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Violet's Lover

"You can never go back from your word, Violet. No human ear hears, but beholds the great, broad, blue sky. Your vow is made to me, darling, before Heaven."

"I have made no vow, Felix."

"You have said that you love me. Violet, make me quite happy now. Already I am so happy that the air seems to intoxicate me. Say you will be my wife," he answered.

She was thinking again, with the same far-off look in her eyes, and she said, suddenly:

"A cottage orne. Do you mean that pretty villa where the Hendersons stayed?"

The question seemed to him almost decisive. She would not have asked it had she meant to refuse him. He could hardly answer her calmly, but he beat back his emotion. "She is so easily startled," he said to himself. "I must be very cautious what I say to her."

"Yes, and many of the beautiful things that Captain Henderson bought are there now. To my mind it is the prettiest house in Lilford, and, my darling, I have a vision of you standing in that pretty entrance hall, waiting for me when business hours are over. I can see the light from the stained-glass window falling on your golden hair. I see the sunlight lying outside on the flowers. I see the pretty, sweet face glow brighter for my coming. I can see your hands stretched out to welcome me. I can also see the years pass on, and life grow brighter and more beautiful. How do you like the picture, Violet? Will you make it real?"

His great, passionate love, shining in his eyes, trembling on his lips, touched her. Her beautiful face grew pale. She was woman enough to feel the beauty of the future he had painted for her—woman enough to appreciate the deep, honest, true love offered to her.

"I would rather not promise," she said, "but I will think of it, Felix."

"You do not refuse, Violet?"

"No, I do not refuse," she answered. "Why, then?" he cried, "the victory is won! You will be my wife. My darling, I love you all the better for your shy, sweet reserve. How could I be so foolish as to fear that I should not marry my sweet girl—love, Violet? See, darling, I have been keeping this for you ever since I came home from London last year. I drew a little Morocco case from his pocket, and, opening it, took out a pretty ring. It was of gold, set with pearls. You will let me put this on your finger, Violet. This is your betrothal ring. You will never part with it—promise me."

She looked at the pretty jewel shining on her finger.

"No, I will never part with it," she said; "but I will think of it, Felix. I do not quite promise."

"Not quite," he returned, with a happy laugh. "You will let me go back to The Limes with you, Violet, and tell Mr. and Mrs. Haye what I have asked you?"

"Must you tell them now—so soon?" she asked. "It will be almost the same thing as being married if you tell them."

THE FIRST BABY.

"What joy there is in the home when the first baby comes, and yet to the young and inexperienced mothers who have to care for it there is no other period of her life so trying. In the little bits that are certain to come to the inexperienced mother, scarcely knows what to do. To the young mother—all to mothers—Baby's Own Tablets are a real blessing. They promptly cure such troubles as constipation, colic, sour stomach, diarrhoea and simple fevers. They break up colds, destroy worms, allay the irritation accompanying the cutting of teeth and prevent more serious ills. These Tablets are sold under a guarantee to contain no opiate, nor any other of the harmful drugs always found in the so-called 'soothing' medicines. They are good for all children from the new born babe to the well grown child. If you do not find the Tablets at your medicine dealer, send 25 cents to The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., and a box will be mailed you post paid."

he could think of it all—realize it all—better there. He had won Violet. She was his own, the beautiful girl whom everyone loved and admired—his own to love him and bless him, to crown his life.

The union was a settled thing. Both families met and talked it over. It was with certainty, and a few days after Felix had placed the little pearl ring on Violet's finger he went to make inquiries about the cottage orne, while Mrs. Lonsdale said to herself more than once, "I do not know how it is, but I wish that he had chosen Evelyn Lester."

CHAPTER IV.

The news of an engagement was already well received in Lilford; it was something to discuss, to think of, something in which both maids and matrons took a lively interest; and it was certain that no engagement ever courted so much discussion as this. How intensely the young farmers in the neighborhood detested Felix Lonsdale for having won the beautiful Violet! Even so, in his mind that Felix Lonsdale should do no more business for him, and wondered why she preferred a lawyer to a farmer. All the old people looked on the marriage with disfavor. Felix and Violet, they said, were equal in position, and marriages of that kind were the best. Mothers who had daughters of their own to marry would scorn that beautiful Violet could rival them no longer. The girls thought that Violet had won a prize, for there was certainly no one in all the country-side like Felix.

