

THE CASTING AWAY

MRS. LECKS AND MRS. ALESHINE.

(Continued.)
The two women left me in an amused but also somewhat annoyed state of mind. I had no intention whatever of proposing to Miss Ruth Erderton. She was a charming girl, very bright and lively, and, withal, I had reason to believe, very sensible. But it was not yet a fortnight since I first saw her, and no thought of marrying her had entered into my head. Had Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine, or, more important than all, had Miss Erderton, any reason to believe that I was acting the part of a lover? The latter portion of this question was almost immediately answered to my satisfaction by the appearance of Miss Ruth, who came skipping down to me and calling out to me in that free and hearty manner with which a woman addresses a friend or near acquaintance, but never a suspected lover. She betrayed no more notion of the Lecks and Aleshine's scheme than on the day I first met her.
But, as I was rowing her over the lagoon, I felt a certain constraint, which I had not known before. There was no ground whatever for the wild imaginings of the two women, but the fact that they had imagined it interested very much with the careless freedom with which I had previously talked to Miss Ruth. I do not think, however, that she noticed any change in me, for she chattered and laughed, and showed, as she had done from the first, the rare delight which has took in this novel island life.
When we returned to the house, we were met by Mrs. Aleshine. "I am going to give you two your supper," she said, "on that table there under the tree. We all had ours a little earlier than common, as the sailor men seemed hungry; and I took your father's to him in the library, where I expect he's a-sittin' yet, holdin' a book in one hand and stirrin' his tea with the other, till he's stirred out nearly every drop on the floor, which, however, it won't matter at all, for in the mornin' I'll run up that floor till it's as bright as new."
This plan delighted Miss Ruth, but I saw in it the beginning of the workings of a deep-laid scheme. I was just about to sit down, when Mrs. Aleshine said to me in a low voice as she left us:
"Remember that the first three-quarters of a pint apiece begins now!"
"Don't you think that Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine are perfectly charming?" said Miss Ruth, as she poured out the tea. "They always seem to be trying to think of some kind thing to do for other people."
I agreed entirely with Miss Erderton's remark, but I could not help thinking of the surprise she would feel if she knew of the kind thing that these two women were trying to do for her.
"Have you taken any steps yet?" asked Mrs. Lecks of me the next day. And on my replying that I had taken no steps of the kind to which I supposed she alluded, she walked away with a very grave and serious face.
A few hours later Mrs. Aleshine came to me. "There's another reason for hurryin' up," said she. "Them sailor men seems able to do without 'st anythin' in this world except tobacco, and Mrs. Lecks has been sellin' it to 'em out of a big box she found in a closet upstairs, at five cents a tea-spoon full, which I think is awful cheap, but she says prices in islands is always low, and wrapping the money up in a paper, with 'Cash paid by sailor men for tobacco' written on it, and puttin' it into the ginger-jar with the board money. But their dollar and forty-three cents is nearly gone, and Mrs. Lecks she says that not a Whiff of Mr. Dusante's tobacco shall they have if they can't pay for it. And when they have nothin' to leave this island just as quick as they can, without waitin' for the flour to give out."
Here was another pressure brought to bear upon me. Not only the wanting flour, but the rapidly disappearing tobacco money was used as a weapon to urge me forward to the love-making which Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine had set their hearts upon.
I was in no hurry to leave the island, and hoped very much that when we did go we should depart in some craft more comfortable than a ship's boat. In order, therefore, to prevent any undue desire to leave on the part of the sailors, I gave them money enough to buy a good many tea-spoons full of tobacco. By this act I think I wounded the feelings of Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine, although I had no idea that such would be the effect of my little gift. They said nothing to me on the subject, but their looks and manner indicated that they thought I had not been acting honorably. For two days they had very little to say to me; and then Mrs. Aleshine came to me to make what, I suppose, was their supreme effort.
"Mrs. Lecks and me is a-goin' to try," she said, "and as she spoke she looked at me with a very sad expression and a watery appearance about the eyes, 'to stretch out the time for you a little longer. We are goin' to make them sailor men eat more fish, and for me and her, we'll go pretty much without bread, and make it up, as well as we can, on other things. You and Miss Ruth and the parson can each have your three-quarters of a pint of flour a day, just the same as ever, but what we save ought to give you three or four days longer."
This speech moved me deeply. I could not allow these two kind-hearted women to half starve themselves in order that I might have more time to woo, and I spoke very earnestly on the subject to Mrs. Aleshine, urging

