

The Family Circle.

IN THE HEART OF THE WOODS.

Such beautiful things in the heart of the woods ;
Flowers, and ferns, and the soft, green moss !
Such love of the birds, in the solitudes,
Where the swift wings glance and the tree-tops
toss ;

Spaces of silence, swept with song
Which nobody hears but the God above ;
Spaces where myriad creatures throng,
Sunning themselves in His guiding love.

Such safety and peace in the heart of the woods,
Far from the city's dust and din,
Where passion nor hate of man intrudes,
Nor fashion nor folly has entered in !
Deeper than hunter's trail hath gone,
Glimmers the tarn where the wild deer drink ;
And fearless and free comes the gentle fawn
To peep at herself o'er the grassy brink.

Such pledge of love in the heart of the woods !
For the Maker of all things keeps the least,
And over the tiny floweret broods
With care that for ages has never ceased ;

If He cares for this, will He not for thee,
Thee, whoever thou art, to-day ?
Child of an infinite Father, see,
And safe in such gentlest keeping stay.

—Margaret E. Sangster.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

"WHAT HAPPENED."

BY MARI GOLD.

CHAPTER I.

Nothing in the world would have convinced Judith Meredith that her "chances in life" were not forever ruined by the formidable fact that she lived in the country. "Of all the uneventful lives that can be lived," she was sometimes heard to say, "a country girl's life is the most uneventful. They see no one—that is, no one worth speaking of—so that their fate is decided. Either they go on living as they always have done, until they have become soured old maids, or else they marry a farmer, and commence the old routine again, day in, day out. Ugh, it would kill me !"

Now, Judith Meredith had not always lived in the country. Her father had been wealthy in his time, a partner in a large shipping firm in the city, but Fate had been against him, and when his business failed, his health failed also, and his doctor had told Mrs. Meredith with a wise shake of the head, such as doctors have, that her husband's only salvation would be a quiet country life, and pure country air. Accordingly, they rented a little country place on the Gatiacau, and went there to live until Mr. Meredith should gain sufficient health, to allow of his again undertaking the worries of business.

At the time of the moving, Judith was a lanky child of thirteen, and her sister a mere baby of five years, and she had looked forward to the change quite as eagerly as had the little sister, principally because it was a change, and therefore something to be looked forward to, and also because of rapturous visions of hay-cart drives, and nutting parties, and wild-flower hunts and other allurements belonging exclusively to the country.

The day on which our story opens was Judith's nineteenth birthday. The little sister had awakened her that morning with all the enthusiasm for birthday-celebrations that lies in the breasts of people of eleven years. "Judith," she cried; "Judith, its seven o'clock and your birthday, and yet you're—oh, Jude! many happy returns (this accompanied by a vigorous embrace), and I'm half dressed already, and—"

Here Judith opened her gray eyes, and shook back some stray locks of gold brown hair, saying: "Why, Marjorie, what a little whirl-wind you are! Yes, dear, just run away, and I shall get up at once." Marjorie's long, black-stocking legs carried her off, but she was back again in a moment thumping at the door. "Oh, Jude, I say, do make haste! There's such a lovely present for you. I'm dying to tell you. Its in an envelope and—oh, I mustn't tell, but do hurry up!" With this Marjorie departed, only returning on her way down

stairs to announce the fact that she was ready for breakfast.

When, a little later, she descended the stair and entered the dining-room, few fairer pictures could have been found than Judith in her fresh pink gown, her wavy hair drawn back loosely from her brow and coiled at the back of her head, her clear gray eyes and bright complexion telling of the health that country air had brought.

"Now dear," said her mother, when the birthday wishes and kisses had been given, "see what is in this envelope; father and I thought that it was what you most wished for." Judith opened the envelope. Inside she found a little note from her father, in which he explained that he and her mother had decided to spare her for a little while, to go and visit her uncle in the city, and see a little of the life she longed for.

"Oh, mother, mother, how perfectly lovely!" she cried; "Oh, daddy, do you think mother can do without me? Can you really afford it?" For the time no objection arose in her mind, so engrossed was she in thinking of the prospect of relief from the ordinary routine of their country life. Marjorie was quite as enthusiastic as she was herself. "Didn't I tell you, Judith, that it was a lovely present!" she exclaimed, skipping about her sister. "Come out and let us talk it over in the hammock." And catching her sister's hand she half dragged her out to the two elms between which swung the hammock. "Just to think, Jude, that you are really going, to do what you wished for so long." Then, you know, I can help mother, so you needn't worry about that." (This last remark rather pompously said.)

