

THE SACRIFICE;

—OR—

FOR HER FAMILY'S SAKE.

CHAPTER III.—(Continued).

Lora really bore wonderfully with the old lady's whims, and would have borne with them just as patiently if Frau Melitta's parlor windows had not overlooked a few shining windows across the street, with curtains of flowered cretonne; which hid themselves so modestly behind lofty elm trees that they seemed to offer nothing worthy of remark, and were noticed neither by Aunt Melitta nor by the many passers-by. But to Lora von Tollen they seemed the loveliest view in the world.

The modest house belonged to the widowed Frau Pastor Schonberg, and behind these same windows lived her son, Dr. Ernest Schonberg. When Lora came down the street, and the wind blew the yellow leaves toward her, and her eyes glanced at the reddish-brown coloring of the elms, a feeling of joyful anticipation came over her. The time would come when she need no longer sit with her aunt on the little balcony at the back of the house, but when the cosy place behind the lace curtains, with the charming view, would be hers again. As she thought this she forgot for a time all her cares and anxieties, and entered her aunt's room, cosy and breathless from the rapid walk and the steep stairs.

The old lady, with her peculiar style of hair—three or four curls hung down on either side of the small face, and certainly did look like the hanging ears of a dog—was sitting at her work-table, with a multitude of bright silk scraps spread out before her.

"Thank Heaven, Lora, that you have come!" she exclaimed, "the tea is put to sleep, and it would have grown bitter. Take off your things and sit down."

"She tossed about her scraps again, and brought out a letter."

"Here is a letter for you from Helen—she asked me to give it to you secretly. Something about your father's birthday, I suppose?"

Lora took off her jacket, lifted the very plain, dark blue felt hat from her blonde hair, and sat down by her beloved window, with the charming prospect, opposite her aunt, turning the letter about in her hand. Aunt Melitta's ancient serving-maid brought in the tea and rolls. A fire burned in the stove, for the old lady was sensitive to the autumn chill, and the charming coziness of the old maid's home, to which the doll-colony lent a cheerful look, warmed Lora's heart.

"Thanks, dear auntie," she said pleasantly, taking the cup from the old lady and laying aside the letter. Then, turning again to her aunt, she said, "Rudi came yesterday, and he is coming to see you."

"Do you know how he is getting on with the lovely blonde in his album?"

"Which one?" asked Lora merrily.

"He has blondes and brunettes by the dozen. But please excuse me a moment, auntie, and I will read my letter."

Her sister's handwriting startled her; the usually firm writing this time was almost illegible, as if it had been written in haste and agitation.

"Dearest Lora:

"I enclose a few lines from my betrothed. What can be done, I beg of you to tell me. I would gladly come myself, to help you to bear the anxiety, but my duty keeps me here. I should be too ungrateful if I could leave my mother-in-law on her sick bed."

"I cannot make up my mind to write to mamma, as Franz wished me to do."

"You are so quiet and reasonable that I put the matter in your hands—you can decide how you can best break it to my father and mother."

"Your loving

"HELEN."

Trembling, Lora caught at the enclosed letter, which was closely covered with her future brother-in-law's handwriting.

She was trying to control herself, to hide her fears, when some one knocked at the door, and in answer to Aunt Melitta's shrill "Come in!" a young man appeared on the threshold in a visiting costume of the latest English fashion.

"Mille pardons if I disturb you, my dear madam. I have long been intending to pay my respects to my esteemed neighbor. Ah," he broke off suddenly. "Fraulein von Tollen—what a happy chance! My mother has just gone to your house to call on you—on you particularly. Will you permit me?"

He had drawn up a chair as he spoke, to seat himself beside Fraulein Melitta, who, with a certain old-fashioned solemnity, had taken her seat on the sofa.

"Delighted to see you—quite charming," Herr Becher, she simpered.

