

Published by permission of P. J. Kennedy & Sons
44 Barclay Street, New York.

HAWTHORNDEN

A STORY OF EVERY DAY LIFE

BY MRS. CLARA M. THOMPSON

CHAPTER XIII.—CONTINUED

The picture was of a youth apparently about twenty, glowing in the first flush of manly beauty, and with an expression that won the heart at once. Miss Greenwood took the locket in her own hand and murmured, "Yes, dear, lovely, beautiful beyond comparison; and taken so young, so suddenly, and so—" her voice died away in a sob. She walked away from her friend, her eyes cast down, her step rapid. Rosine remained where she had left her, wondering in her own mind if this could be the first born of whom Ned had once spoken—then came the wonder, why this intimacy between the two families, which must have been very strong, had never been known to her. She tried to recall any allusion to them, but could only remember hearing Aleck once wish Harry Greenwood were at home, and the Colonel had spoken sometimes quite severely of Greenwood and the lost brother, she had never heard till she had herself made her acquaintance.

Rosine was awakened from her reverie by the return of her friend, all traces of the late deep emotion effaced, and her countenance wearing the calm, placid, somewhat pensive look, that usually rested there. She informed her young companion that she had met the Colonel on the beach looking for her. Rosine made haste to meet him, his coming towards her holding a letter high above his head, exclaiming, "From the west! Immediately, as she saw her father's handwriting, her heart sunk within her. 'I know there is bad news,' she said, out of breath with her run, and looking pitifully into his face. 'Shall I read it for you?' he inquired affectionately, and placing the camp stool for her and bidding her lean against him, he read aloud, not without some hesitancy and choking on his part, the sad story of little Jeannie's release and Marion's wanderings and consequent illness. It was written in the terse, laconic style of a man of business; but in the end he said, "I thank God, my child, that you are exempt from the hard discipline we are enduring in this to us foreign land, and are sheltered in the home and heart of one worthy of the love of such a daughter."

"But I ought to be with my mother," she said, looking up at Colonel Hartland; "she needs me now more than ever."

"But, my darling child," replied he, "in your present delicate state, lately recovered from a nervous fever, you could be but little assistance."

CHAPTER XIV. CONVALESCENCE

Physically, Laura Marten was slowly recovering, but her mind appeared to be still overshadowed with a heavy cloud. From the first dawn of returning intellect she had missed from her finger the ring of her betrothal; the loss was like a continual fire eating into her heart, for she had instinctively divined into whose possession it had fallen. She spoke of the loss to no one; within the thought dwelt continually, and her friends sought, without success to cheer her spirits; she did not rally, she showed no interest in anything, but seemed constantly searching for something which she could not find. The first thing that aroused her in the least, was the letter from Lieutenant Hartland, which the Doctor had forwarded as soon as Rosine had given it to him. It was held back by her father at first, lest it might excite her too much, but when day after day went by and there was no change, it was resolved to try what effect the letter would have in arousing her from her apathy. Accordingly, one September morning, as she was seated in the invalid's chair, drawn toward the eastern window that she might have the influence of the early sunlight, and the prospect of the lovely scene that nature spread before her, Captain Marten entered with the Lieutenant's letter in his hand. She did not turn her head to greet her father, but continued to gaze down the long avenue of pines, that brought such fearful memories. An intense melancholy pervaded every feature; twice her name was called ere she gave a look of recognition. The rough old sailor was softened by trouble, and his voice wavered as he said in a tone meant to be jolly, "Laura, duck, are you ready for a line from the Commodore that is to be, I mean Aleck Hartland?" There was no change in the story expression of her face, and not a spoken word as she held out her hand for the letter. The Captain was at a loss to know if he should leave her alone with her treasure,

but she settled that matter by a wave of the hand that indicated her wish. As soon as the door closed she kissed the precious missive over and over again, pressed it to her heart, laid it in her lap and wept over it, till after many minutes with trembling fingers she ventured to break the seal and read—

