

the unworthy pride that tries to hide it away altogether. Neither did he boast of it as something very much to his credit, but to anyone who cared to know he would say, "My family were poor working people in Somersetshire and I don't even know if I had a grandfather, and I owe everything to Dr. Savile." And he would say it with a smile and a quiet manner, as if it were nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to be proud of, but just a fact which was hardly of interest; and his manner somehow made people feel that birth and breeding were after all mere insignificant circumstances of life, and of no account by the side of talent and success. "He's a good fellow, John Carter, and a clever fellow too, without any humbug about him," the men said, and the women thought much the same, though they expressed it differently. Indeed, the glimpse of his early humble country life, so simply given, without any pretence or concealment, grew to be considered an effective, picturesque background which showed up to advantage his present success and dignified position. It was quite true there was no humbug or concealment about him, that was the very truth he told, and yet somehow, as time went on, the words lost the full meaning they had to him at first. Don't you know if you use the same words frequently they get almost mechanical—even in our prayers, alas! they are no longer the expression of our feeling, but the words come first and the feeling follows, or does not follow? And then, don't you know sometimes how we hear with other people's ears, and see with other people's eyes? And so John Carter, when he said those simple, truthful words, grew to see the picturesque background, the thatched cottage, and the honey-suckle-covered porch, and the grand old patriarch with white hair, one of nature's noblemen, leaning on his staff and blessing his son; and he gradually forgot the pigsty close to the cottage door, and father in a dirty green smock and hob-nailed boots doing what he called "munking it out," and stopping to wipe the heat from his brow with a snuffy, red cotton handkerchief.

But come back from the pigsty to the violets which are scenting the consulting-room and huring Dr. Carter, not unwillingly, from the *Medical Review* to thoughts of the giver. Her name is Violet too, and so are her eyes, though the long lashes throw such a shadow that you might fancy they were black themselves. It is not everyone—indeed it is John Carter alone, who is privileged to look straight down in those eyes, and see the beauty of their colour; only he, poor, foolish fellow, forgets to take advantage of his opportunity, and only notices the great love for him that shines there and turns his brain with happiness. His hand trembles as he stretches it to take the specimen glass, and the cool, fragrant flowers lightly touch his lip as he raises them to his face. "Pshaw!" I hear you say—reminding me of my own words, "there is no beauty in weakness, and this is weakness! a sensible man, past the hey-day and folly of youth, growing maudlin and sentimental over a bunch of violets?" No, reader, it is power—the strongest power on earth—the power of love.

He had been used to say that his lady-love, and he had looked on with wondering, incredulous eyes at the follies and excesses of young lovers; he was inclined to think it was a mild form of mania, and required physical treatment. And so he reached five-and-thirty unscathed, and slightly contemptuous of others less fortunate than himself: when, one day, a girl's blue eyes, looking shyly at him through dark lashes, brought him down once and for ever from his pedestal of fancied superiority, and before he could collect his arguments, or reason himself out of it, he was past cure, hopelessly, helplessly, foolishly in love. They had been engaged for two days; it was two days since this clever young doctor, this rising, successful man, with such stores of learning, such a solid intellect, such a cool, calm brain, had stood blushing and stammering before a girl of eighteen. If I were to write down the words he said, you would think my hero an idiot pure and simple; the most mawkish and feeble twaddle of the most debased of penny periodicals was vastly superior to what Dr. Carter stammered out that day.

But is this not generally the case? Beautiful poetical love-scenes are frequent in plays and books, but very rare in real life. There is not one love-scene in a thousand that would bear being taken down in short-hand, printed in plain, black type, and read by critical eyes through commonplace spectacles. Nevertheless, the feelings are no doubt sublime, though the words may be ridiculous. He was quite another man altogether (happily for him) when he went to Sir John Meredith, and told him he was no match for his daughter as far as birth went.

"My good fellow," the sensible little baronet answered, "there are only about ten families in England that can put their pedigree by the side of the Merediths, and it don't seem to me to make much difference, if you rise from the ranks yourself, or if your father or grandfather did it."

"I can scarcely claim even to be a gentleman," the young man went on, feeling pretty sure of success by that time.