her to give up the fanciful plans which she and Mrs. Lecks had concocted.
"Let us drop this idea of love-making," I said, "which is the wildest kind of vagary, and all live happily together, as we did before. If the provisions give out before the Dusantes come back, I suppose we shall have to leave in the boat; but, until that time comes, let us enjoy life here as much as we can, and be the good friends that we used to be."
I might as well have talked to one of the palm-trees which waved over us. "As I said before," remarked Mrs. Aleshine, "what is saved from Mrs. Lecks's and mine and the three sailor men's three-quarters of a pint apiece ought to give you four days more." And she went into the house.
All this time the Reverend Mr. Erderton had sat and read in the library, or meditatively had walked the beach, with a book in his hand; while the three miners had caught fish performed their other work, and lain in the shade, smoking their pipes in peace. Miss Ruth and I had taken our daily rounds and walks, and had enjoyed our usual hours of pleasant converse, and all the members of the little colony seemed happy and contented except Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine. These two went gravely and sadly about their work, and the latter asked no more for the hompines and the sea songs of her sailor men.
But for some unaccountable reason, Mr. Erderton's condition of tranquil abstraction did not continue. He began to be fretful and discontented. He found fault with his food and his accommodations, and instead of spending the greater part of the day in the library as had been his wont, he took to wandering about the island, generally with two or three books under his arm sometimes sitting down in one place and sometimes in another, and then rising suddenly, to go grumbling into the house.
One afternoon, as Miss Ruth and I were in the skiff in the lagoon, we saw Mr. Erderton approaching us, walking on the beach. As soon as he was near enough for us to hear him, he shouted to his daughter.
"Ruth, come out of that boat! If you want to take the air I should think you might as well walk with me as to go rowing round with— with anybody."
This rude and heartless speech made my blood boil, while my companion turned pale with mortification. The man had never made the slightest objection to our friendly intercourse, and this unexpected attack was entirely indefensible.
"Please put me ashore," said Miss Ruth. And without a word, for I could not trust myself to speak, I landed her. And petulantly complaining that she never gave him one moment of her society, her father led her away.
An hour later, my soul still in a state of turmoil, but with the violence of its tossings somewhat abated, I entered one of the paths which led through the woods. After a few turns, I reached a point where I could see for quite a distance to the other end of the path, which opened out upon the beach. There I perceived Mr. Erderton, sitting upon the little bench on which I had found Emily's book. His back was towards me, and he seemed to be busily reading. About midway between him and myself I saw Miss Ruth, slowly walking towards me. Her eyes were fixed upon the ground, and she had not seen me.
Stepping to one side I awaited her approach. When she came near I accosted her.
"Miss Ruth," said I, "has your father been talking to you of me?"
She looked up quickly, evidently surprised at my being there. "Yes," she said, "he has told me that it is not suitable that I should be with you as much as I have been since we came here."
There was something in this remark that roused again the turmoil which had begun to subside within me. There was so much that was unjust and tyrannical, and—what perhaps touched me still deeper—there was such a want of consideration and respect in this behavior of Mr. Erderton that it brought to the front some very incongruous emotions. I had been superciliously pushed aside, and I found I was angry. Something was about to be torn from me, and I found I loved it.
"Ruth," said I, stepping up close to her, "do you like to be with me as you have been?"
If Miss Ruth had not spent such a large portion of her life in the out-of-the-world village of Nanfou-chong; if she had not lived among those simple-hearted missionaries, where it was never necessary to conceal her emotions or her sentiments; if it had not been that she never had had emotions or sentiments that it was necessary to conceal, I do not believe that when she answered me she would have raised her eyes to me with a look in them of a deep-blue sky seen through a sort of Indian summer mist, and that gazing thus she would have said:
"Of course I like it."
"Then let us make it suitable," I said, taking both her hands in mine.
There was another look in which the skies shone clear and bright, and then, in a moment, it was all done.
About five minutes after this I said to her, "Ruth, shall we go to your father?"
"Certainly," she answered. And together we walked along the thickly shaded path.
The missionary still sat with his back towards us; and, being so intent upon his book, I found that by keep-

