

An Unexpected Confession;

Cr. The Story of Miss Percival's Early Life.

CHAPTER VIII.—(Cont'd)

But the next instant her anger blazed forth.

"What do you mean?" she sharply demanded. "Do you refuse to obey me?"

"I do not refuse, and never have refused, to obey any reasonable command; but I will not be ticketed as a nursemaid wherever I go, Esther observed, with slow positive-ness.

"But that is what you are—you are only a servant!" hotly retorted the enraged matron.

"I know that is what you have made me, ever since I came here," Esther calmly responded.

"Pray, what else should I have done?" sneered her companion, utterly ignoring the fact that almost the last instructions her husband had given her had been that his adopted sister's child should share equally, in all respects, with his own children. "Did you expect to be made a lady of, and spend your time in idleness?" she concluded, ironically.

"No, I never like to be idle. I am willing to work, and be useful to you," Esther answered. "I do not even object to acting the part of nurse to Daisy, for I love the child, and am glad to care for her, to the best of my ability. But I shall not go about the streets wearing a glaring cap and apron. I prefer to wear a hat, when I go out, like other people."

"Well, I must say that for impudence and independence, this exceeds anything I ever heard of," exclaimed Mrs. Cushman, in a towering passion. "Do you imagine, for a moment, that I am going to tolerate such a state of things from a girl like you?"

Esther lifted a look of astonishment to the woman, at this outburst of vulgarity from one who usually assumed a superiority of culture and refinement over ordinary mortals.

Then a dangerous gleam came into her own eyes.

"You make a mistake, Mrs. Cushman, in applying such an obnoxious epithet to me. I am not a beggar," she said, in a constrained tone, as if she were striving to hold her temper well in hand.

"Then I should like to know what you are! You are utterly dependent upon my bounty; you are indebted to me for the roof that shelters you—for every morsel of food that you eat," snapped the irate dame.

"This Esther arose from her chair, and stood tall and straight before her companion, and she was now startlingly pale.

"There is where you are mistaken again," she returned, with ominous calmness; "I am not dependent upon your bounty—I am not indebted to you for anything. I have served you faithfully ever since I came here, and have received in return simply my board. I have had no wages—no time to myself. You paid Ellen Mason four dollars a week to do less work than I have been doing, and gave her one afternoon out every week. Madam, if you are going to talk of obligation and indebtedness, the burden rests upon you, rather than upon me, and you owe me exactly twenty dollars, up to last Tuesday, for five weeks that I have served you. If I am supposed to occupy the position of a servant in your house, I am at least entitled to a servant's wage."

Mrs. Cushman was considerably staggered in view of these pointed and logical arguments. But she quickly rallied.

"There can be no question of wages between you and me," she haughtily observed. "I am your guardian, and, until you are of age, it is your duty to obey me."

"Yes, as long as I remain with you, Mrs. Cushman, I will obey every reasonable requirement," Esther answered, in a gentle, respectful tone, but with a slightly suggestive emphasis upon the adjective.

"Who is to be the judge of what is reasonable?" sharply inquired the matron. "I ask you to wear the cap and apron of a nurse, while you act in that capacity for Daisy. Every nurse, employed in families of our standing, is required to conform to the custom, and she is expected to do so cheerfully."

Esther thought a moment before replying; then she said:

"If a girl should apply to you for a situation as a nurse, and you insisted upon this point, as your right, because you expected to pay her wages for so doing, it would be optional with her whether she would conform to your wishes, or go elsewhere, if she did not like to be conspicuous wherever she went. But you have given me no choice in the matter; you have assumed, ever since I came here, that I was to do whatever you saw fit

to put upon me, regardless of the fact that I have certain individual rights. You dismissed a girl to curtail your expenses, and arbitrarily laid upon me her duties, paying me nothing, and allowing me no time to myself. My mother and your husband were reared in the same home; the same woman gave them counsel; therefore, I have been as well-bred, except, perhaps, in certain fashionable conventionalities, as your own children; and so, being sensitive about becoming a target for every one who ever goes, I claim the right to refuse to wear a nurse's cap and apron."

"Girl, your insolence is unbearable!" exclaimed Mrs. Cushman, in a towering rage. "The idea of putting yourself upon a level with my children! Do you realize that I have the power to send you homeless into the streets?"

"Yes," said Esther, briefly. "Then you'd better come down from your stilts, and be obedient to me."

"I think, Mrs. Cushman, it might be best for all concerned that I go away," Esther reflectively observed.

"Where would you go, pray? Who do you imagine would take a green girl like you, without a recommendation?" was the sneering rejoinder.

