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TALES OF THE LINKS OF LOVE.

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LILLYMERE.

CHAPTER XI.—Continued

The second and fourth chariots are drawn by four Arabians, handled by postillions. The third, El Abra's coach of state, by six horses with postillions. All embodying the art and poetry of carriage building. But the coach of state excels all. Every craft and art in alliance with genius came to its construction. The most choice products of the looms, ateliers, studios of India, Europe, America, commanded into service by El Abra's marvellous wealth, adorn it and the palace on El Abra Island.

But Eurynia declines to accompany her visitor in the coach. And on horseback goes only a little way, for one has told her that the young English gentleman, Mr. Tobias Oman, is out in the forest, and she sends an invitation asking him to the camp. Meanwhile El Abra departs; not disconcerted, for his mind, ever occupied with devices of business, or themes of philosophy and science, has no space for offences. He surmises that the Donna has a tender regard for some youthful stranger, to him unknown, and does not care. So goes home to El Abra Island, Rosa Myther and Lucy Lud accompanying to consult him as a sorcerer, about the lost Lillymeres, mother and son.

Eurynia had, the year before, seen Toby Oman at Detroit, and remarked on the similarity of his features to old friends, Colonel Lillymere, killed in battle, and his lady—Edith Ogleburn before marriage. She breathed not a word of this to any one but Toby himself; and now sought to see him privately again. One messenger came back without finding him. A second returned at gallop on horseback, terror in his look, whispering to the lady in fitful gasps:

"In his blood—stabbed—dead, I think, killed—murdered!"

Help went out on the instant, with a surgeon of the Eurynia Institute, and a litter. They returned, carrying a bleeding body into the encampment. Other surgical aid came, and the wound—all but mortal—was dressed.

Eurynia watched by the patient's couch. And as he slept, or fainted and revived, slept and awoke fitfully, exhausted by loss of blood, and fevered, on the second day the watcher, in her tender solicitude, saw, or thought she saw, more and more of the features of years ago—the features of Edith Ogleburn and of Eustace De Lacy Lillymere.

"If Rosa Myther were here," said the lady, in silent thought, "she might determine the resemblance better than I; Rosa saw Colonel Lillymere oftener than I did."

Worn by watching, Eurynia slept long on the fourth day, when one of the coloured nurses entered the Donna's recess in the silken tent, to report the patient's condition. Eagerly the sleeper awoke and enquired:

"No better, no worse, my lady. But the doctors have missed seeing one of his wounds. Besides that in his blessed beautiful bosom, by which he has nigh died, there is a dagger or sword like as if burned in the skin, and burning red now aback of the right shoulder."

The Donna coloured in wonder, anxiety, hope, feverish expectancy, but said nothing more than—

"Go, arrange the couch, lay the patient on the left side if you can, and unseen by any one; mention this to no living creature; then return and conduct me privately."

This was done. None saw the Donna Eurynia enter. Gazing on the sword mark, now livid red and glowing, she made sign for the nurse to retire, and again the sign to be silent.

Then Eurynia turned the patient to the easier posture on his back, kneeling beside him in impassioned silent prayer, looking in his unconscious eyes, looking and looking on every pale feature, on every one of the brown clustering curls, looking on that noble, pale, beautiful brow; on the hazel eyes and long lashes; on the delicate hands; the arms of fine form and of power—reading in all these the son of Edith Ogleburn.

Bending on his lips, they were tenderly, piously, touched with her own. Then, as the eyes opened on hers, she spoke:

"Eustace De Lacy Lillymere!"

He made no sign, seeming not to know the name. Still gazing into his eyes in tender solicitude, she said:

"You are the lost heir of Lillymere."

He started in a spasm; his eyes gleaming in fiery terror, and muttering in gasps, said indistinctly:

"What is that? Who are you? What did you say?"

"You are the heir of Lillymere, and will,

in time, be Earl of Royalfort. Be calm—have a care—be!"

He was not calm. He sprang from the couch, and in weakness fell on the floor, exclaiming wildly:

"False villain! Fiend! Spectre of horror, avant! Murder! Murder!" Then fainted.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PEARLY FAMILY, THE PURDYS, AND THE HAYVERNS.