ing my eyes upon him it was perfectly safe to walk with my arm around Ruth until we had nearly reached him. Then I took her hand in mine, and we stepped in front of him.
"Father," said Ruth, "Mr. Craig and I are going to be married."
There was something very plump about this remark, and Mr. Erderton immediately raised his eyes from his book and fixed them first upon his daughter and then upon me; then he let them drop, and through the narrow space between us he gazed out over the sea.
"Well, father," said Ruth, a little impatiently, "what do you think of it?"
Mr. Erderton leaned forward and picked up a leaf from the ground. This he placed between the open pages of his book and closed it.
"It seems to me," he said, "that on many accounts the arrangement you propose may be an excellent one. Yes," he added more decidedly, "I think it will do very well indeed. I shall not be at all surprised if we are obliged to remain on this island for a considerable time, and, for my part, I have no desire to leave it at present. And when you shall place yourself, Ruth, in a position, in which you will direct the domestic economies of the establishment, I hope that you will see to it that things generally are made more compatible with comfort and gentility, and, as regards the table, I may add with palatability."
Ruth and I looked at each other, and then together we promised that as far as in us lay we would try to make 'he life of Mr. Erderton, a happy one, not only while we were on the island, but ever afterward.
We were promising a great deal, but at that moment we felt very grateful. Then he stood up, shook us both by the hands, and we left him to his book.
When Ruth and I came walking out of the woods and approached the house, Mrs. Aleshine was standing outside, not far from the kitchen. When she saw us she gazed steadily at us for a few moments, a strange expression coming over her face. Then she threw up both her hands, and, without a word, she turned and rushed indoors.
We had not reached the house before Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine came hurrying out together. Running up to us with a haste and an excitement I had never seen in either of them, first one and then the other took Ruth into her arms and kissed her with much earnestness. Then they turned upon me and shook my hands with hearty vigor, expressing, more by their looks and actions than their words, a triumphant approbation of what I had done.
"The minute I laid my eyes on you," said Mrs. Aleshine, "I knew it was all right. There wasn't no need of askin' questions."
I now became fearful lest, in the exuberance of their satisfaction these good women might reveal to Ruth the plans they had laid for our matrimonial future, and the reluctance I had shown in entering into them. My countenance must have expressed my apprehensions, for Mrs. Aleshine, her ruddy face glowing with warmth, both mental and physical, gave me a little wink and drew me to one side.
"You needn't suppose that we've ever said anything to Miss Ruth, or that we're goin' to. It's a great deal better to let her think you did it all yourself."
I felt like resenting this imputation upon the independence of my love-making, but at this happy moment I did not want to enter into a discussion, and therefore merely smiled.
"I'm so glad, I don't know how to tell it," continued Mrs. Aleshine, as Mrs. Lecks and Ruth walked towards the house.
I was about to follow, but my companion detained me.
"Have you spoken to the parson?" she asked.
"Oh, yes," said I, "and he seems perfectly satisfied. I am rather surprised at this, because of late he has been in such a remarkably bad humor."
"That's so," said Mrs. Aleshine; "there's no gettin' round the fact that he's been a good deal crosser than two sticks. You see, Mr. Craig, that Mrs. Lecks and me, we made up our minds to let that rich missionary go on payin' for him and his daughter, and if we couldn't get no more out of him one way, we'd do it in another. It was fair enough that if he didn't pay more he ought to get less; and so we gave him more fish and not so much bread, and we weakened his tea, and sent him just so much sugar, and no more; and, as for openin' boxes of sardines for him which there was no reason why they shouldn't be left here for the Dusantes, I just wouldn't do it, though he said he'd got all the fresh fish he wanted when he was in China. And then we agreed that it was high time that that library should be cleaned up, and we went to work at it, not mindin' what he said; for it's no use tellin' me that four dollars a week will pay for a front room and good board, and the use of a library all day. And, as there wasn't no need of both of us cleanin' one room, Mrs. Lecks, she went into the parlor, where he'd look his books, and begun there. And then, again, we shut down on Mr. Dusante's dressing-gown. There was no sense includin' the use of that in his four dollars a week, so we brushed it up, and camphored it, and put it away. We just wanted to let him know that if he undertook to be skinflinty, he'd better try it on somebody else besides us. We could see that he was a good deal upset, for, if ever a man liked to have things quiet and comfortable around him, and everything his own way, that man is that missionary. But we didn't care if we did prod him up a little. Mrs. Lecks and me, we both agreed that it would do him good. Why, he'd got into such a way of shettin' himself up in himself, that he didn't even see that his daughter was goin' about with a young man, and fixin' her affections on him more and more every day, when he never had no idea, as could be proved by witnesses, of marryin' her."
To Be Continued.

Talking It Over.