"Not another word my dear boy: not another word! I respect your candour, and I esteem you very highly as an honest man—the noblest work of God, you know, eh?—though I'd like to hear anyone say you were not a gentleman as well. There, go along! shake

hands! God bless you! You'll find Violet in the drawing-room. Sly little puss! but I saw what was coming—and mind you dine with us this evening at seven sharp—old-fashioned folk, old-fashioned hours."

I think the wary baronet also respected Dr. Carter's income, and esteemed very highly his success, and having weighed the advantages of family and birth against success and income, had found that the latter were the more substantial in the worldly scales.

And so Dr. Carter was dreaming rosy dreams that evening in his quiet room, as was fit and proper after two days' wandering in fairyland with Violet Meredith. But as the scent of the violets had led him to think of the giver, so it drew his thoughts away from her again back to springtime many years ago at Sunnybrook, and the bank where the earliest violets grew in the sheltered lane leading to the Croft Farm. Did ever violets smell so sweet as these? He remembered one afternoon, after school, going to fetch the milk from the farm, and the scent luring him across the little runlet by the side of the path, which was swollen into a small, brawling brook by the lately-thawed snow. He set down the can safely before he made the venture, and Dr. Carter laughed softly to himself to think how short and fat the legs were that found the little stream such a mighty stride. He was busy diving for the flowers among the layers of dead elm-leaves, which the blustering autumn winds had blown there, when a sound behind him caused him to look round, and there was the can upset, and the young foxhound quartered at the Croft licking up the white pool from the pebbles. In his anger and fear, and haste, he slipped and he tried to jump back, and went full length into the stream, and scrambled out in a sad plight, and went home crying bitterly, with a very wet pinafore, and dirty face, and empty milk-can, with the cause of his mishap, the sweet violets, still clasped unconsciously in his little scratched hand. And his mother—ah! she was always a good mother! He could remember still the comforting feeling of mother's apron wiping away dirt and tears, and the sound of her voice bidding him "Never mind! and hush up like a good little Laddie." His heart felt very warm just then towards that mother of his, and he made up his mind that, cost what trouble it might, he would go down and see her before he was married, if it were only for an hour or two, just to make sure that she was comfortable, and not working about and wearing herself out. His conscience pricked him a little at the thought of what a pleasure the sight of him would have been to the old woman, and how year after year had slipped away without his going down. But still a comforting voice told him that he had been substantially a good son, and it was accident and not intention that had kept him away. "Anyhow," he said to himself, "another month shall not pass without my seeing my mother."

At this moment the deferential man knocked at the door and aroused Dr. Carter to the consciousness of how far his wandering thoughts had carried him from his consulting-room and *Medical Review*.

"What is it, Hyder?"

"Please, sir, there's some one wishes to see you. I told her as it was too late, and you was engaged very particular, but she wouldn't be put off nohow, sir."

"What is her name?"

There was a slight smile disturbing the usually unruddled serenity of Mr. Hyder's face as if he had a lingering remembrance of something amusing.

"She didn't give no name, sir, and she wouldn't say what she wanted, though I asked if a message wouldn't do; but she said her business was too particular for that, sir."

"What sort of person is she?"

The corners of the man's mouth twitched, and he had to give a little cough to conceal an incipient chuckle.

"Beg your pardon, sir! She appears to be from the country, sir. Quite a countrified, homely, old body, sir."

Perhaps the odour of the violets and the country memories they had called up made him more amiably inclined; but instead of the sharp, decided refusal the servant expected "Tell her it has long past my time for seeing patients, and I am busy, and she must call again to-morrow," he said, "Well, show her in," and the man withdrew in surprise.

"Countrified, homely, old body." Somehow the description brought back to his mind his mother, coming down the brick path from the door at home, with her Sunday bonnet on, and her patters in her hand, and the heavy-leaded double stocks and columbines tapping against her short petticoats. The doctor smiled to himself, and even while he smiled the door was pushed open, and before him he saw, with a background of the gas-lit hall and the respectful Hyder, by this time developed into an uncontrollable grin, his mother, in her Sunday bonnet and with her patters in her hand.

CHAPTER III.

