

# ROSE ISLAND

By Lillian Leveridge

CHAPTER V. (Continued.)

"Well, a long, long time ago, before all the mermaids and mermen died off, there was a merman who had a real, real wife. Her name was Margaret. She was very beautiful, and she loved the sea. When she used to live up in the world in the little town beside the sea she would wander alone along the shore, listening to what the wild waves were saying. The wild waves said lots of things to her that other people never heard, because the other people didn't love them like she did.

"One night, when the waves were all lovely and sparkly in the moonlight, and were breaking at her feet in sweet, little, tinkly drops of music, a very handsome young merman came riding along on a big wave. Margaret was a little bit scared at first, for she had never been so close to one before; but he had such a good, kind look on his face that she knew in a minute she needn't be afraid. He came close up to her, and said that he had often seen her there, and it was his voice she had heard when she thought the waves were singing. He said he loved her better than all the mermaids in the sea, and he wanted her to be his wife.

"At first Margaret said she couldn't think of such a thing for a minute, and she went back home and went to bed. But she couldn't sleep, for all night long there came through the open window the sad, sweet music of the waves. She knew now that it wasn't really the waves, but the merman singing to her.

"The next night, when the sea was all silvery in the moonlight, she went back to the same rock where she had seen the merman. Pretty soon he came riding along on a big, shiny wave. He told her about his beautiful home down in the bottom of the sea, and asked her, wouldn't she come and live with him.

"Margaret said no, she couldn't think of it for a minute, and she went back home and went to bed. But she couldn't sleep a wink, for the

merman was singing all night long, and the song seemed sadder and sweeter than ever. So she got up and sat by the window in the moonlight. Her hair fell in golden waves all down over her long, white gown, and she was very lovely. She sat there a long time and cried, because she was afraid of the merman's music.

"The next night, when the moon was up high and the waves were all sparkly, she went again and sat on the big, gray rock beside the silvery sea. Pretty soon the merman came riding along on a big, shiny wave. He told her some more about his home in the sea, and asked, wouldn't she come.

"Then she began to tremble, for she was afraid, awfully afraid, of the cold, deep water; but she loved the merman, and she said, 'Yes, I will go with you.'

"The merman's eyes shone like melted stars, he was so very, very glad. He came and took her by the hand, and led her toward the sea.

"Her eyes filled up with big, sparkly tears as she looked back at the little town where all her friends were sleeping in their warm beds. She wondered if they would miss her very much. Then she looked up to the big, blue sky, where the moon and the stars were shining. And the little winds, all sweet with flower scents, came and rippled the waves of her golden hair—for it was all loose around her shoulders—and they kissed her forehead and her lips and whispered good-bye to her. Then a big, achy lump came in her throat, for she knew the soft, little winds she loved so much could never follow her to her strange, new home.

"The merman saw the tears falling from her eyes, and he was as sorry as could be. But he just kissed her again and said, 'Come, Margaret, come.'

"So Margaret smiled a beautiful smile at him, and put her hand in his and took a step with her bare, white feet into the water. She was trembling still, for she was afraid, awfully afraid; but the merman held her hand tight, and she took heart again. Deeper and deeper they went into the cold water until they disappeared under the silvery waves.

"Margaret found the water didn't choke her, and she didn't mind the cold a bit. Down, down, down they went to the bottom of the sea. On the way they passed a lot of big, terrible-looking animals that she had never seen before—whales and sharks and porpoises, and ugly, coiling serpents, and ever so many more sea animals and fish of all kinds. Of course, she was frightened, but they just looked at her curiously and didn't try to bite her. The merman kept tight hold of her hand and told her not to be afraid.

"At last they came to the merman's home. And, oh! it was the most beautiful home you could imagine. It was just a natural cave in a big rock down there, but it was fixed up like a king's palace. The floor was made of pearl, the shiniest, pinky white, and the ceiling was of amber, just as clear and yellow as sunshine. There were beautiful little chairs and tables made of ivory and gold and precious stones.

"But just imagine Margaret's surprise when the merman led her to a splendid red gold throne at the far end of the room. Very proudly he seated her in it, then knelt at her feet, kissed her hand, and said, 'Welcome home, Queen Margaret!' Then she knew that her merman lover was a king. It was a lovely surprise.

"They lived there a long time and were very happy. Only sometimes, though she had everything she could wish for, and the merman was always kind, Margaret would get lonesome for the friends she had left up in the world.

"At last one day—it was in the springtime, when the beautiful white lilies were blooming up on the land, when the winds were low and the sunny waves were still—there floated down through the water the sweetest of sweet music, like silver bells ringing far away. The merman listened, and the children listened, and Margaret listened, and it seemed almost that the sea animals and the lovely sea flowers in the Queen's garden listened, too; but only Margaret knew what it was. She was sitting on the red gold throne, combing the baby mermaid's hair, when the music began; but she stopped at once, and the lonely look came into her face as she looked up through the clear, green water.

