recollections and griefs, she found she could effect much, even with little. In trouble, danger, difficulty, she was sought after eagerly, and consulted respectively. By the bed of death she stood, like a ministering angel; she feared no contagion; she dreaded the sight of no disease.

"My income is not a large one," she said one day, shortly after her recovery, to Dr. Duvar, "but still I have enough to help a few of my fellow-creatures along the road of life; and whenever you meet with a case of real distress, I should feel obliged by your informing me of it."

And so, whenever a brood of young children were left orphans, or a woman was suddenly widowed, or a man disabled, or an old couple deprived of food by the death of some stalwart son—their bread-winner—the doctor went to Judith, and got help for each and all from her. It was no wonder that, young and beautiful as she was, he should become deeply interested in the woman thrown so strangely across his path.

Not that he ever once wavered in his allegiance to Alice.

The time when Judith thought flirting an amusing occupation was gone for ever. She was too grave to inspire any feelings but those of friendship and respect in the breast of an "engaged" individual; and what, perhaps, saved Dr. Duvar from a very disagreeable denouement, and preserved his fidelity to Alice unshaken, was the fact that Judith kept him at arm's length. Her manners, if kind, were certainly somewhat frigid to everybody, except her little garden acquaintances; no one ever dreamt of asking her a question, of encroaching one step beyond the line she marked out for her acquaintances to stop at.

But love!—Doctor Duvar would as soon have thought of getting up an affection for a glacier, as of committing that folly. Alice was to be his wife; and meantime he thought he had never seen so beautiful and accomplished, and amiable a woman as Mrs. Gilmore, concerning whom he wrote, truth to tell, a vast deal more to his affianced bride, than altogether satisfied that somewhat exacting young lady. It was in the purity, and confidence, and integrity of his heart that the man poured out his admiration. But Alice did not like it; she grew wonderfully suspicious of the beautiful unknown, and jealous too.

Alice Crepton became jealous, and angry, and dissatisfied; and she thought it was an extraordinarily strange and evil chance, which had sent the widow, for so she deemed her, into that identical suburb in which poor Charles Duvar was trying to keep soul and body together; and she felt angry with her for going there, and getting ill, and sending for Doctor Duvar, as though there were no other doctor on earth she could have got to cure her, but him. And she was vexed with her being so beautiful, and good, and clever—for woman is as unreasoning in her dislikes as in her loves—and Alice being very fond of her fiancé, was tenacious of his affection accordingly: and Alice becoming far too much engrossed by the lovely face of his new neighbor.

In short, the curse of a long engagement was on the girl, and producing effects which will hereafter be described; but while she continued torturing herself with all sorts of unjust suspicions and conclusions, Dr. Duvar was not falling in love with Judith—he was only asking her to assist his patients, and enjoying, as all men, whether married or single, will enjoy, half-an-hour's chat occasionally with a well-educated woman; while she, in her turn, grew to esteem the young physician, who she saw was bravely buffeting the

billows of fortune; and she would have aided him also if she could. But it was beyond her ability to procure him a good practice; and so, utterly unconscious of all the harm she was doing, totally unaware of the close relationship which might some day exist between her new friend and herself, she quietly pursued her way.

For twenty-one tranquil months she had been an inmate of the laundress' humble abode; and still the world, usually tolerably well informed in all matters of the sort, was unacquainted with the real name of an authoress whose works were beginning to be "inquired for."

Her second book had gone through two editions; and Judith was completing a third work, the first portion of which was already in type. Much curiosity was expressed in literary circles concerning the antecedents of the lady who produced such life-like fictions. Miss Ridsdale was the only one who guessed the truth at that period—and she, perhaps, only surmised it, because of a certain character vaguely shadowed forth in the first book, and of a remittance her niece sent her, which, Judith said, in the note accompanying it, "had been honestly earned by the united efforts of her hand and head."