To Lot Three, Ninth Concession of Conway, about the time of the Blanketeer settlers, but not of that party, came Willy and Nancy Pearly. Willy had been one of the Ogleburn handloom weavers of whom a glimpse was had in Chapter I. And his wife, in the unmarried days, was the "Bonny Lass of Brantston,"—the Nancy Fair, who, at mid-day milking in Ogleburn woods, ran up the Lady's Walk to the rescue of the child Essel Bell and babe Lillymere, waving her apron and calling in shrill notes of alarm: "Shoo! shoo! Hoo shoo! the glee!"

Emigrating to Canada three years after marriage, a daughter at Nancy's knee and another in arms, the Pearlys entered on one of the free grants in Conway Township, the two hundred acre lot just named. It was in the wild bush. No settlers having then taken land farther out than the Sixth Concession, three miles of wilderness lay between the Pearlys and nearest neighbours, and beyond them the North Pole. No inhabitants between their Lot and the Pole so far as they knew. It was not the wilderness of infinity north of them, so much as the interval of three miles of tangled thicket, gigantic trees, rock, marsh and running water lying between the Sixth and Ninth Concessions, that was a trouble, tearing clothes, wetting feet, dampening hearts.

Willy made several journeys out with implements and food, excavating a recess under a shelving rock for temporary shelter, then building it up in front with loose stones against the visitations of wild beasts, if any. Lastly, he conducted Nancy, she carrying the babe, he the "Wee Pet," Alecy—two years old.

As soon as Nancy arrived they chose a site for the log shanty, and another site higher on the slope where, in after years, they should build the two-storied dwelling of their prosperity, in midst of a fruit tree garden to be there planted. This chosen spot of the future was near a spring which, gushing from a rift in the rock, came down in a wimpling runlet under shadow of the great trees where they were to-morrow to begin the shanty. The pure cool water Nancy pronounced as just what she required for the prime dairy butter, to be made and marketed after they made the farm.

When they had enjoyed this vision of the future some minutes, the man kindled a fire near the excavation in the rock, placed over it a tripod of poles, and there-under, by a chain, hung the tea-kettle. And soon the kettle gave out its cheery song, dancing its lid with the steam, first time in that part of the wilderness.

Father's "Wee Pet" noticed the lid dancing and pulled mamma by the dress to look. But she had already seen and felt it. Had felt it in her heart as a happy foretaste of bright days to come, and by endearing words and caresses to baby invited that infantile witness to observe how the first kettle boiled on Lot Three, Ninth Concession of Conway, was already singing. And the infant Essel Bell, named after the missing Essel, bore witness by its ineffectual leaps, and language of kissing the air; communion of mother and babe in one glow of contented delight.

At night they built themselves in, below the rock, lying on a bed of fern and branches. With heads on other's arms, each a babe on the bosom; their souls sought peace in prayer. And, finding the repose they sought—finding it as undoubtingly by faith, in bosom of the Heavenly Father, as the babes pillowed on their own breasts had peace there, sleep came.

Sleep came; but so, after midnight, came wolves; howling, howling, and sniffing at the stones of the barricade. A growling shout from Willy, then the shot of his gun through a loophole, scared away the wolves. Until dawn of day they were heard at a distance, but none again approached so near.

With the first gleam of sunlight among the trees the Pearlys arose to prayer and thanksgiving; sang "The Lord is my Shepherd," Nancy's clear, melodious voice ascending among the trees, at which birds became mute for a minute, then renewed their own twittering anthems of love, as if joining in with the new associates. Again the tea-kettle steamed and rattled its lid, the frizzling pan with a buttery fry accompanying in the chorus. And they were refreshed; ready to begin the new home in the new land.

"Cows? Yes, Nancy; we shall have cows, plenty of them in time; and one within a week of the day I get the shanty up. I see enough of grass in the opens for half-a-dozen cows, only we would have no use for them yet awhile, and no provender in winter, or not enough. I shall begin making bog hay as soon as the shanty is up. Now, Nancy, come look on."

