



It is by attempting to reach the top at a single leap, that so much misery is caused in the world.

—Cobbett.

The Messenger Maid

BY HELEN WALLACE

(Continued from last week.)

"YOU remind me of that!" flashed out the girl. "For my mother's sake I would give you gratitude—oh, so fully, so gladly, but to strike a bargain—to buy me with your bounty and then talk to me of your love! Love!" with fierce scorn. "If you had a spark of common generosity—"

"Gratitude—generosity—pshaw! We needn't bandy words. All's fair in love and war," said the man with a laugh. "You know I love you."

"God keep me from such love, then!" broke in the girl's voice, the intensity of her emotion only heightened by her low, guarded tone. "I was a child—I did not understand, but I see it all now. You have separated us from all our friends. You took a cruel advantage of my poor mother's misery to make us dependent on you—oh, if I had known it, the bread I ate would have choked me long ago, but now that I do know—"

"Yes, now that you know, what then?"

"I will find means to support my mother myself, though I starve for it," proudly.

"Maybe, but you won't want to starve her, and starve yourself at the last," brutally. "No, no, this is sheer waste of words. Your mother wishes it, as if with her last breath. I want you. Want you! I've waited for you for years, for more than half your life. Am I to let the flower I've watched so long be plucked by another hand?" The man's voice deepened to a note of strained, hoarse passion. "Do you think you can escape me—you, a girl alone, friendless, penniless among strangers? You're mine—mine—"

Behind the pillar Maitland stood irresolute. At first he had heard the voices as if they were part of the half dream into which he had sunk, then he made the unwilling listener's usual mistake of delaying too long to make his presence known. But at those last words, at the girl's faint gasping cry, his hesitation was at an end. He must stop this, come what might.

With as casual an air as he could, he strolled round the pillar. For an instant both speakers stared at him in blank surprise, then, seizing the moment, the girl wrenched herself from the grasp the man had laid upon her arm, and sped away down the long aisle, not so swiftly, though, but that Maitland caught a glimpse of the pale, pure oval of her face, and of great dark eyes dilated with wrath and dread. With a careless, contemptuous glance at her companion, a stout, elderly, cross-looking man, he followed her down the nave. Where had he seen that face before? It seemed curiously familiar, it recalled some insistently familiar—but what?

As he stepped out into the sunshine of the square, his foot struck against something soft. He stooped and lifted this little packet, which unrolled itself in his hand. Then he stood staring. Of all things in the world it was a sampler! A sampler?—it was the very one he had been dreaming of! There was the quaint, steep-roofed house, the stiff trees, the dogwood leaves, "Isabel Calder is my name." Little Isabel—no wonder her face had touched a vibrant chord. He had found her, then, and found her help-



A Spacious Verandah Is One of the Commendable Features of This Home

Mr. W. F. W. Fisher, fruit grower and farmer, has a beautiful home, as the illustration herewith abundantly testifies. Such a big verandah and well arranged grounds will be any country home attractive. This one is in Halton Co., Ont.

less, bullied by that old hound! A wave of unspeakable emotion surged up within him.

"Your pardon, sir," said a voice behind, quivering with rage, but curbed to half incoherent courtesy. "That belongs to a lady—a friend of mine." Maitland faced round upon the speaker, and with the clue now supplied, recognition dawned again. "The lady, I find, is an old friend of mine, too, Major Walsh. I shall restore her property to her myself. She is no longer alone, friendless, penniless among strangers." I am Nigel Maitland, whose acquaintance you were once very desirous to make. If you are still of the same mind, I am very much at your service," his hand instinctively grasping his sword-hilt, while he gazed steadily into the blood-shot eyes.

Walsh's eyes fell. He backed into the crowd. Perhaps he felt that his game was played out. Anyhow he knew himself to be no match now for the tall, athletic figure before him. Maitland turned away with a laugh.

He had lost sight of Isabel, but no matter! He would soon find her now. Then his heart leaped, for there she was, coming towards him, her eyes on the ground, evidently seeking for the lost sampler. With one stride he was at her side.