As time went on, Judith grew to appreciate and quietly enjoy her freedom, and the greater became her dread of detection. During the writing of her new work, and conveyance of it piecemeal to Mr. Mason's, she lived in a sort of agony. It might have been the state of her bodily health, which was far from satisfactory, that induced this morbid kind of horror. Certain rumors which had reached her anxious ear, even in that remote region, of her husband's affairs being embarrassed, had brought back painful memories; at all events, one thing is certain Judith, strange as it may sound, frequently found the contemplation of possible detection so terrible, that she rushed into absolute danger to get rid of her apprehensions.

Under the protection of her well prepared disguise, she traversed most of the back streets and lanes which literature affects in London—trying to dispose of old manuscript tales to editors and publishers—asking for interviews with all sorts of people, as if she were striving for variety, in rebuffs, refusals, cold civility, and constrained politeness. She the successful author, apparently liked the amusement of taking her first born offspring a-begging. She never said to anybody, "I am the writer of these books, about which reviewers are making such a fuss;" but rather she defiantly presented her earlier efforts to people who would not accept them, and was wont to emerge from many an office inwardly laughing at the comments which accompanied these rejections.

On one of these occasions she turned into the Strand, intending to proceed from thence straight home; but, passing by one of the cross streets with the manuscripts in her hand, it suddenly occurred to Judith that she would leave them with her old correspondent, Mr. Kear, who "held court" in that region, and see what he had to say to her now. Accordingly she went a few steps out of her way, and entering the British Lion office, asked to see the editor. He was out, but she left her parcel in the care of a clerk, saying she would call again the next time she came into town.

Very graciously Mr. Kear received her when she did so, seated in his dark sanctum, where gas was burnt all the day long, and visitors contemplated the august personage of the Editor-proprietor across a table covered with papers, and through an atmosphere thick with dust.

"I left a manuscript here about a fortnight since," she said; "may I inquire if you have come to any decision concerning it?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Kear, diving down as he spoke into a perfect chaos of papers, from which he finally fished up the tale in question. "I am sorry, very sorry to have to return it—more particularly as I cannot praise it in any solitary respect. I feel it a kindness to you—I feel it in fact my duty, to advise

your abandoning literature as a professional pursuit." And as Mr. Kear delivered himself of this encouraging speech, he laid the offending manuscript out flat on his desk, as if it were a corpse, and he a clergyman about to read a funeral oration over it.

"Thank you," replied the object of his proposed benevolent intentions, "but as you decline my tale, I fear there is nothing further you can do for me. I do not think 'hints,' or 'suggestions,' would be of much use in my case now."

"Yet authors—young authors—often stand greatly in need of advice," urged Mr. Kear.

"Pray, do you often find them follow it, when given?" inquired Judith.

"Yes, generally," he replied.

"And you never discover your advice to have been ill-judged?" she pursued.

"No," he said, but he said it somewhat hesitatingly; "No. I cannot remember an instance."

"Well," answered Judith, and leaning over the top of an arm-chair upon which one arm rested, she fixed her eyes on Mr. Kear's now irritated face; "Well, I will supply you with one; years ago, a girl wrote to know if you would read one of her manuscripts, and return of post there came a reply, stating how happy you should feel to give your best attention, and so forth; and accordingly she sent her tale. In due time it was returned to her, declined; accompanied by a note full of regrets and counsels, the principal burden of the epistle being that you advised her not to write at all, she having no genius for a literary career. Advice to that girl was useless—money was all she needed, assistance all she asked—money then would have saved her a life-time of misery; had you stretched out a helping hand in those days, she would have gone down on her knees and blessed you for it."

Judith's voice shook as she spoke.

"But to the letter; instead of studying its contents, and laying them to heart, she put it in the fire; and now that same individual can obtain a couple of hundred pounds for any novel she writes—she made her reputation quickly, and is at this moment a 'popular author.'"

"And the authoress—" suggested Mr. Kear.

"Has now supplied an instance, Mr. Kear, of what she considers the absurdity of either giving or following unasked-for advice—for I was that girl—and this manuscript which you have just rejected was one of my earlier efforts. I came to you, because I wished, now I was successful, to hear your opinion pronounced on a later work than the one previously submitted to you. I wished to hear, now my genius is acknowledged, whether you could find in that old manuscript any trace of latent talent; and you know the result."

"But you are so young to have written two popular books," remarked Mr. Kear, after a pause.