Lora remained quietly in her place. She felt half-paralyzed with the shock of what she had read. Adalbert Becher's presence was an absolute physical torture to her. He addressed his remarks to her, and she looked at him without comprehending, without answering. He was rather a good-looking figure, this tall, fair man, only there was a gleam in his moist, light blue eyes which always gave Lora a feeling of disgust, she herself did not know why. The rosy face was bloated, as often happens to those who are fond of good

dinners, and do not spare champagne. His dress was elegant, but not that of a gentleman; he was wildly extravagant in the matter of neckties and shirt studs, used the smallest of handkerchiefs, with the largest of monograms, and the most impossible perfumes. His bows and smiles were generally like caricatures, and in intercourse with ladies he scattered his coarse and fulsome compliments like bombs. Moreover, he was always talking about his money, and told the cost of everything. In short, during the three years that he had lived in Westenberg he had gained the reputation of a "good fellow," and in fact he gave large sums for charitable objects. The new city hospital had been built in great part by his gifts; he had set up a fountain in the market-place, and on the emperor's birthday he entertained all the "Soldiers' Union" at the "Crown." Very praiseworthy; but Lora von Tollen thought otherwise. She thought him low and vulgar; she had held this opinion of him ever since he had sold a noble horse, that he had injured in a race, to a carter. The poor creature, which could scarcely drag itself along, every day drew the heavy sand-cart past the elegant villa in whose stable it stood a few months before, petted and caressed; and every time the animal stopped and neighed slightly, as if begging to be let in, and Herr Adalbert Becher looked quietly on—he had received six thalers for the horse!

Lora had learned this by chance; since then she had hated the man, who was considered the best match in the city, and was the object of many secret calculations of anxious mothers with marriageable daughters.

She thought that a man who had no feeling for animals could have no compassion for human beings. And this man devoted himself exclusively to Leonore von Tollen; and in spite of her cool disdain, he only grew more eager in his attentions.

Now he sat there beside her aunt, the lonely old woman who made no claim to visits from young men of fashion. Lora knew perfectly well that it was only another attempt to ingratiate himself with her and her family.

"You cannot guess, my dear Fraulein von Tollen, what request my mother has to make of you. As I am more fortunate than she, and have met you here so unexpectedly, may I tell you of it myself? It is about a little play for our ball—and we count on your kindness."

"Would you undertake the part of the French peasant-woman in a little opera-tella? This charming role would gain for your grace and elegance."

He laid his light-gloved hands imploringly together, and cast a fiery glance at the young girl.

"I am very sorry; I never play in comedies."

"Oh, but—why not?"

"Because I do not like it."

"But why do you not like it? You ought to like it, for there can be no better opportunity for a charming woman."

He stopped beneath the cool, astonished glance that swept over him. Her delicate mouth was drawn down imperceptibly, and this gave an expression of pride and disdain to her countenance.

"Why won't you play?—why do you refuse me?" he stammered in confusion.

She did not reply at once; the slender figure rose to its full height, and moving toward the next room with the letter in her hand, she turned her golden head half round as she reached the door, and no queen could have assumed a prouder air. "You must content yourself with the simple fact," she said.

The next moment she was alone in her aunt's bedroom, and she rushed to the window with the letter, and read it with a heart beating with anxiety:

"To my great grief, dearest Helen, I must tell you that your brother, Rudolph, has again got himself into difficulty, into even a worse one, I must say, than that of last year. He came to me this time, too, begging that I would sign a note for him to enable him to borrow money. I cannot understand Rudolph—he knows my circumstances, that my means are of the very smallest, that I have an invalid mother, and that I am saving up every penny to enable me to marry you."

"I was not any too friendly in my reply, but I begged him before all things to tell me the nature of his difficulty. From what he says, I gather that through ill-luck in play, and through buying and selling horses, he has contracted debts which he still hopes to be able to pay by a stroke of luck."

"He seems to have got a comrade to be responsible for him. According to Rudi's account, his friend offered his assistance. Pardon me, dearest Helen, if I express some doubts as to this part of his story. The fact remains, however, that Rudolph is very far from being able to meet his engagements."

"If I had anything like the amount—it is certainly a large sum—I would help him for the sake of the poor fellow who is anxiously waiting Rudolph's payment, for he promised him to raise the money; if he does not, they must both go to the wall. If your father, nevertheless, refuses to sacrifice his last penny,

I cannot blame him, when I think of you and of your sisters and your mother, who are all unprovided for. How a way out of the difficulty is to be found is a mystery to me."

"I write this to you in order that you may prepare your family, for the catastrophe must come sooner or later. Do not distress yourself about it, my darling."