"But she is not pure, gentle heart to whom the new of the engagement came like a terrible blow, although it had long been expected. Evelyn Lester had never even owned Violet, she was his dearest daughter, yet when she heard the news she seemed to her that the bright face of heaven was hidden from her by a dark funeral pall. They had all been children together, and their childish quarrels it was always Evelyn who defended Felix. He could do no wrong in her eyes; in her opinion the wide world held no other so brave, so handsome, or so noble—and the childish love she unconsciously grew with her—she called it friendship, and believed it to be nothing else. Felix had a real friendship for her, a real sympathy, a great esteem for her, and she loved him. He lent her books, he frequently asked Mrs. Lonsdale to invite her to the house; but it was all before she was a young girl, and she thought her life lonely and sad. Evelyn was an orphan, left to the tender mercies of a strong-minded aunt, Jane Lester, mistress of the pretty little farm known as Our-shore, and she was very fond of herself. "I am nothing if I am not strong-minded," and therein she spoke the truth.

She looked like a strong-minded woman, she was thin and angular, she had that called the "iron" in her face, and the wind ever freshened it into deeper bloom; her gray hair was braided in a most simple and unassuming style; her dress was of rich material. In writing the word "woman," she always used a capital "W," and a capital "H" in "humanity." Of men as a rule she had the poorest opinion; she was not only intensely fond of her own sex, but she had the deepest contempt for all their sentiments, principles, and inventions. She went to extreme lengths in her views about the rights of women. Where there was a man, she was accustomed to say, they were the chief. "If you want anything done well, do it yourself," she counseled; "do not leave it to men."

"She had a certain conviction that if the world were governed by women it would be quite another place. She did not dislike men, she had simply a superb contempt for them—a lofty pity and compassion that she was intuitively amusing even to the objects of their scorn. It was the puzzle of the whole neighborhood how so sweet a girl as Evelyn Lester could have grown up unaccompanied by a man, and she was not a beautiful woman. She was the perfect type of an English girl—graceful, healthy, with a rounded figure, a clear complexion, fair, brown eyes, red lips, a face that would glow with the sweetest and most beautiful; the dark-gray eyes were clear and tender, long lashes shading them—a frank, noble smile spoke from her eyes, her lips were full and sensitive, with sweet and gracious curves about them. Of a hundred men perhaps ninety-nine would have passed by her and thought but little of her. The hundredth would have considered her face one of the sweetest and dearest. There was a quiet dignity about her, a graceful ease and self-possession that delighted her aunt. Evelyn had a small fortune entirely of her own inheritance, but she was always at hand to see that there was no undue expense.

Outlands was a pretty farm not more than half a mile from Lilford, and Miss Lester was a most agreeable and well-liked woman. She had made money, she, with her niece, belonged to the gentry, but owing to the elder woman's peculiarities, the two ladies visited but seldom, and seldom received any visitors.

If there was one man in Jane Lester's eyes less contemptible than another it was certainly Felix Lonsdale.

"The boy has a beautiful face," she was accustomed to say of him, "and beauty is a woman's gift." So, because he had "a woman's gift" Miss Lester looked more kindly on him. She liked to see him at Our-shore, and she gave him an amount of good advice; she was pleased that he should be a friend of Evelyn.

No one was more delighted than Jane Lester with the engagement, but she was so well-liked and so agreeable, her so well. Love and marriage were folly in her eyes.

"I am disappointed in you, Felix Lonsdale," she said, sharply, "but you have a little more sense than the generality of men. Pray expect no congratulations from me—I have none to give."

But Evelyn smiled at him with her clear eyes.

"You are very pleased," she said, "for I know that you love Violet dearly."

"We shall always be friends," she told her.

"She will be my wife, madame. Mr. and Mrs. Haye are both willing. She has not exactly promised; but she will marry me when I have a house ready for her."

Lester and youth were strong within him; the mighty passion stirred in the narrow compass of four walls. He went out into the moonlight;

but to Eve Lester life was never quite the same thing again. She was innocently unconscious of her duty. If any one had suddenly taxed her with it she would most indignantly have denied it. She hardly knew that the love of a woman differed from the love of the child. She did not know why the smiling earth and the faint heavens had so suddenly grown dark to her. She did not know why the spring of her life had left her.

Darcy Lonsdale had taken Vale House; he had for once in his lifetime the pleasure of ordering nice carpets and pretty furniture. Mrs. Lonsdale was delighted. She had engaged a treasure of a nursery governess, and prepared herself to enjoy life in real earnest. The deed of partnership had been drawn up and the firm was known now as Lonsdale & Son. Everyone agreed that Darcy had done a wise thing in making his clever, bright, intellectual son a partner. Felix had taken the pretty cottage orne, and his spare time was devoted to preparing it for his beautiful bride. He had seen some fine photographs and had decided he would lock well framed and hung upon the walls. He asked Violet to look at them; but he could not get her to speak freely upon anything. The photographs were beautiful—with the most charming of smiles she condescended to say so; that was all. She was evidently in an amiable humor, and Felix resolved to try her again.

"Violet, do come and see the house," he begged.