"On board the X—, off Cadiz, July—, My Precious One: 'A letter from Ned last night exasperated me, and I was so like a madman that I only escaped reprimand from the Captain by pleading illness. Your letter came after it, live healing balm to my spirit, could not doubt your love; in spite of Ned's malicious hints, I have perfect confidence in you. It would be dastardly in me to wish to deprive you of gentlemen's society during my absence; I leave my honor in your hands with unwavering trust.' At these words Laura uttered a shrill, piercing cry, that soon brought her father, her aunt, and most of the servants to her room; she struggled for composure, but a fearful paroxysm of hysteria was not to be avoided. She grasped the letter convulsively, and it could not be taken from her without tearing it into fragments. Hours passed before the physician could calm her agitation and weeks before she could again sit at the window and gaze down the pine walk. Who can doubt that He that maketh the sparrow's fall, guided the steps of his dear ones? Sister Agnes was called at this time on an errand of mercy to a charity child in the very house where Laura was ill. It was a balmy sunny day, such as the closing hours of September often bring to charm us with a remembrance of the past, when Laura heard the gentle tones of Sister Agnes' voice, as she interrogated Mrs. Norris with regard to the orphan.

"Bring her here," said Laura to the servant in attendance; "I must see her, I cannot wait, she will help me, bring her here now—I can't wait."

Her manner was hasty and impetuous. After a short commotion, however, the good sister was conducted to the room of the invalid, followed by Captain Marten and Mrs. Norris. "All of you go," said Laura; "I wish to see Sister Agnes alone, and I don't wish to be interrupted."

"I wish to see Sister Agnes alone, and I don't wish to be interrupted." They obeyed reluctantly, her father whispering to the sister as he went out, "The poor thing is not quite like herself."

"Please lock the door, and sit beside her," said Laura, pointing to a chair beside her own. Sister Agnes did as she was requested, and took Laura's hand affectionately. "I'm sure you don't know how wicked I am, or you would not have come near me," whispered the sick girl.

"Our dear Lord did not spurn the chief of sinners, and He will not turn away from us," replied she, pressing the hand that she held.

"I've been thinking of that," continued Laura, her eyes brightening a little. "He let that poor woman wash his feet, that's what I'd like to do."

"My child, if that is your wish, He welcomes you to His arms."

"begin at the beginning. You will never have peace while you carry this secret about with you. Colonel Hartland and Captain Marten at least have a right to know your position, and they can make it public if they choose. Lieutenant Hartland's honor demands that you make a fair statement of everything to him. I cannot counsel you further now," she added.

"But you will not leave me alone," cried Laura, seizing both hands convulsively, and rising only to sink back exhausted; "all alone!" she continued, covering her face with her hands, "nobody cares for anything but the disgrace."

"Be quiet, my dear," replied the sister, "don't excite yourself; wait till you are a little stronger. I will not forget you, and maybe your father will let you come to me for a little while when you are able, and I will do all I can for you. The dear Lord help you," she added, stooping over her and kissing her brow.

Laura meditated on the counsel she had received; it returned to her day by day as she grew stronger; but with her slowly recovered strength came added reluctance to follow Sister Agnes' advice. There was but one thought living in her soul, one feeling that overcame and cramped out every other emotion—how she should take the next step. The lonely hours brought her no peace, and her aunt's conversation became odious to her. At length, with a desperate struggle, she took the first step in the right direction; she wrote a long letter to Lieutenant Hartland, confessing everything but the last interview with Le Compte, and the loss of the betrothal ring. With all her struggles she could not bring herself to tell of this, it was such a mortifying incident. She was sincere and truthful as far as she went, but she kept back that which was deemed to bring her severest punishment, and which, truly confessed, would have been forgiven with the rest.

The effort she made, although it was not a thorough one, benefited her mentally and physically; but a dreadful fear of Le Compte, which had come upon her so forcibly in her illness, continued in all her days. His presence seemed to haunt her, and not without reason, for she had learned from months of almost daily intercourse, that he did not readily give up the pursuit of any object.

No sooner was she able to appear below stairs, and her father well out of the way, than a little messenger appeared each day with bouquets of flowers for "Miss Marten," from an unknown source; soon words of love were found among the leaves, betraying at once, if before there had been any doubt, from whence they came. Mrs. Norris spoke of the "delicate attention," and "kind thoughtfulness" of the donor, professing to wonder who he could be; but to Laura these tokens brought added pangs of head and heart, till one day, summoning resolution, she met the carrier of the flowers, and ordered him to return them to the one who sent them. Mrs. Norris was indignant with this step.

"You're a little better, after that lady had expressed her feelings, you ought to be the last to tempt me further in the ways of sin. Flirting and coquetting have brought me sorrow enough. I wish to be done with them."