Lora dropped the letter on the window-seat, and clasped her hands together. What was to be done? The blood rushed to her cheeks and her eyes filled with tears. Who could help them? With feverish haste her thoughts chased one another through her brain. Uncle Victor? Ah, Victor, if he only would! But Rudolph had already been there—and could she blame him? He had his children, and he knew his brother's incorrigible folly.

But what other help was there? He would go to his father again, the embittered, suffering, suspicious man, for whom any trifling was the signal for groans, harsh words, and tyrannical conduct. It was not so very long since they had this same trouble in the little house, when no one dared say a word, and every one went about with red eyes; when even Katie crept away silent and depressed, secretly clenching her fist and throwing her books about—and then the nights when the pillows were wet with tears!

And now, now—would it not be a thousand times more dreadful, since the means of resource were literally at an end? And because another was dragged to ruin with them? She could still bear her father's voice, as he had taken the receipt for the registered letter from Katie, last year, and flung it into the drawer, with the words: "So that is done—it is not possible to do it again, for when there is nothing, even the law can't seize upon it."

She started up; that was Rudolph's clear voice mingling with Adalbert Becher's deep bass, a gay careless tone: "Isn't Lora here?"

The young girl started up and slipped behind a curtain into the little alcove, which her aunt used as a wardrobe. Wonderfully shaped garments hung on wooden pegs in exquisite order. The air was close, as it is apt to be in a clothes-press that is seldom opened. Lora leaned her head against the side of the door—she could not meet her brother now without telling him that she knew all. She pressed her hand against her beating heart, and clenched her teeth. Close by a door opened, and she could hear through the thin wall that Adalbert Becher was taking leave of her aunt. The old lady thanked him again and again for his visit, and promised to come and see the park. It was a valuable parting.

"Good-bye, auntie," now sounded in Rudolph's voice. "When Lora turns up please excuse me, and ask her to tell them at home that I shall not be there at tea-time."

Lora breathed a sigh of relief. She thrust the letter deeper into her pocket, and went back to her aunt, in the parlor. The old lady, as she came in, met her in the door in her hat and jacket.

"Lora," said Aunt Melitta, with deeply flushed cheeks and her side-curls trembling with her indignation, "I am astonished to detect you in so great a faux pas in etiquette! Your good mother is too indulgent in this respect; you and Katie do what you like, not what you ought."

As she spoke she came toward her and opened a window to let out the overpowering odor of Jockey-Club, which Adalbert Becher had left behind him.

"In our house, with my mother, good manners were considered before anything else," she continued, "anything else. But what is the matter, Lora? You look so pale."

The young girl turned her head away.

"Forgive me," she whispered, and kissed the old lady's hand forcefully, as if she would prove how false were the words so lately spoken with regard to her failure in good manners. The next moment she had fled.

She could not go straight home. She must think over, quietly, how she should break this matter to her parents—to her mother, first, of course, the poor soul who, in all her life, had done nothing but suffer and toil. Suddenly turning rushed to her eyes, as she unconsciously turned her steps toward the park. Yellow leaves rested on the quiet little river, below; and on the other side, across the meadows, the white fog was rising, rolling in nearer and nearer over the marshy fields, looking almost ghostly in the autumn evening twilight.

She walked quickly, as if driven on by inward unrest. It was quite lonely in the alleys of the park, but she did not give it a thought. At length she stepped before a garden-pavilion, shaped like an umbrella, which stood in the midst of a circular plot of ground, and seated herself on the bench, under the somewhat dilapidated wooden roof. She did this instinctively, for it had begun to rain.

The trees were motionless; there was a dead calm; only the rain-drops fell softly, and now and then a withered leaf floated to the ground. She sat motionless, and gazed out into the gray mist; but, for all her thought and pondering, she could find no way out of the difficulty. So much she was sure of, that her father would never survive it if his darling son was turned out of the army in disgrace—to say nothing of her mother. And this would be the end—*that* must be so!

Her heart was beating so loudly that she did not hear the firm, hasty step which sounded behind her; she suddenly started up, and a deep flush spread slowly over her delicate face.

"Caught in the rain!" asked a rich, manly voice. "Permit me, Fraulein von Tollen—this family canopy will serve for us both; it is sometimes a good thing

to be an obedient son. My mother urged me so hard to take this antique specimen that I gave in at last, half vexed and half amused. But what is it? Has anything happened to you, Fraulein Lora?"