"May I remind Miss Isabel Calder of an old friend and an old debtor, whom I hope she hasn't quite forgotten?"

The girl started round. The pallor of her face was drowned in a sweet, sudden flush, the trouble in her eyes gave place to joyful wonder.

"You!" she uttered under her breath, as if the word had escaped without her knowledge. Then her face changed pitifully. "It was you, then, behind the pillar? You heard?" she gasped.

"Yes," he heard, and thank God I did. I know now why I sought my little friend in vain," said Maitland in a shaken voice.

That sweet flush, the glad unconscious welcome her eyes had opened the flood-gates within. The tender twilight memories of his child-deliverer, which had been hovering in his mind, now flamed at the sight of this fair and gracious girl into the glowing dawn of new-born passion, and all his being rose up to greet her. He knew his own heart now.

"Here, by God's rood, is the one maid for me," he too, might have said if he could have put the tumult of his feelings into words.

"You haven't forgotten the gilded room and the door behind the stage, have you, Isabel?" he went on, his

her deliverer who had stepped into her life as suddenly, as amazingly as the gay young gallant had appeared from behind the golden stage. The vague dreams she had half-consciously woven around him since that unforgetting moment had become bewilderingly true; when hope had been at its lowest ebb her Prince Charming had come to the rescue! A new life opened to her, as under the silken leaves of the young lime trees they wandered on, Nigel urging, persuading, pleading. Time seemed to stand still, the sunset was painting the western sky, when at last Isabel said shyly: "I know you."

"I knew you, of course. It was little wonder I did, but how did you know me? I was only a child then."

Nigel laughed happily. "I wish I could say, too, that I had known you at once. I should very soon have known you, for the sight of your face knocked at my heart, but I couldn't doubt when I found this," and he drew out the sampler. "That happy chance made you carry it with you to-day? My dear love, what is it?" as Isabel's look changed startlingly at the sight of the sampler, at the contrast between the miserable then, when she had said she thought it a token of despair, and this blissful, wonderful now.

"It was no happy chance, but a very forlorn hope," she said in a low voice. The housewives set great store by needlework here. I thought if I took it to a shop I know—if it were seen—someone might employ me—I might earn my mother's bread and my own; his was poisoning me," she shuddered. Nigel drew a long breath. "Thank God, that's over," he said, as he gently drew her nearer to him.

"Listen to the bells!" cried Nigel gaily, with a jerk of his shoulders as if he were casting dark days and dark memories behind him. "Please God, we'll soon be hearing the old-bell of Ledington kirk, and though it's cracked enough, it'll make better music than Antwerp chimes, for it'll be ringing in our wedding day and our welcome home."—The girl's Realm.

Brighten the Kitchen

By Mary L. Oberlin.

ONE wonders at the housekeepers who choose for their kitchen walls and woodwork a dingy grey or brown or some other dark, dull color that will not show the dirt. Are they better housekeepers because the dirt, which is surely there, does not show? Would these same women wear black dresses and aprons when doing the cooking and feel that they were clean because they did not look soiled?

The kitchen should be the cleanest, sunniest, and most cheerful room in the house. It is here the housekeeper spends most of her time, and it is here the food is prepared and often served.

It is not always possible to have the kitchen located so as to get the best light, but a dark room may be much improved by using the proper colors. In a Minnesota town the school kitchen had windows on the east side only. Half of the seats were on a court and the others against a hill; but the use of a deep cream tint on the ceiling, a buff for the walls, and woodwork of southern pine finished in the natural color and varnished, the effect of sunshine was given even on the dull, short days of the northern winter.

If there is much sunshine in the kitchen white or blue may be used; but on the north side of the house use buff or warm, yellowish tan. Increased cheerfulness and better spirits of the housekeeper will mean much to the entire family, and her work will not be increased by the new color scheme because a sunny, pleasant workshop lightens every task.

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