"Young in years—old in sorrow!" she answered, with a shudder.

And the authoress died out, and the woman usurped her place, as, with a rush of old memories softening her voice, she added:—"Good-bye, Mr. Kear; what I have said may, perhaps, prove of use to some orphan girl or struggling woman;" and she held out her hand to the Editor in token of amity, which he took, and shook in an offended and dignified manner, and afterwards returned with, perhaps, unnecessary expedition to its owner.

So Judith passed forth satisfied that she had said her say—and had it out with the proprietor of the British Lion; while, as for Mr. Kear? why, he did not believe one solitary syllable of her story, and speedily recovering his equanimity, which had been somewhat ruffled by his visitor's rather uncivil comments, he put on his hat, and walked out of his office, intending to proceed westward on business.

When he got into the Strand, he saw Judith waiting to cross the crowded thoroughfare. The street was wet and dirty—a drizzling rain had commenced to fall, which, hanging like dew on the thick crape veil she always wore in public to conceal her features from observation—blinded her so completely that almost involuntarily she threw it back in order to effect the passage over in safety.

At the moment she did so, Mr. Kear noticed a man regarding her with a fixed and puzzled stare, with an expression of such intense surprise and eagerness, that it at once arrested the Editor-proprietor's attention, and induced him to pause for a moment, to see what would happen next.

He saw Judith reach the other side, followed by the stranger; as soon as she set foot on the opposite curb down went the deep crape veil again, but just as she was gathering in in close folds over her face, the person who had excited Mr. Kear's curiosity, drew close to her

side, and touching her shoulder, whispered apparently a single word in her ear. With a sudden start she turned round, and then without a single cry fell on the pavement. The whole affair scarcely occupied two seconds, and before the Editor had well recovered from his amazement the principal figures were concealed from his view by a crowd of delighted spectators, who pressing eagerly forward to "see the sight," surrounded the spot in an incredibly short space of time.

"What is the matter?" asked Mr. Kear, of a man who turned away from the circle after a glance into the centre, with a peculiarly significant smile, "What is the matter?" "Only a gentleman who has found his wife," replied the person addressed, who chanced to be a Member of Parliament.

"And who is the lady?" demanded the other, feeling satisfied that the gentleman knew all about the parties concerned.

"Oh! the beautiful Mrs. Mazingford, whose disappearance nearly two years since created such a sensation in fashionable circles."

"Whew!" exclaimed Mr. Kear, and he absolutely emitted a whistle from between his closed teeth; after which impromptu performance, which wonderfully amused his informant, he bowed to the gentleman who had given him such valuable intelligence, and hastening off eastwards, told the "news" to every publisher with whom he came in contact. Whereupon, long before Mr. Mason was himself aware of the fact, all the trade knew that the two successful books he had recently brought out were written by Mrs. Mazingford, the lady who had run off; and a tremendous demand followed forthwith, somewhat to the astonishment of the publisher, who, as usual, was the last person to hear tidings which concerned him most.

(To be Continued.)

About the Farm

GARLIC FLAVOR IN MILK.

Prof. J. C. Kendall an American dairy authority, has been making an investigation of the garlic odor in milk and cream. Cows, when turned out to pasture in the spring, eat the tender young sprouts of this plant with relish, and the result is most disastrous to the milk and butter supply. The odor is closely associated with the butter-fat, while bitter and other flavors, are most pronounced in the milk serum. Removing the skim milk does not therefore accomplish the beneficial effect that might be expected.

Prof. Kendall has made a close study of the influence of the weed upon the flavor of milk and butter, and has tried different methods of ridding milk and cream of the flavor. While this flavor can be got rid of, to a certain extent, by pasteurization and quick cooling, these are not sufficiently effective to make butter made from milk with garlic flavor saleable.

In an hour or two after the animal has eaten garlic it is noticeable in the milk. In a short time the entire system is permeated by the pungent odor. It will damage the sale of the carcass of animals slaughtered, while on pasture infested by garlic. The only effective way found to overcome the effects of this odor was to turn the cows on the pasture for not more than two hours immediately after milking, and keeps them from access to garlic until the following milking. Prof. Kendall found no trouble from it by following this plan.