She did not dare leave the house even for a stroll in the garden, an invisible influence told her the enemy was not far away, and September went out with its last golden sunshine, leaving her still a close prisoner within doors. Her father came up for a few days, and she begged most piteously that she might return to the city with him, but the physician had advised her remaining in the country as long as possible; she did not open her heart to her father, or he would have better understood her pleadings.

She was nearing her fortieth year in single blessedness, and ably keeping up the family tradition of generosity to religion; adding therewith new forms of social service, not only among the familiar poor, but among the oft-times needy foreigners drawn so numerously to Bruccstown in recent years by the big wicker furniture manufactory.

Yet while everyone respected Miss Tallon and acknowledged all her claims, there was hardly one who would not have brooded himself for a private interview with her just as Father O'Connor did.

"How are you, Julie?" asked the priest pleasantly. He had baptized every one of the third generation of the Tallons, and had seen this one grown from infancy to her prime maturity; he himself verged on his vigorous and young-hearted old age.

"Well, considering everything," sighed the lady standing respectfully as the priest settled himself as well as he could in the slippery horse hair armchair opposite her.

"I trust there is no trouble in the family," said Father O'Connor, with kindly solicitude.

"No, indeed, we never have trouble in the ordinary acceptance of the word," said Miss Tallon, with a perceptible stiffening of her exceedingly erect person.

All the Tallons were as proper as Miss Tallon herself. The young people were the painted models of the various schools they attended. On their occasional visits to Bruccstown Father O'Connor would have given much to see one of these decorous nephews' hanging on behind to a grocer's cart; or one of the nieces with a torn gown or hair disordered in healthful play; just as he wished for an occasional lapse from grammatical accuracy or a

comes to take me away. Do you know that viper?" she exclaimed vehemently, striding across the floor; "that wretch was the whole cause of my illness; his insulting proposals nearly shattered my brain, and he keeps me as truly imprisoned here, as if a band of soldiers surrounded the house with that design. I will not change my purpose," she added, as her aunt begged her to be calm and reconsider, "I will not see him, I will not communicate with him, and if he comes, tell him what I say."

Mrs. Norris, frightened by her excited and positive manner, dared not expostulate further, lest she should bring on the delirium of her illness; but her fear left her before the next call of the tormentor, she excused Laura on the plea of health not sufficiently restored to meet any one out of her family.

"I may trust you to give this to her," he said in his blandest manner giving into her hand a dainty note.

She turned the note over and over again after his departure, hesitating for some time in her decision, but after her own curiosity had been gratified, she concluded to commit it to the flames.

It was well for Laura that her aunt came to this decision, for the contents would probably have sent her to the borders of insanity. After this second call, the poor harassed girl wrote a pleading letter to her father, telling him of her sufferings; from her persecutor, and begged him to come and bring her to stay awhile with Sister Agnes, as the only place where she could be free from his haunting presence. We may readily suppose her earnest words had the desired effect, and the next week found her at the House of the Infant Jesus, under the calm placid but invigorating watchfulness of one who would deal wisely with her sorrows.

"The housekeeper announced, 'Miss Tallon, Father'."

Father O'Connor set his book mark in at the evictive scene of "Luke Delmege," and with a momentary compression of the lips that meant facing a frequent and not altogether agreeable duty, passed into the parlour.

This was the meeting day of the Society of St. Martha, and Miss Tallon always called on him directly after adjournment. Through several years' experience he knew that these calls always meant complaint—more in sorrow than in anger, to be sure—of the other officers or of certain members; with a contrast hardly conscious of her own fidelity to duty, and the sacrifices she made for the society and its beneficiaries.

For Miss Tallon was president of the society, she was the head of everything among the Catholic women of Bruccstown, as any member of St. Joseph's parish would have explained to a stranger. Indeed, if the Golden Rule or the Laetare Medal were to be given in Bruccstown, the people would have deemed it Miss Tallon's inalienable right.

Truly, she had many claims, ancestral and personal, on local Catholic gratitude. Her grandfather had given the site of St. Joseph's, now one of the most valuable properties in the town, together with a generous offering to the building fund. At the dedication of the church, her father's gift was the high altar, and two memorial windows; and on her parent's death, Miss Tallon and her brothers and sisters, all married but herself, had given a beautiful marble altar, in keeping with her father's earlier gift to the Lady Chapel.

She was nearing her fortieth year in single blessedness, and ably keeping up the family tradition of generosity to religion; adding therewith new forms of social service, not only among the familiar poor, but among the oft-times needy foreigners drawn so numerously to Bruccstown in recent years by the big wicker furniture manufactory.

BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS
MURPHY & GUNN
BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS, NOTARIES
Solicitors for The Home Bank of Canada
Solicitors for the Roman Catholic
Episcopal Corporation
Suite 63, Bank of Toronto Chambers
LONDON, CANADA Phone 176

FOY, KNOX & MONAHAN
BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS, NOTARIES, ETC.
A. E. Knox R. L. Middleton T. Louis Monahan George Keogh
Cable Address: "Foy"
Telephones: Main 461 Main 462
Offices: Continental Life Building
CORNER BAY AND RICHMOND STREETS
TORONTO

DAY, FERGUSON & CO.
BARRISTERS
James E. Day 26 Adelaide St. West
John M. Ferguson Joseph F. Walsh TORONTO, CANADA

LUNNEY & LANNAN
BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS, NOTARIES
Harry W. Lunney, B. A., B. C. L.
Alphonsus Lannan, LL. B.
CALGARY, ALBERTA

JOHN H. McELDERRY
BARRISTER, SOLICITOR
NOTARY PUBLIC
CONVEYANCER
Money to Loan Telephone 1081
HERALD BLDG., ROOM 24
GUELPH, ONT.

ARCHITECTS
WATT & BLACKWELL
Members Ontario Association
ARCHITECTS
Sixth Floor, Bank of Toronto Chambers
LONDON, ONT.

DENTISTS
DR. BRUCE E. EAD
Room 6, Dominion Bank Chambers,
Cor. Richmond and Dundas Sts. Phone 9806

EDUCATIONAL
St. Jerome's College
Founded 1864 KITCHENER, ONT.
Excellent Business College Department
Excellent High School or Academic Department
Excellent College and Philosophical Department
Address: REV. W. A. BENINGER, C. R., President.

FUNERAL DIRECTORS
John Ferguson & Sons
180 KING ST.
The Leading Undertakers & Embalmers
Open Night and Day
Telephones—Hous 375 Factory 543

E. C. Killingsworth
FUNERAL DIRECTOR
Open Day and Night
389 Burwell St. Phone 3971

ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.
ALAMAC
HOTEL
OCEAN FRONT, IN THE HEART OF ATLANTIC CITY
AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN PLANS
Hot and Cold Sea Water Baths
Cricket Ground, Race Course, Garage
MACK LATTZ CO.

87 YONGE ST., TORONTO
Phone Main 4030
Hennessy
"Something More Than A Drug Store"
DRUGS CUT FLOWERS
PERFUMES CANDIES
Order by Phone—We Deliver
Watch Our Ads. in Local Dailies Thursday

RAW FURS
Best Market Price Paid for Raccoon, Skunk,
Mink, Weasel and Fox.
ROSS' LIMITED
LONDON, ONT. 808-11

Book Bargains
15c. Postpaid
Halt! Who Goes There? Wifred Meynell, Evergreen
reader of "Aunt Sarah and the War" will
want to read this book. Paper Cover.
60c. Each Postpaid
Bossy Convey. By Mrs. James Sculler,
Hawthornden. By Mrs. Clara M. Thompson,
Straw-Cutter's Daughter. The, by Lady Fullerton,
Merchant of Antwerp. The, by Hendrick
Conscience.
Lady Amabel and the Shepherd Boy. By
Elizabeth M. Stewart.
A Mesalliance. By Katharine Tynan. Lightness
of touch, agreeable and amusing people, a
pretty plot are all here, as always, in a new
novel by Katharine Tynan.
Memories of Robert Hugh Benson. By Blanche
Warre Cornish, Shane Leslie, and other of his
friends. A beautiful tribute to Father Benson by
his friends. The book contains a number of
anecdotes and notes.
"Dear Jane." By Isabel Cecilia Williams. A
simple, but very pleasantly told. It is refreshing
in its simple pathos and expression and true
feeling. All who enjoy a clean, wholesome and
striking tale ought to read "Dear Jane."
The Honor of the House. By Mrs. Hugh Fraser
and J. J. Stahlmann. In the ancient and grand
Palazzo Bordeghese with its wonderful Roman
gardens, is laid the scene of a story of treachery
and loyalty, duplicity and upright fortitude,
cruelty and wonderful devotion that is
thoroughly Italian in the heights and depths of
human nature that it discloses.
ORDER NOW
Our Stock is Limited
The Catholic Record
LONDON, CANADA