But, as Marjorie chatted on, Judith's face grew graver and graver, and a little line became between her eyes. She was wondering how her frail little mother would manage without her. How weary she would be in the evenings, with only Marjorie's willing but unskilled hands to help her! But, then, how could she give up this visit that was to be so much to her?

"Margie," said Judith, suddenly, "run away dear, I think it's time you got ready for lessons. I shall be with you in a few minutes." So off ran Marjorie, rather puzzled to see Judith taking this birthday treat so coolly.

When Marjorie was well out of sight, Judith sat up in the hammock, picked up a gray kitten that had been frisking at her feet, and, giving it quite a shake, said severely: "No, my dear young person, mother is not to be left alone just now, not for all the birthday treats that ever were invented, so bear that in mind, kitty, if you please." Kitty, resenting this treatment, took herself off, Judith slowly extricated herself from the hammock, and walked toward the kitchen, where her mother was busy, "as she always is," thought Judith. "Mother," she said brightly, "I think I'd rather stay at home with you this summer. After all, 'Sunny Side' is a dear little place, even if nothing ever does 'happen'; and then, who knows, something interesting might 'turn up' (as Mr. Micawber used to say)."

And something did turn up.

CHAPTER II.

The Merediths were all surprised at the turn affairs had taken. Both father and mother tried to persuade Judith to go, but all in vain. Judith spent an hour in her own little room wrestling with her great desire to take the pleasure offered her. At the end of the hour, sore as had been the struggle, she came out victorious. Her mind was made up, her duty was plain; and it was one of this girl's characteristics, that once her mind was made up about a certain course of action, she seldom swerved from that course.

And so she stayed at "Sunnyside," and June, with its roses passed, and July came and went, and all things went on as usual. Household drudgery in the summer morn-

ings, reading or boating with Marjorie in the afternoons; and in the evenings a long stroll with her father, or a quiet time with her mother, sitting on the low verandah in the growing darkness and listening to the cheerful chirp of the crickets, and the ceaseless hoarse cries of the bull-frogs for "more rum, more rum!" And still nothing "turned up."

But at last there arrived an August day on which something came to pass.

Now, of all days, this was the last on which one could reasonably expect anything romantic to occur, being sultry and savoring somewhat of coming thunder-storms, and being also the day on which it was Judith's turn to go to market and do the family's shopping at Rougepont, the little French-Canadian village, some miles distant. Judith disliked this exceedingly. In the first place she had to bring vegetables, of her father's cultivation, to sell to an old huckster on the market, with whom much bargaining was inevitable, and in the second place, as Bidy, their only domestic used to say, "Miss Judith never could abide drivin' the old nag."

"Pierrot," the only horse owned by the Merediths, had long since passed the meridian of life. The French-Canadian term, "bourique," might well have been applied to "Pierrot," being suggestive of bones and slow locomotion. Pierrot stood this morning harnessed to the little phaeton, showing, when Judith sprang into the carriage, how entirely he disapproved of going to market by his drawn back ears and sulky demeanor. However, it was imperative that he should go to Rougepont, so off he trotted, though at a slow enough pace, thinking within himself what an ill-used horse he was.

Arrived at Rougepont, Judith concluded her bargaining with Madame Goyer, finished her shopping satisfactorily, and set out for home.

She had gone only a short distance when a bicycle loomed up in the distance. Pierrot's dismay was evident. On came the bicycle, nearer and nearer, until Pierrot's heart fairly died within him, and he resolved that in flight lay his only chance of escape. He reared and plunged and galloped off, at a pace of which few could have thought him capable. From one side of the road to the other he dashed, the little carriage jerking and plunging after him, threatening an upset every moment. "Whoa! whoa!" implored Judith wildly, clutching the side of the carriage and pulling the reins tight. Off flew her hat, and her hair blew across her eyes so that she could scarcely see. At last the phaeton struck a larger boulder and Pierrot with an impatient tug or two, stopped short. The object of his terror gone, why should he exert himself? Judith turned her head and peered out of the little pane of glass at the back. There was the bicycle some distance away, reclining against a tree, and here was the bicyclist coming towards her with her hat in his hand, and his arm full of parcels which had been thrown out. "Oh dear, dear," sighed Judith, "what a plight to be in!" And she vainly endeavored to reduce her straying locks to order. A pair of brown eyes twinkled as the bicyclist, raising his little cloth cap, said: "This is your hat, and these your parcels, are they not. I must apologize for having been the innocent cause of this catastrophe." "Oh it really doesn't matter in the least," said Judith, conscious that she was blushing violently, "for I am not at all hurt, and you have so kindly gathered all my things together."