READER, think of some lovely picture of rustic life, with tender lights and pleasant shadows, with hard lines softened, and sharp angles touched into gentle curves, with a background of picturesque, satisfying appropriateness, with the magic touches that bring out the beauty and refinement and elegance of the scene, which are really there, and that subtly tone down all

the roughness, and awkwardness, and coarseness which are also equally there. And then imagine it, if you can, changing under your very eyes, with glaring lights and heavy shadows, deepening, and sharpening, and hardening wrinkles, and angles, and lines, exaggerating defects, bringing coarseness and age and ugliness into gainful prominence, and taking away at a sweep the pretty, rural background which might have relieved and soothed the eye, and putting a dull, commonplace, incongruous one in its place. It was something of this sort that happened to John Carter that night, when the picture he had been painting with the sweet lights of love and childhood's fancies, and the tender shadows of memory throwing over it all soft tones of long ago and far away, suddenly stood before him in unvarnished reality, with all the glamour taken away, an every-day fact in his present London life.

I am glad to write it of him, that, for the first minute was the uppermost feeling in his mind. First thoughts are often the best and purest. He started up saying, "Mother! why, mother!" in the same tone of glad surprise as he would have done fifteen years before if she had come unexpectedly into the shop at Martel; he did not even think if the door was closed, or what Mr. Hyder would think; he did not notice that she was crumpled and dirty with travel, or that she put her patters down on his open book and upset the glass of violets; he just took hold of her trembling, hard-worked hands, and kissed her furrowed old cheek, wet with tears of unutterable joy, and repeated "Mother! why, mother!"

I am glad to write it of him, glad that she had that great happiness, realizing the hopes and longings of years past, consoling in days to come when she had to turn to the past for comfort, or forward to the time of perfect satisfaction. There are these exquisite moments in life, let people say what they will of the disappointments and vanity of the world, when hope is realized, desire fulfilled; but it is just for a moment, no more, just a foretaste of the joys that shall be hereafter, when every moment of the long years of eternity will be still more full and perfect, when we shall "wake up" and "be satisfied."

She was clinging meanwhile to his arm sobbing out "Laddie my boy, Laddie!" with her eyes too dim with tears to see his face clearly, or to notice how tall, and grand, and handsome her boy was grown, and what a gentleman. Presently, when she was seated in the arm-chair and had got her breath again, and wiped her foolish old eyes, she was able to hunt in her capacious pocket for the silver rimmed spectacles that had descended from her father, old Master Pullen in the almshouses, and that Laddie remembered well, as being kept in the old Family Bible, and brought out with great pomp and ceremony on Sunday evenings.

"I must have a good look at you, Laddie," she said.

And then I think her good angel must have spread his soft wing between the mother and son (though to her mind it seemed only like another tear dimming her sight, with a rainbow light on it,) to keep her from seeing the look that was marring that son's face. All the pleasure was gone, and embarrassment and disquiet had taken its place.

"However did you come, mother?" he said trying his best to keep a certain hardness and irritation out of his voice.

"I come by the train, dear," the old woman answered, "and it did terrify me more nor a bit at first, I'll not go for to deny; but, bless you! I soon got over it, and them trains is handy sort of things when you gets used to 'em. I was a good deal put to though when we got to London station, there seemed such a many folks about, and they did push and hurry a body so. I don't know whatever I should adone if a gentleman hadn't come and asked me where I wanted to get to. He was a tallish man with whiskers, a bit like Mr. Jones over at Martel, and I darsay you knows him; but he was terrible kind however."

John Carter did not stop to explain that there were many tallish men with whiskers in London.

"Why didn't you write and say you were coming?"

"Well, there! I thought as I'd give you a surprise, and I knew as you'd be worrying about the journey and thinking as I'd not be able to manage; but I'm not such a helpless old body, after all, Laddie."

"Who have you left in charge of the cottage?"

"Why I've give it up altogether. Farmer Harris, he wanted it for his shepherd, and he give me notice. That's why I come all on a sudden like. I says to myself, says I, Laddie's got a home and a welcome for his old mother, and it's only because he thought as I was pretty nearly grown to the old place, and couldn't abear to leave it, that he ain't said that I must come and keep house for him long ago. But, bless you! I've been thinking so of the pleasure of seeing you again that I've pretty nearly forgot as I was leaving my master's grave and all."

"And when must you go back?"

"Not till you get tired of me, Laddie, or till you takes me to lay me by the old master, for I'd like to lie there, if so be as you can manage it, for I've heard tell as it costs a mint of money buryin' folks out of the parish as they nyes in, and may be it mightn't be just convenient to you."