"You say that you never visited it while the Hendersons lived there. You cannot tell how pretty the rooms are—do come and see them."

It was a brilliantly beautiful day, in July; the sun shone on lilacs and roses, on flowers of every hue; the flowers in the garden were in brilliant haze; there was a hush and sweet, brooding silence over all. Violet could not refuse; putting aside all other thoughts, it would be pleasant to see the interior of the pretty house. Mrs. Lonsdale offered to go also, and the three started together. But Mrs. Lonsdale had been in love herself, and she had a heart full of pity when they had to go. "I am sorry to see you go, and the gardens, she said, laughing. "The kitchen will not interest you; it does me; I will go and inspect it."

The Felix showed Violet the pretty rooms he had planned for her.

"The charm of them," he said, "is that they are full of light and bright; see from every window you have flowers as trees through every door comes a breath of perfumed air. Oh, my Violet, we can be so happy here!"

"Is that jasmine growing yonder?" she asked. "Do gather a few sprays, Felix. I think I am fonder of jasmine than I am of any flower that blows."

(To Be Continued.)

NEW VEGETABLES.

Being Introduced in United States From Mexico and Europe.

The Department of Agriculture is making experiments with many new vegetables, which, says the Saturday Evening Post, are expected to prove useful in this country. If the people can be persuaded to grow them, they will furnish a source of food for the people, and the plants that would be of much value if introduced into the United States.

Among the valuable Mexican vegetables are various kinds of peppers and several species of tomatoes, which are unknown to us. For example, there is the "husk tomato," which is about the size of a horse chestnut, and is contained in a sort of detachable rind that is removed when the fruit is ripe as a preliminary to cooking it. It is not good raw, but is said to be excellent when stewed or fried. The Mexican cucumber is also a new vegetable. There is a brand new kind of cucumber, which is quite an oddity in its way, inasmuch as it explodes with a loud report when ripe, throwing out red seeds to a distance. Its chief use is as a medicine, but the vine on which it grows is so handsome as to be desirable for gardens. More valuable is a giant okra, lately obtained from Europe, which has pods five or six times the ordinary size. Soon, doubtless, it will be commonly grown in this country, and will be obtainable in our markets. It has a delightful flavor.

Another European vegetable which Uncle Sam wants to introduce is the tuber of a plant that looks a good deal like March grass. It is only about as big as a hazelnut, and when eaten raw resembles the common flax. This is called "cheruili," and may be cooked in a variety of ways. The plant is a kind of sedge.

Special attention is being paid to the cultivation of new pot herbs on the extensive farms near Washington, and the seeds of the best of these, when a sufficient supply has been obtained, will be distributed to farmers and gardeners. Notable among them is a plant from India called "basella," which bears fruit that looks like little blackberries. It is a vine, has pink blossoms resembling those of the arbutus, and is said to be delicious. It is always difficult to persuade people to eat new things—a fact of which the common tomato, which a generation ago was considered poisonous in New England, affords a familiar illustration. Nevertheless, every new vegetable is an important addition to our happiness and welfare, and even a novelty in the way of pot herb is a contribution not to be despised by those who appreciate a well-flavored plate of soup or dish of stew.

SHEEP BREEDING.

Best Kind of Sheep to Raise and how to Raise Them.

Department of Agriculture, Commissioner's Branch.

That there is room in Canada for an immense development of the sheep raising industry will readily be admitted. In this country we are almost entirely free from the ravages of those diseases which interfere so seriously with the profits of the sheep grower in some other lands. Then, too, we grow in abundance nearly all the foods best suited for feeding sheep. We have excellent pastures in summer, and with rape and turnips there is no lack of succulent food for fall and winter. Where clover hay and pea straw are not available, some other suitable roughage can usually be found. Oats and bran are everywhere convenient grain feeds, while peas and beans may also be provided in many localities. Unfortunately, too, we have in nearly all parts of Canada an abundance of weeds, which may partially be kept in check by maintaining large flocks of sheep. It is said that 25 per cent of our common weeds are readily eaten by sheep, and consequently we find, as a general rule, that a sheep farm is a clean farm.

Sheep breeders, like all other live stock breeders, should start out with some aim in view. In Canada this will doubtless be the production of mutton for the home and foreign markets, with wool-growing merely as a sideline. The breed chosen should be one adapted to the purpose in view, as well as one for which the farmer has a liking. In addition to this, it must be a breed suited to the conditions of soil and climate prevailing in the locality. As a general rule, the heavier breeds do best on somewhat low lying or level land, while the lighter breeds prefer upland or even mountainous country. These characteristics are largely due to the nature of the soil in the district where each breed originated, as has been shown by Mr. Primrose McConnell in his paper on agricultural geology. If a purebred flock is to be kept the farmer should choose a popular breed or one gaining in popularity, in order to be reasonably sure of a demand for his stock.