There was a gleam of recognition flashed into the young man's eyes.

Years ago Cyril Gage had had for playmate a little girl with big gray eyes and hair that rippled over her shoulders. Surely this was she! They had been companions for years, sharing each others childish joys and sorrows, and, on the Meredith's departure, Cyril had halved a sixpence and given his little companion one half and kept the other himself (according to the good old custom), swearing everlasting fidelity. "Why," said

the young man, "is it? yes it must be Judith, Miss Meredith!" This with a glad surprise on his boyish face. "And oh, Cyril, is it really you?" cried Judith. "Yes, Judith, it seems to be really I. You know, mother took a cottage near Rougepont for the summer, and I came out to explore this morning, and was meditating on the dullness of the prospect, little thinking whom I should meet. Oh, Judith, it does seem wonderful to be with you again," said Gage, with something in his brown eyes more than surprise and pleasure, now—something that brought a blush to Judith's cheek, and made her say hastily: "Of course you'll come back with me, and see them all at home. Mother will be so delighted to see you again."

So off they set, Judith driving the rebellious Pierrot, while Gage mounted his bicycle and rode at a respectful distance behind Pierrot in case of further mishap.

And the outcome of it all was that almost every summer evening for a long time, that bicycle might have been seen leaning against the gates of "Sunnyside," where Pierrot, from his pasture might view it with resentful eye; and, more than this, that in the early autumn there came a morning when Judith Meredith, dressed in purest bridal white, took "for better for worse," Cyril Gage "to be her wedded husband."

"And merrily rang the bells
When these two were wed."

FORMOSA.

HOME OF THE MORNING-GLORY, TEA
GARDEN OF THE PACIFIC.

"A republic has been declared in Formosa, the flag adopted being a yellow dragon on a blue ground." So whispered the telegraph under the ocean and over continents in the last days of May, 1895. To those who know Formosa, the very idea is a joke. If, however, it means independence of China, there is nothing surprising. If it means independence of Japan, then we are sorry for the new republic. As a matter of fact, however, only a coast line on the north and west has ever been under the control of the Chinese. The larger part of the island is an unknown, unpenetrated, mountainous jungle, which awaits some Japanese Stanley to explore and reveal it. Meanwhile, we sympathize with the missionaries during what we fear is anarchy.

Lying out in the Pacific, a day's sail, and within sight on a clear day, from China, rises this lovely island rightly called Formosa,—"the beautiful." It is about fifteen thousand square miles, and having a population of possibly four millions. Judging by the proofs of flowers, insects, and animals, including the two-legged variety called man,—in short, by the geology, flora, and fauna,—Formosa is an integral part of the great island chain of the Mikado's empire. Out of the silkworm-like head of southern Japan is spun a long chain of islands properly called Oki-nawa, or "the big cable." In our days and weeks of 1895, Formosa has become Japan's terminal possession. With such "terminal facilities" north and south as Formosa and Yezo, Japan is likely to control the western Pacific and to say to the robber nations of Europe, "Halt!"

During the peace negotiations at Shimono-seki, the Japanese high commissioners insisted upon the cession of this beautiful island, upon the ground of virtual possession by their fleet and army, but largely, also, on account of historic claims, which have been urged long before this year. Before the united front of Russia the earth-hungry, France the ambitious, and Germany which wants to extend trade, Japan relinquished her claim to Manchuria, for a consideration, and with provisos that may yet surprise the world. But despite Spain, or any other power, small or great, Japan will have Formosa. We doubt very much whether anything short of all Europe combined would have made Dai Nippon give up her claim to this gateway into her seas.