"That's the Easter bells ringing,' she said with a sigh of longing. 'Up in the world the people are all going to church for the gladdest service of all the year. There will be flowers and music. And, Merman, I must go to church once more or I shall lose my soul.'

"Mer-people don't have any souls, but the merman knew that Margaret wouldn't lose hers for anything. So he said very kindly, 'Dear heart, go up if you wish to go, and say your prayer. We shall miss you, but you will soon come back to us again.'

"Margaret smiled a beautiful smile, and went up, up, up through the shining green sea. The merman and the little mer-children were very lonely after Margaret left, and the minutes seemed like hours. At last they thought she must soon be coming back, and they would go to meet her.

So they, too, went up, up, up through the shining green sea, but they didn't meet her. They went across the sandy beach, all pretty with sea-stocks a-blowing in the wind. Then they went up the narrow streets of the town till they came to the little gray church away up on a windy hill.

"The windows were too high up for them to look through, so they climbed on the grave-stones. Then they could look right into the church. It was just as Margaret had said. There were lilies and violets and crocuses, and a lot of people there, all kneeling. They saw Margaret quite plainly; she was beside a smooth, white pillar.

"Margaret,' the Merman said, 'We are all here, and we are so lonely. Please come home.' But Margaret never looked up.

"Dear Heart!' the Merman called again, 'the sea is stormy and the winds are cold. The little ones are crying for you, and they want to go home. Please, come.'

"Margaret had always smiled before when he called her 'Dear Heart,' but now she kept her eyes on her Prayer Book and seemed not even to hear. The Merman knew now that it was no use calling any more, so very sorrowfully they all went back to the sea, but the little mer-children cried so pitifully that the Merman said they had better call once more before they went down.

"Margaret! Margaret! Margaret!' they called again and again, and there was such a wild wail of sorrow in their voices that you would have thought she could not help but hear. But not a word in answer did the wild winds bring to them; and at last, with aching hearts, they went down, down, down to their beautiful home at the bottom of the sea. There forever after they lived, lonely and forgotten (at least, they thought so), for Margaret never came back.

"But Margaret had not forgotten. She was glad to be back again among her friends, and to feel the warm, sweet sunlight. And most of all, she was glad to go to church on Sundays and pray and sing; for if she had stayed with the Merman in the sea, you know, she would have lost her soul; and nothing could make up for that. But she did not forget. Often



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at midnight, when the silvery moonlight was sparkling on the waves, she would look toward the sea, and her eyes would meet the sorrowful eyes of a cold, lonely, little mermaid and the gleam of the moonlight on her wet hair. And the winds that blew up from the shore would bring her the sad, sweet love song of the Merman she had forsaken.

"Then she would sigh, a long, long sigh, and the teardrops would fall from her beautiful eyes upon the windowsill. But however sorry she felt, she knew she could never go back, or she would lose her soul.

"She never went back, and the Merman and the little mer-children were lonely forever after."

(To be Continued.)

## If You Want Evidence

That Hemorrhoids, or Piles, Can be Completely Cured Read These Letters—Both Are Sworn Statements.

Toronto, Ont. (July 10th)—Next to personal experience the sworn statements of reliable people is the strongest evidence obtainable. If you have any doubt that Dr. Chase's Ointment will positively and completely cure piles, these letters should convince you.

Mr. Samuel Parker, fruit grower, Grimsby, Ont., has made the following declaration before M. W. W. Kidd, Notary Public, of the same place: "I do solemnly declare that I was troubled with bleeding piles and was advised to go to the hospital to have an operation performed. My wife said 'No, get a box of Dr. Chase's Ointment.' I did so and have used it according to directions while living in Manitoba and obtained a complete cure, for I have never been troubled with piles since. I am now seventy years of age and want to recommend Dr. Chase's Ointment to all sufferers from piles. My wife has used it for itching skin and obtained complete cure."

Mr. Donald M. Campbell, Campbell's Mountain, N.S., writes: "I have used Dr. Chase's Ointment with great success for hemorrhoids or piles of fifteen years' standing. After trying all kinds of so-called pile cures, three boxes of Dr. Chase's Ointment gave me a complete cure. I have also used Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills, and there are no others so good. You may use this letter, if you wish, for the benefit of others who may suffer as I did."

Sworn before me, Murdoch Gordon Campbell, J.P., in the County and for Inverness County.

If you would like to try Dr. Chase's Ointment at our expense, send a two cent stamp to pay postage and we shall mail you a sample box free. Full size box 60 cents, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Limited, Toronto

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### The Dwindling Dollar

Day by day, down, down goes the purchasing value of the dollar.

Up goes the "high cost of living"; it takes more money now to pay the necessities of life.

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