A good deal of the pleasure and satisfaction we take in going anywhere, and seeing anything, is found in talking it over afterward.
If you are going to the lecture, the church, the play, or the garden party, you like to have a friend—a sympathetic friend, along with you, so that you two can compare notes and talk it all over afterward.
She will see what you see, and some things beside probably, and two heads are better than one, and of course two pair of eyes are better than one. There are so many things to be discussed, and there can be so much harmless, delightful gossip when two women, who are thoroughly in rapport with each other, come together.
The way that dancer in the red silk gown flirted with the knight in armor, and how she turned up her eyes at the other leading lady; and you wonder if she is any relation of the dark gentleman who scowled at her so fiercely when the lover was doing the sentimental toward her, and were her diamonds real, or not? And what awful large feet she had, and how scrawny her neck was, and what a way she had of setting her arms akimbo, just like your washwoman when she disputes the wages you want to pay her! And if the matter under discussion be a lecture, it is just lovely to talk that over, and have somebody who was with you to share in the entertainment. You can ask her if she thinks, if the really thinks, that all that lecturer's hair was natural hair, and if she noticed how dreadfully her skirt did hang over to one side, and how badly her boots fitted; and you can say (and your friend will agree with you) that a woman who lectures ought to be very careful about the way her skirts hang, and how her feet look, because you know, one is so exposed on the platform.
And if you have been at church why, it is nothing out of place, after you have talked over the sermon, to talk over the preacher—gently and charitably, of course, we all do it. "Such a learned and holy-minded man! Oh so intellectual! But just a little ever so little, careless about his collars and things." And he will open his eyes now and then when he is praying—just a habit of his, of course; and he does have—don't you think! a rather cordial way of shaking hands with that forward young soprano; but then, probably, it is her fault. Some girls never know how to deport themselves you know. And she isn't quite in our set, poor thing!
If you go to a party, or reception you dearly like to talk that over. The way the table was laid—the new method of folding the napkins, the fashion in which the hair of the hostess was "done up"—(not becoming at all, do you think?)—and your friend is quite of your way of thinking. And she noticed how Mrs. Brown's dress had been let out in the waist—she is getting so stout; and then that dreadful Seely child that they all think is such a wonder; and if it were yours you would have left it at home—yes, indeed! And it was so funny that Mr. Robinson, the host, did not even look in, and he was in the house you know he was, all the time. And you have heard it hinted, and your friend says she has heard it hinted, too, but of course you don't either one of you believe it—oh, no!—you have heard it whispered that he does not like to have his wife belong to clubs and do so much entertaining; and that he is awful close and miserly with his family; and your friend has heard the same thing; but, then, one never does know what to believe. And then she smiles knowingly, and you smile in the same way, and you thoroughly understand each other, and Mr. Robinson's status is definitely settled to your mutual satisfaction.
And the dresses of the guests come in for a share of attention when you are talking it over. Poor Angeline Jones, with her black hair, and dreadfully tawny skin, and that blue dress! Strange that people do not have better taste! Her dressmaker ought to have told her better. She looked positively horrid! And Mrs. Flitters, with those pink ribbons; and she is fifty, if she is a day! And your friend will supplement your remarks with the information that they do say that it is a fact that the Flitters have a big mortgage on their house and don't pay their grocer's bill; and that oldest Miss Flitters is dead in love with young Goldust, and he laughs about it at his club—the wrath!—but, then, men will do so, you know.
When you go away for the summer season, your friend and you can have reminiscences of that kind are so delightful. Oh, the mosquitoes, and the horrid hard beds, and the flies, and the multitudes of other things that you experienced. And so, as we said in the beginning, half the enjoyment one gets out of anything is found in talking it over after it is over and gone.—Kate Thorn.

A STRANGE CASE.