While he had been speaking, her eyes had filled with tears; and she gave her hand for a moment to the slender young man in a dark overcoat, who had playfully spread a gigantic old-fashioned umbrella over her, she managed to bring out, with great difficulty, and in choked voice, the words, "Don't ask me."

"But I shall, of course I shall ask you," he replied anxiously, closing the umbrella. "It is true I have no right to do it. I know that, Fraulein Lora; but," he continued, "but when a man has received so friendly a morning greeting as was my good fortune to-day, then a man feels happy for all day; and happiness gives courage. Tell me, Lora, what is troubling you, I beg of you. I cannot bear to see you looking so sad."

He had taken her hand again, both hands this time; the umbrella lay beside them on the ground, and Lora von Tollen's beautiful eyes shone through her tears like a clear sunbeam.

"But if I cannot tell you, Herr Doctor?"

He looked at her with appealing eyes. "Herr Doctor?" he repeated. "When shall I stop hearing that, Lora?"

She blushed again. "Ernest!" she said softly, and the next moment he had drawn her close; her head rested on his shoulder, and her frame shook with heavy sobs.

He looked down at her head and stroked the fair hair, but he spoke no word. He let her weep. Indeed he had some trouble to keep back the tears that came into his own eyes; he felt dizzy with happiness.

"At last! at last!" he whispered almost inaudibly. There was no sound but the light dripping of the rain, and around them was the deep twilight of the autumn evening.

"Lora, Lora," he said tenderly, pressing her closer.

She started up in terror, and pushed him away. "I must go home."

"Lora," he entreated, trying to draw her back.

"No, no," she cried. "Oh—I—"

"But I will not let you go like this—now—I must have some certainty, Lora. I want your permission to speak to your parents—"

Her eyes suddenly took on an expression of horror in her colorless face. "It cannot be," she said hastily, "it cannot be, not now—wait, you must wait—"

"Why?" she asked sadly.

"I cannot tell you, Herr Doctor—"

"Ernest," he corrected her.

"Ernest," she repeated softly, suffering his kiss. It was the first. "Come," she then entreated, blushing deeply.

(To be Continued.)

The Farm

SELECTING DAIRY COWS.

It is generally recognized that a good udder is one of the most important external points of a dairy cow. A capacious bag of good quality is rightly regarded as being an indication of a well-developed milk-yielding capacities, and in selecting a milch cow for the dairy herd one of the first things to do is to look at her bag.

A well shaped udder of a dairy cow should be square in shape, possessing plenty of depth, width and length. The sole of the udder should be broad and level. The bag should extend well up between the hind legs, and must also reach as far forward under the belly as possible.

Although size is a very important point in a good udder, it is by no means the only point, as is often erroneously supposed. Good quality is even more essential than mere size. The fact of a bag being of good quality is indicated by the skin being thin and pliable, and of a nice soft and fine texture. A thick, coarse, fleshy skin, which feels hard and unyielding to the touch, is a bad fault. We often find that large bags are coarse and fleshy, in which case the udder is very inferior, despite its size. Coarseness and fleshiness of the udder are generally an indication of poor milk-producing qualities, and it is wrong to look upon a bag of this kind as denoting a deep milker, simply because it is large and looks capacious. In reality a fleshy udder is not capacious, even when of large size, since its size is brought about by the thick skin and the thickness of the underlying tissues, says W. R. Gilbert.

A bag of good quality and possessing a fine, pliable skin, will shrink considerably after the cow has been milked. The skin will then lie in soft folds or pleats, the bag gradually increasing in size again, as the time for the next milking draws near. In the case of a fleshy coarse udder, deficient in quality, the bag does not decrease much in size after milking, but continues to appear full and distended, the skin remains stretched, and does not draw itself into folds as it ought to do. The great difference between an udder of good quality, and one which is coarse and fleshy, is best seen after the cows have been milked. Anyone who judges the udder only by its size would be entirely on the wrong track, if he were to look at the bags after the cows have been milked, because he would in that case select a coarse, inferior udder, as being better than a really good one which possesses quality.

