

SELF-RAISED

BY
EMMA D. M. SOUTHWORTH

"I shall leave here on Saturday morning. Can you be ready to go with me as soon as that?"

"Of course I can, Mr. Worth. There's nothing for me to do in the way of preparation but to pack my knapsack and lock my door," answered this "Rough and Ready."

"Very well then, professor, I like your promptitude. Meet me at Brudenell Hall on Saturday morning at seven o'clock and in the meantime I will find a conveyance for you."

"All right; thank you sir; I will be ready."

And Ishmael shook hands with the professor and departed, leaving him hopeful and happy.

At the dinner-table that day, being questioned by his father, Ishmael told him of the retainer he had engaged.

"Ah, my boy, it is just like you to burden yourself with the presence and support of that poor old man, and persuade him—and yourself, too, perhaps—that you are securing the services of an invaluable assistant. And all with no other motive than his welfare," said Mr. Brudenell.

"Indeed, sir, I think it will add to my happiness to have Morris with me. I like and esteem the old man, and I believe that he really will be of much use to me," replied the son.

"Well, I hope so, Ishmael; I hope so."

There was through all his talk a pre-occupied air about Mr. Brudenell that troubled his son, who at last said:

"I hope, sir, that you have received no unpleasant news by this mail?"

"Oh, no; no, Ishmael! But I have had on my mind for several days something of which I wish to speak to you—"

"Yes, sir?"

"Ishmael, since I have been down here I have followed your counsel. I have gone about among my tenants and dependents, and—without making inquiries—I have led them to speak of the long period of my absence from my little kingdom, and of the manner in which Lady Hurstnecox administered its affairs. And, Ishmael, I have heard but one account of her. With one voice the community here accord her the highest praise."

"I hold you so, sir."

"As a wife, though an abandoned one, as mistress of the house, and as lady of the manor, she seems to have performed all her duties in the most unexceptionable manner."

"Everyone knows that, sir."

"But still remains the charge not yet refuted."

"Because you have given her no chance to refute it, sir. Be just! Put her on her defence, and my word for it, she will exonerate herself," said Ishmael earnestly.

Mr. Brudenell shook his head.

"There are some things, Ishmael, that on the very face of them admit of no defence," said Mr. Brudenell, with an emphasis that put all end to the conversation.

Punctually at seven o'clock Saturday day the professor, accoutred for a journey, with knapsack on his back, presented himself at the servant's door at Brudenell Hall.

His arrival being announced, Ishmael came out to meet him.

"Well, here I am, Mr. Worth; though how I am to travel I don't know. I have walked, by faith, so far!" he said.

"All right, professor. Mr. Brudenell will lend me an extra horse."

And father and son took leave of each other with earnest wishes for their mutual good.

CHAPTER XII. The Journey

Ever charming, ever new,
When wilt the landscape tire the view?
The fountains fall, the rivers flow,
The woody valleys, warm and low,
The windy summits, wild and high,
Roughly rushing on the sky?
The pleasant seat, the chapel tower,
The naked rock, the shady bower,
The town and village, dome and farm,
Each gave each a double charm,
As pearls upon a woman's arm.

Ishmael and his aged retainer rode on, down the elm-shaded avenue and out upon the turnpike road. There seemed to be a special fitness in the relations between these two. Ishmael you are aware, was a very handsome, stately, and gracious young man, and the professor was the tallest, gravest, and most respectable of servants. Ah, their relative positions were changed since twelve years before, when they used to travel that same road on foot, as "boss" and "boy."

Many men in Ishmael's position would have shrunk from all that would have reminded them of the poverty from which they had sprung; and would have avoided as much as possible their early struggles.

But Ishmael did not so. While pressing forward to the duties and distinctions of the future, with burning aspirations and untiring energy, he held the places and people of the past in most affectionate remembrance.

"Because I like to recall them, professor. It quickens my gratitude to the Lord of all his marvellous mercies, and it deepens my love for my friends for their goodness to me then," said Ishmael fervently.

"The Lord, knows I don't know who was good to you then? Of course, now, sir, there are multitudes of people who would be proud to be numbered among your friends. But then, of all the abandoned children that ever I saw you were about the most friendless."

"You, for one, were good to me, professor; and I do not forget it."
(To be Continued.)

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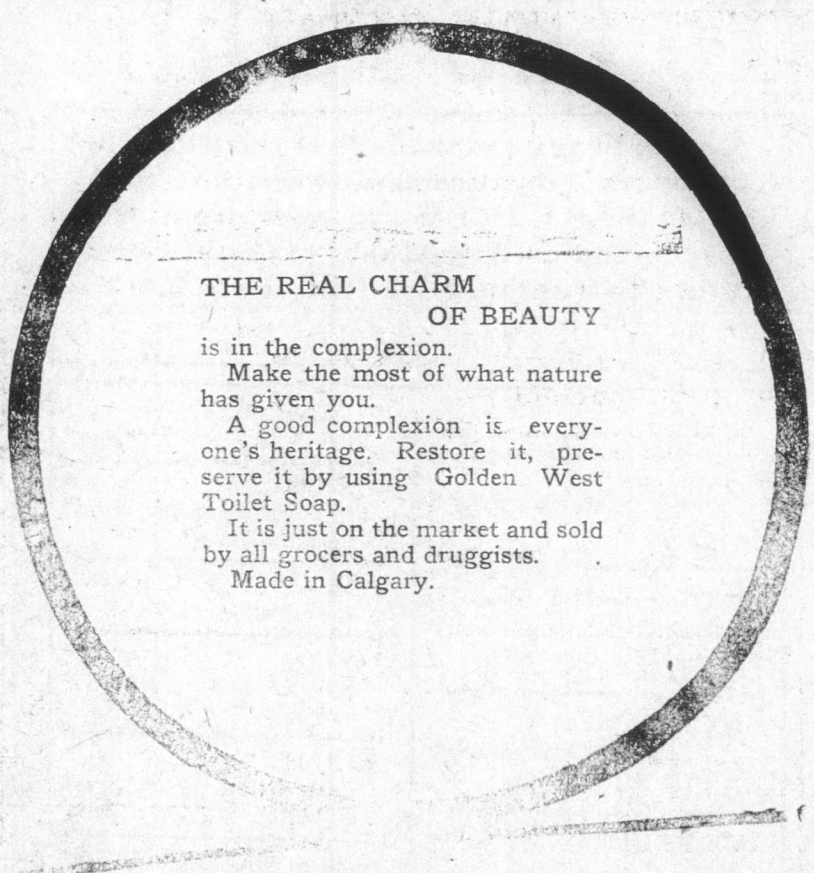
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