Selecting a tree, tall, straight, and of the

diameter best for walls of the dwelling—Nancy looking on, seated upon a rock, with the babe in arms, and Alecy on her knee—Willy Pearly strode his feet out wide, swung the axe aloft above his head, and came down a chopping blow in the side of the tree thirty inches above the root, true place selected for the cut. Again and again the swinging blows and cuts, until the young maple fell, crashing through branches of other trees; crushing its own branches, and swagging on the ground—prostrate in its tall length.

Thus fell the first tree in clearing an estate of two hundred acres, to be his and the family's freehold in perpetuity.

Willy wiped his brow.

Then making a nest of branches the babes were laid to sleep. Nancy took her end of the cross-cut saw, assisting to make lengths of logs for shanty walls, which they smoothed on the upper and lower sides with the axe; she in turn with handsaw and another axe, cutting out the over-lapping ends; boring with the auger and pinning the logs together, while the stronger arms of the man levelled down more trees.

Thus the first dwelling arose. Crops came; cattle came; and more children. Roads were made as neighbours settled in; and a church was built on the Town Line.

Other shanty churches were erected on that or on adjacent Town Lines. For it happened about the time when the Pearlys built their dwelling and prayed in the cave, other settlers along that Concession were chopping their first trees, and kneeling in prayer also addressing the same longings of the soul to the same Fountain of Grace, but in different forms of supplication. So, when building a church, not one, nor two, nor three, nor four churches would quite satisfy all the diversities of form, and of theological thought.

"They cannot all be right, if indeed any be right," said one Doubtman.

"Why not all be right?" rejoined Pearly. "Every tree in the forest looks heaven in the face; the oak in its great strength, the willow in its weakness, the tall dark pine, the trailing vine clinging for support to nearest neighbour; soft basswood, hard hickory; swamp cedar and iron-wood; prickly brier—not pleasant to walk with the prickly brier, I admit, but having its uses in nature and in churches no doubt; these, and all other trees of the forest, the widely spreading maple ever beautiful if in leaf, and sugary, sugary, dropping its sweet sap in the season if not in leaf—all turn their heads heavenwards, looking into the eye of the sun, from whence they have life. Why not all the people be right, if faithfully seeking the one salvation according to the light that is in them?"

"The gowk! To liken folk to trees!"

In that manner retorted Tibby Hayvern, neighbour to the Pearlys, on Lot Four, Ninth Concession.

The Hayvern family comprised two brothers and this sister, all unmarried. They looked for the end of the world soon, or a millenium. The elder brother, Clapper Hayvern, had been a sailor, and was so far abroad at one time, so Tibby told, as to have looked over the outer edge of the world. At another time his ship was so far away and the voyage so long, that the topmasts went through the sky, cracking it like a shell, the sailors thought at first, but it was the sky that had cracked the masts, as they afterwards found.

On Lot Three the Pearly family increased in number until the girls were seven, and the boys two. But though Nancy had always babies on hand, she had a dairy of many cows which became famed in the market towns, and at shows, and in newspapers for its butter, so well made, and so sweet in flavour.

When the new house was built, the garden laid out, and the orchard bearing, Nancy Pearly had preserves widely known; showing prize-taking fruit every year; rivaling the Purdys and the Sims, eminent fruit-growers. The girls all worked as they grew up, besides attending school; yet went to church, to merry-making, or gave parties at home in faultless prettiness of dress.

The Hayverns owned Lot Four, between the Pearlys and the Purdys. To the smithy, over a mile away at The Corners, Tibby walked most days to stand and look at the smith. She stood with hands to the sides, elbows out, talking of the "Elect," or on such secular topics as the award of prizes at the Annual Exhibition to the Pearlys and the Purdys.

"We have prayers every day," she said, "as well as the Pearlys and Purdys, and better and more acceptable, should think, for we are of the 'chosen,' prepared for 'that day,' since the foundation of the world. Yet their pastures are greener than ours on the same kind of soil, and carry a third more head of cattle than ours. Their butter is praised and mine is not, and brings more cents a pound in price than mine. They get prizes for wheat and barley; for turnips; for mangolds; for honey and maple sugar, and we get no prizes. Their heifers and stots wear cards and blue ribbons at the show, ours standing unnoticed. Truly it is hard to see worldly people getting so many blessings which by right belong to the 'chosen.'"