A good udder should be uniformly developed. The fore udder and the hind udder ought to hang down to the same level, and the two quarters of both portions of the bag should be of the same size. It is a bad fault if one quarter is small and less developed than the other three; thus denoting that either the small quarter is diseased, or that the shape of the udder has been spoiled by incompetent milking. A proper and uniform development of the bag in young cows, can only be attained by being careful to milk them in such a manner, that all the four teats receive the same share of attention at milking time. Not infrequently dairy cows are to be met with, in which the udder hangs over to one side as a result of the cow in question having been milked always from the same side, and the two teats on that side having received more attention from the milker than the teats on the other side. The teats should be placed wide apart from one another. Very generally the two front teats are wider apart than the rear ones, but the distance between front and rear teats should be exactly the same on both sides. Ayrshires are especially noted for the symmetry in placing of the teats, as well as for other fancy points connected with the udder.

From the dairy farmer's point of view it is very desirable that the teats should possess adequate length, so that the operation of milking is rendered as easy as possible; short teats are more difficult to milk. The surface of the teats should be quite smooth and free from any warts or excrescences which might interfere with the milking operation. Teats which are flattened at the end are less satisfactory to milk than those which are more or less pointed. The teats of young cows are always comparatively small, they increase in size as the cow gets older. Though fairly long the teats should not be very large, for must they be coarse. Coarse and fleshy udders generally have teats to correspond; such feel hard and unyielding, whilst teats of good quality even if very large are soft and pliable. Well developed milk veins, which show up plainly when the bag is full of milk are essential points in good udders.

VACCINATION FOR BLACKLEG AND ANTHRAX IN CATTLE.

The disease known as Blackleg in cattle, although entirely unknown in many extensive agricultural sections of Canada and not at all wide spread in any district or province, annually causes quite extensive losses to cattle-raisers. Anthrax, which is quite a different disease, although frequently confused with Blackleg in the minds of many cattle-raisers is also the cause of serious loss of stock. The former disease is almost entirely confined to cattle under three years and is generally fatal. The latter attacks other classes of farm animals and the human subject is not exempt from its infection, which generally results seriously.

By the aid of science cattle-raisers are now enabled to protect their stock against their maladies. As the human family is vaccinated against smallpox, in the same manner cattle are rendered immune from Blackleg and Anthrax. The Department of Agriculture at Ottawa through the Health of Animals Branch is now in a position to supply preventive vaccine for each of these diseases at the nominal cost of five cents per dose. Until recently, by special arrangement with extensive manufacturers in the United States, these products were secured at a reduced cost, and were placed in the hands of Canadian cattle-raisers at ten cents per dose for Blackleg vaccine and fourteen cents per dose for Anthrax vaccine. It is due to the fact that these preparations are now being made at the Biological Laboratory in connection with the Health of Animals Branch that they can be supplied at five cents per dose.

The vaccine for Blackleg may be administered by any intelligent person by means of an instrument supplied by the Department at fifty cents.

Anthrax vaccine, which is also supplied at five cents per dose, is more difficult to administer, requiring a qualified veterinarian to treat an animal.

Cattle-raisers who have fear of an attack of either Blackleg or Anthrax would do well to apply to the Veterinary Director General at Ottawa for the proper preventive treatment.

DROUGHT INSURANCE.

One of the best methods of securing safety from drought is to keep the surface of the ground well stirred and loose. It will then not only absorb much rain, if any comes, that might otherwise run off the surface of dry or caked soil, but it absorbs and holds even the dew, which in an ordinary time amounts to a great deal of moisture.

WANTED THE SECRET.

A very aggressive crusade in favor of temperance has recently been going on in a certain Scottish city, and a young minister, whose eloquence is marred only by the unfortunate remarks he sometimes makes, has persuaded several heavy drinkers to enter the temperance fold.

Meeting one of his converts one afternoon he inquired how he was getting along. The man kept well back, and the minister's suspicions were aroused. "Ah, Robert," said the reverend gentleman, sadly, "I'm afraid you've been drinking. I can smell it in your breath."

Robert didn't deny the impeachment—in fact, he couldn't—and just remained speechless, his eyes fixed on the ground in front of him.

"Now, Robert," continued the minister, "you never smell the odor of liquor in my breath."

"No, sir; I never did," was Robert's reply; then, in a most anxious tone of voice, he added: "What d'ye do for it?"