In starting a flock, only healthy, robust ewes should be selected, and all of them should be of the same type. They should be mated with first-class rams of similar type, and one of the same breed as the ewe flock, unless the farmer is crossing for some special purpose and does not intend to retain the progeny for breeding. Each year a few ewes should be carefully weaned out, only the best being retained. Good, comfortable, roomy sheds or stabling for the cold and stormy weather are necessary. These need not be expensive, but should be well ventilated, free from drafts and situated on dry ground. A large open yard, apart from that occupied by other animals, should be attached to their houses in every case to allow exercise. Two much confinement in over-warm, un-ventilated or draft-stables is fatal to success with sheep. On the other hand, comfortable quarters, regular and liberal feeding, plenty of pure water and a sufficiency of salt will go far to ensure their successful wintering and a strong crop of lambs in the spring. Very careful attention must be given at lambing time, but at other seasons comparatively little time need be spent in looking after the flock.

The excellent Mexican vegetable buildings and equipment is labor in caring for them than almost any other class of live stock.

Unfortunately there are two causes which tend to demoralize the sheep-raising industry in Canada, viz., the wholesale adulteration of many lines of imported wools, goods, and the ravages of dogs and wolves. The former renders wool-growing unprofitable, and the latter prevents carefree growing of mutton sheep in many districts which are otherwise well suited to the business. That legislation is needed to protect the sheep breeder from these evils can scarcely be doubted. Yours very truly, W. A. Clemons, Publication Clerk.

USE OF APPLES.

Financial and Dietetic Value of a Growing Crop.

One medical writer says: "The more mellow apples one eats, the better, provided they be taken at meal time. It is best of all to eat fruit before meals, and freely as you like."

This will prevent loading the system with a heavy weight of less digestible foods, says the Independent. Charles Lamb quotes a friend who says that a man cannot have a perfect mind who refuses apple dumplings, and Dr. Johnson speaks of a clergyman of his acquaintance who brought his family up almost altogether on this Anglo-Saxon combination. We have recollections of dumplings which might accord with the opinion of Lamb; and then we have recollections of other dumplings which might have been the creation of Calvin. It must be borne in mind that the ideal apple is one that is fit to be eaten raw, yet the glorious old Spitzenberg is only fit for the cook—in whose hands it may become the very perfection of pie apples. The nineteenth century went out with a marvellous evolution of new sorts of fruits of all kinds, but there was nothing in the list to exceed the deliciousness of the Northern Spy, the Macintosh, the Red, the Shanon or the Stuart's golden.

There is nothing in the world to exceed the beauty of the apple blossom; while the air is laden with an exquisite perfume that has charmed a hundred generations—has added to the poetry, the love and the comfort of Greece, Rome and of Britain. But if there be anything more beautiful than the apple in blossom it is the same tree loaded down with crimson and golden fruit. Then it is that the apple touches human nature and weakens in the housekeeper the highest conceptions of the science and the fine art of dietetics.

EMMA BOOTH-TUCKER.

An Anecdote Illustrating Her Childish Courage.

It was when she was a girl of 13, before her parents had organized the Salvation Army, that an incident occurred which serves to illustrate the intense hatred of cruelty and the youthful courage of the late Emma Booth-Tucker. She was out for her usual daily walk with the family governess, when a donkey cart passed, and she noticed that the boy drove was viciously belaboring the donkey with a stick. It was by no means an unusual sight in the streets of an English town, but it horrified the child, and she called out to the boy to have mercy on the poor brute. As an answer, the young butcher laughed in derision, and resolutely his horse, smacking himself away from the governess. Emma ran after the cart and after a long chase through the streets of Portsmouth overtook it and caught the donkey by the reins.

The boy once leaped down and tried to pull the animal away from the resolute little woman. But he found his match for once. Gaining possession of the stick, Emma showed rapid blows upon his head and shoulders, crying, "There, now! How do you like it yourself?" The boy was a strong young fellow, and could easily have turned the tables on the little girl. But her head and shoulders were so covered with tears and pleadings, proved so powerful than her blows, and he surrendered unconditionally and promised never to repeat his cruelty.

When the home training of little Emma Booth was shown in the fact that she forced the boy to kneel down with her in the dusty road and pray that he might be forgiven for his cruelty.

As they rose from their knees the subdued young ruffian apologized for having brought her so far out of her way and offered to drive her back. Seated beside him in the donkey cart, she rode home in triumph, admiring the little steed and exhorting the lad to feed it well and treat it with kindness. In the meantime the governess had returned to the house to complain of Emma's rashness, but the delighted mother listened with undisguised pleasure to her daughter's tale, and rejoiced at the happy conclusion of the daring adventure.

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