MR. JAS. CROSGREY, OF PORT HOPE, TELLS AN INTERESTING STORY.
His Right Leg Swollen to Three Times Its Natural Size—Elicers Followed for a Year and a Half—Doctors' Treatment Failed to Help Him.
From the Port Hope Times.
"It was nearly as large as that telephone pole." These words were said by Mr. Jas. Crosgray, of Port Hope, Ontario, who is in the employ of Mr. K. Scott, who has a feed store on Main street, and is well and favorably known in town and vicinity. Less than two years ago Mr. Crosgray was the recipient of much sympathy on account of a severe affliction which befell his leg, and from doing any labor except a few odd days work. His recovery was wrought so suddenly and completely that the Times considered the matter would be of sufficient interest to its readers to obtain an interview with Mr. Crosgray. In substance Mr. Crosgray told the following story of his illness:—"In April, 1895, I was laid up for seven weeks with typhoid fever, and after I recovered from the fever, my right leg began to swell, and was very painful indeed, and in a few weeks it was three times its natural size—nearly as large as that telephone pole," and he pointed to a stick of timber about an inch in diameter. "Nothing the doctor did gave me any relief, and I consulted another with the same result. I suffered for nearly five months when I noticed that the swelling began to decrease and I became hopeful of recovery. But the improvement continued for a short time and then the swelling became greater and the big ulcers formed on the inside of the leg above the ankle. These ulcers were right through to the bone and you could put that much into them and Mr. Crosgray indicated on his thumb an object an inch in length. "For the next year and a half I was treated by four or five doctors but the leg and the ulcers were as bad as ever. The doctors pronounced the disease phlebitis or inflammation of the vein. They didn't seem to know what was getting well." Mr. Crosgray's recovery came in a strange manner, almost chance one might say. He tells of this way:—"I had a relative named Teeswater, named William B. D. H. CHISHOLM."

On the Farm.

PROPAGATING GOOSEBERRIES AND CURRANTS.
They are propagated by layerings. Currants are especially well adapted to reproduce in this way, says a writer cutting five to eight inches from September up to the time the current year's growth. Tie bundles and bury until spring in a place where the water will be good, plant in a well-prepared bed, leaving about two inches above ground. The rows should be spaced apart to permit of easy cultivation and about six inches apart in the ground. This must be done before the ground freezes. Layerings of the previous years growth planted in this position for a season will have been put out in nursery row or set where it is intended they are to remain.
HARROWING THE YOUNG WHEAT PLANT.
It is many years since, says an Australian paper, we first advocated harrowing of wheat crops when the plant was a few inches high. A long time many farmers were skeptical about the results, and some even contended that the young wheat was too delicate for such a roughly rough treatment. Several farmers, however, especially those in the southwestern portion of the colony, were determined to give the harrow a trial, and after some years of experience are now thoroughly convinced the benefits arising from the operation are the strongest advocates of the principle. Many of the harvest crops are said to have yielded from five to seven—bushels more per acre than the uncultivated ones did. This, of course, was in seasons. Those farmers who have some doubts as to the benefits derived from harrowing, may try what plant may easily test after for themselves by cultivating five acres in any paddock and all the remainder of the crop to the effect of itself. This would enable a farmer to judge for himself whether harrowing had benefited his wheat, or if the results had justified the outlay. The total expense of harrowing one acre with another has been estimated at about 2s 6d per acre—prose of a bushel of wheat. The time to harrow the crop is when the plant is from two to three inches high, and when the soil is dry on the surface and easy to work. The immediate effects of the operation will destroy any number of weeds, which, allowed to grow, would not only land of some of its fertility, but hinder the development of the plant, loosen the surface, which will act as a mulch and prevent too-rapid evaporation of moisture from the subsoil, and leave the soil in a good condition to receive the benefit of any passing shower. The operation will destroy wheat plants, but this will be compensated for by the growth of those that are left, and the fillers much more readily will grow. On many soils a second harrowing has often proved of the greatest benefit to the crop. This operation should be carried out about six or six weeks after the first harrowing took place.
FALL AND WINTER PEARS.
The smooth Bartlett's pear is held their own for the summer and fall trade. The heavy yield of these trees, and the ready market they find, makes them a profitable pear to grow, writes S. W. Chisholm. Bartlett's are not by any means the best pears for home use, for the Seckel, Flemish Beauty, and other dwarf varieties far surpass them in estimation, but owing to the handsome appearance of the fruit they will always command a premium. The buying public still judge largely from their own appearance. The Bartlett's are just sweet, but one soon sickens of them, and then become so impatiently, and then become so impatiently, that one must use harrowing. They should be picked off the tree when quite green, and best results. The old Flemish Beauty are bright, red-checked pears with a greenish color, but of low quality, they crack open and spoil for market use. The flavor of the Seckel is delicious, and beyond the market, and of late years several varieties have caused them to go into great disfavor. Those who grow them, however, would advise one to almost any other variety of pears, cracks and all. The cause of this crack-

Electric light is about to be introduced into the 11,000 rooms of the Vatican. The plant is being set up in the former barracks of the French Guards.