Some follow the plan of keeping cows out of the pasture infested with garlic for a couple of hours before milking. But this was found not to be effective. The only effective plan is to see to it that the cows have their feed containing garlic before any considerable amount of milk has been elaborated.

The safe plan with this and other foods that flavor the milk, such as turnips, is not to feed them at all to milch cows. In the fall of the year many dairy sections in Canada are troubled with turnip flavor in milk. While this flavor may be got rid of by feeding turnips immediately after milking it is never a safe proposition to advocate it. The patron is sure to take advantage of it, and feed turnips when he should not do so. There are other foods for milch cows just as good and cheap that do not flavor the milk. Then why feed anything that will endanger the quality of the product?

FARM NOTES.

The early generations simply

plowed the ground and gathered the crops. We must manage very differently to-day. We have been selling from the farm elements of fertility, which we must return in some way to the soil.

It is pretty generally understood at the present day that the feeding of animals is most economically performed by the use of a ration in which the elements of nutrition bear a definite ratio to each other. The present state of agricultural science would seem to indicate that plants too should be fed by properly proportioned rations or in such a manner as will secure a healthy and continuous development of the plant until it fulfills the end of its existence.

If weeds are to be kept at bay the portions of the farm once cleaned must be kept clean. Unless this is done it is quite impossible to clean a farm at all. In order to do this effectively every farm must be gone over once or twice a year with spud in hand. Whether this work shall be done once or twice will depend first, on the nature of the weeds found growing; second, on the kinds of crop grown in certain fields, and third, on the extent of the autumn cultivation practised. It is astonishing how efficacious this simple process proves. Where it is practised from year to year it is quite impossible for a farm once cleaned to get foul again, when the ordinary process of cultivation receives due attention. Every form of weed life is thus nipped in the bud, and so never gets a footing.

LIVE STOCK NOTES.

Weak legs in pigs show that the bone-making material in their diet is lacking and that they need to be given a chance to get out on the ground.

In setting a hen late in the season, when the weather is warm, it is well either to make the nest on the ground, or to put a sod in the bottom of it, so that there may be some degree of coolness and moisture.

Sheep need looking after every day nearly, but they do not have to be milked twice a day, like cows; neither do they have to be driven to the barn every day. They ought, however, to be changed from one lot to another about every three weeks, and that is not much of a job if every time they are looked after they are given a few handfuls of some kind of grain that they like. They are only too willing to follow the dish on being called.

Every farmer should at least keep hogs enough to consume the waste products of the farm, garden and dairy, and more, according to circumstances. The market demand is of primary importance. Every farmer should keep his own brood sows. Select those of good, rapid growing power, that fatten readily at any age. A standard breed is preferable. Breed to a standard bred male of same type. Market fall pigs in May or June, when they will usually bring a good price. They will weigh, at this time, 200 to 300 pounds. If you don't want to sell before fall, keep them growing thriftily all summer, and get them ready for an early market, as it is generally the best. Commence feeding gradually and in a short time they may have all they will eat.

SAVED.

A young lawyer, not noted for intelligence, succeeded in having a client acquitted for murder. Meeting a friend a few days afterwards, the lawyer was greeted with warm congratulations.

"Yes," he said, mopping his brow, "I got him off, but it was a narrow escape."

"A narrow escape! How?" "Ah, the tightest squeeze you ever saw. You know I examined the witnesses, and made the argument myself, the plea being self-defence. The jury was out two whole days. Finally, the judge called them before him, and asked what the trouble was."

"Only one thing, my lord," replied the foreman. "Was the prisoner's counsel retained by him or appointed by the court?"

"No, gentlemen, the prisoner is a man of means," said the judge, "and engaged his own counsel."

"I could not see what bearing the question had on the evidence," continued the lawyer, "but ten minutes later in filed the jury, and what do you think the verdict was?"

"Why, 'not guilty,' on the ground of insanity."

Landlady—"You make an awful noise with that flute." Boarder—"Well, I'm sorry to hear it." Landlady—"So's everybody else."

Some women are naturally weak. That's why they are unable to hold their tongues.