John Carter busied himself with making the fire burn up into a blaze, while his mother rambled on, telling him little bits of village gossip about people he had long since forgotten or never heard of, or describing her journey, which was a far greater exploit in the old woman's eyes than Lieutenant Cameron's walk across Africa; or dwelling on the delight of seeing him again. He paid little heed to what she said, pretending to be intent on placing a refractory piece of coal in a certain position, or coaxing an uncertain little flame into steadiness, but his head was busy trying to form some plan for getting himself out of his difficult position. He did not want to hurt her, or to be unkind in any way; but it was altogether out of the question having her there to live with him. It would ruin all his prospects in life, his position in his profession and in society; as to his engagement, he did not venture to allow himself even to think of Violet just then. He knew some doctors whose mothers lived with them and kept house for them, received their guests, but they were ladies, very different. The very idea of his mother with three or four servants under her was absurdity. And this thought brought Hyder's grin before his mind. What had happened when his mother had arrived? Had she committed herself and him frightfully by her behaviour? No doubt that impudent rascal was giving a highly facetious account of it to all the maids in the kitchen. Chattering magpies! And how they would pass it on! How Mary Jane would describe it through the area gate to the milk-woman next morning, and cook add a pointed word or two from the front steps as she cleaned them! He could almost smell the wet hearth-stone and hear the clinking of the tin milk-pails as Biddy hooked them to the yoke and passed on with the story of his degradation. And he could fancy what a choice morsel it would make for Hyder to tell Sir John Meredith's solemn, red-nosed butler, behind his hand, in a hoarse whisper, with winks to emphasize strong points, and occasional jerks of the thumb over the shoulder and a careful avoidance of names. This thought was too much for his feelings, and the tongs went down with an ominous clatter into the fender, making the old woman jump nearly off her chair, and cutting short a story about the distemper among Squire Wellow's pigs.

"There! it brought my heart into my mouth pretty near, and set me all of a tremble. I reckon as I'm a little bit tired, and a little do terrify one so."

The sight of her white, trembling old face touched his son's and doctor's heart under the fine, closely woven, well-cut coat of fine gentlemanliness and worldly wisdom which he was buttoning so closely round him.

"You are quite tired out, mother," he said, "you shall have some tea and go to bed. I can't have you laid up, you know."

"There now! if I wasn't thinking as a dish of tea would be the nicest thing in the world! and for you to think of it! Ah! you remembers what your likes, bless you!"

In that moment he had quickly made up his mind that at any rate it was too late for that night to do anything but just make her comfortable; to-morrow something must be done without delay, but there was ten striking, and she was evidently quite worn out. He must say something to silence those jays of servants, and get her off to bed, and then he could sit down and arrange his plans quietly; for the suddenness of the emergency had confused and muddled him.

(To be continued.)

HYGIENIC.

ONE of the most popular remedies for chronic rheumatism is the mud bath.

DR. BROWN-SEQUARD says that coughing may be prevented by pressing on the nerves of the lips in the neighborhood of the ear, and by pressing very hard on the top of the mouth.

M. FEA of Padua is greatly in favour of maize or Indian corn as an article of food. He says that maize is superior to all other cereals in fatty matters, and that it may be considered as a perfect food.

STARCH, bean flour, sand, gum, mucilage, and gelatine are used as adulterants of honey. They are readily recognised, as they all, except sand, thicken on heating, while the pure honey becomes thinner under such a condition.

THE following points in house-construction Dr. Richardson recommends to the notice of all who desire to have really healthy, habitable, comfortable places of abode. In the first place, he says, there should be no rooms underground. The basement should be simply an arched subway with a free current of air passing through it, thus preventing any damp from ascending into the upper storeys, and affording an opportunity of warming the air admitted into the house. Secondly, the kitchen, instead of being in the basement, should be at the top of the house, by which means all smell of cooking would be kept out of the living rooms, and the conveyance of hot water to the bed rooms would be made much easier. Next, the staircase, instead of being in the centre of the house, should be in a distinct shaft at the back. There should be a door on each floor communicating with the staircase, and lavatories and similar apartments should be placed in the shaft, so that they may be out of the house and yet accessible from each floor. Lastly, the roof should be level, paved with asphalt, and covered with glass. In this way a garden would be obtained on the top of every house, sheltered from the weather, and protected from frost by the warmth of the kitchen beneath.

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