To this speech the blacksmith, Ramasine, replied:

"Tibby, this is about how it is. Willy and Nancy Pearly rise in the morning and pray for blessings; then they set to work with all their family and all their might, helping to make the blessings."

"Oh, the profane man!" she interposed, bitterly.

"Whereas," he continued, "you wait, and wait looking for the end of the world; spoiling the milk and cream, the pigs rooting up the garden because the fence is down. The fence down, and left so, because of the end of the world. The yard manure fouls the well and goes to waste instead of enriching the land to yield two-fold crops, and win the Society's prizes. If you want this world's blessings, Tibby, help Providence, don't wait. The world will last a long, long while yet, ever, and ever, and ever, I believe!"

"Oh, Tom Ramasine! Ramasine, I thought better of you."

"Yes, Tibby; and if you would secure other blessings—a husband for instance—do not rest quite content that you are of the Elect. Compel the man to love you, and to tell he loves you."

Tibby departed for home, but could not pass Lot Three without going in to gossip, not with, but at Nancy Pearly.

"Alecy's growing a braw lass, almost a woman," she said; "they tell at The Corners that young Jock Purdy is looking after you; is that true, Alecy?"

"Tibby, you are always clashing. What is it to you, even were it true that young Purdy was looking after Alecy?"

"Well, you see, Nancy, they do not belong to the same church for one thing; they are old Kirk, and you Free. But old Purdy has rowth of gear and will give Jock a farm of his own, and set him up in cattle no doubt. They say he is importing another short horn for three thousand dollars. But Clapper Hayvern, my brother's in the old country just now, and bringing out a short horn for ourselves. And what is the price, think you? Four thousand dollars. Where will the prizes go after that bull comes?"

About the same month the following year, Tibby, otherwise called "Green Lightning," from her silk dress, coming from Conway town in her light waggon wearing that dress, and brimful of news, alighted at The Corners. Entering the smithy she raised her arms to their full stretch, her head thrown back, exclaiming:

"Did you ever—ever—ever?"

"What has happened, Tibby?"

"Have you heard the news? the news?"

"No, Tibby; what has happened?"

"Who do you think was cried yesterday in Conway?"

"Was cried? About what? In what? In a church, do you mean?"

"In the English Episcopal, I mean."

"Really I cannot guess. Any pair known out this way?"

"Known out this way? The backsliding idolators; to marry into the English Episcopal, and a man that might be her father."

"Tibby, woman, if you have any sense left, tell right out, who was it?"

"Who was it, indeed? To be cried in the Episcopal?"

"But the Episcopal make good lawful marriages; who are they?"

"Good lawful marriages! Sinful Erastians. To think the daughter of a Free Church Deacon, a light and pillar among the Frees, should be cried with English Priests!"

"Od, woman, who is it? I know of no Free Church Deacon with a daughter old enough."

"A daughter old enough? You may well say that, Thomas Ramasine!"

"But, Tibby, who is she?"

"Who is she? Well may you ask who is she." Saying which, Tibby Hayvern returned to her waggon, mounted like an antelope, the green silk glistening, and drove away at a slow trot. The smith, tall in figure, thin and spare by nature and hard work, almost vehement hard work, walked to middle of the highway, stood wiping his brow, head stretched in wonder, shading with one hand his eyes in the western sun.

Tibby twisting round, looked over the shoulder and slackened pace. The smith waved her to return, and she with—"Ho! Wo! Ho, Jott!" turned the light four-wheeler and drove back.

"Now, Tibby," said the smith, a bachelor, "this is kind of you to return and put me off my thorns. Tell now, right away, who are they that were cried in the English Church? And, when you are about it, just say the time when we—yes we ourselves, I mean ourselves, Tibby, are to be cried."

"Thomas, I'll drive away again and never more come in the smithy, if you fool me in that way. But I'll tell you: It is no less than the Member of Parliament, Squire Steel-yard of the Mills, and Alecy Pearly."

"Alecy Pearly? Willy Pearly's Alecy? Surely not she is but a lassie."

"Atweel it is just Willy and Nancy Pearly's Alecy. A lassie? Yes. Barely out of her teens, if out of her teens. Indeed I'm sure she is not out of her teens by a year. Now, what think you of that for English Episcopal and Scotch Frees?"

(To be continued.)