"I do not know; but I am very sure there must be plenty of places for an honest, willing girl; while, as for a recommendation, I believe I need only apply to either Mr. Lancaster or Miss Percival in order to secure all that I could desire in that line. I certainly shall make the trial, if I am to have no individual rights and privileges here, Esther firmly concluded.

Mrs. Cushman now began to realize that she was a more resolute character to deal with than she had anticipated, and the girl's last assertion was like a dash of cold water in her face.

She had no wish to lose her, for she was valuable help—far more faithful and trustworthy than any servant she had ever had. She could better bear the blow to her pride by conceding the disputed point regarding the cap and apron, than to part with her services.

"You are exceedingly obstinate," she remarked, as she arose to leave the room; "but since you were my husband's ward, and he left you in my care, it becomes me to look after you until you arrive at a suitable age and have judgment to care for yourself; and so, if you won't oblige me by wearing the cap and apron, I suppose I shall be compelled to bear with your stubbornness."

She flounced from the apartment with an injured air, without giving Esther an opportunity to reply, and so disposed of the subject for the time being.

Esther was strongly tempted to take her fate in her own hands; but she was so utterly alone, and unused to the ways of a great city, she shrank from facing the world without a friend upon whom to lean. Besides, she had become very fond of Daisy, and she could not bear the thought of leaving her.

"I will try it here for a while longer," she said, with a weary sigh, as she resumed her interrupted work. "Only she must let me go to school again, by and by."

Late that same day she was sent upon an errand a long distance from home, when she met with an adventure that was destined to change her whole future.

Her mission was connected with some dressmaking which Mrs. Cushman was having done for the summer.

On reaching her destination the dressmaker was engaged with another customer, and thus Esther was kept waiting until her patience was nearly exhausted; but, finally, her errand done, she started out upon her return.

Daylight had faded, however; the sky had become overcast with heavy clouds that portended a storm, and Esther's heart beat fast with many fears as she hurried through the narrow, ill-lighted street, toward the avenue where she was to take a car for home.

Suddenly a man dashed out of a house which she was passing, slamming the door violently after him, and bounded down the steps, and but for the fact that she sprang nimbly aside, would have knocked the girl down.

And yet he did not appear to have seen her at all, but staggered up against the building, a groan of almost mortal agony escaping him.

Esther paused, and glanced back at the sound, although her first impulse had been to run for her life.

The next instant she saw him snatch something from his pocket, and raise his hand to his head.

The gleam of the barrel of a revolver caught her eye, and she realized that a human being was about to commit suicide.

CHAPTER IX.

A thrill of horror went quivering through every nerve in Esther's body as she comprehended the man's suicidal intention.

Terror prompted her to turn and fly from the sight and sound of such a deed; but the next instant she had bounded to his side, and struck his hand down, without a thought of the danger into which she was plunging.

"Don't! Oh, don't!" she panted, in tremulous, appealing tones, as the weapon fell, with a sharp ring, harmlessly to the pavement.

The man turned fiercely upon her, an impatient groan bursting from him at thus being balked in his purpose, and she saw, by the light that shone through the windows of the house he had just left that he was comparatively a young man—he might have been a little upward of thirty.

"Who are you?" he demanded, in an irritable tone.

"It does not matter who I am," Esther responded, in accents of solemn reproof; "be thankful that I reached you in season to prevent you from committing an unpardonable sin."

Her companion gave vent to a laugh of exceeding bitterness.

"You have only delayed the deed," he said, in a desperate tone; "I was simply going to rid the world of a useless clog of a wretch who is only a burden to himself and all who know him. I have just lost the last dollar I possessed," he went on, ramblingly.

"I have not even a penny with which to buy me a crust—I am an alien and an outcast, and it is better that I should die—"

"No, no!" Esther excitedly interposed, her heart strangely stirred with sympathy for one so forlorn.

"I, too, sometimes feel that life is a burden, young as I am, but, oh! if I were a thousand times more lonely and wretched I could not stain my soul with self-murder! Oh, promise me, sir, that you will never again attempt to take your life."

"Why should I make you such a promise?" her companion questioned, while he leaned forward, trying to see her face, which, however, she kept averted from him. "What right have you to demand such a pledge from me?"

The right of a girl, who, even though the world holds nothing to tempt her, would not see a man a greater coward than herself," she cried, a note of scorn ringing through her tones.

He started, as if the words had stung him like a lash, and muttered an oath under his breath.

"Go home," Esther continued, in a gentler tone; "rest and sleep; and to-morrow try to realize what you have escaped, and here is a trifle to tide over the pressure of the moment."

She had opened her purse while she was speaking, and now thrust a crisp note into the limp hand that hung nearest her. Then, without giving him an opportunity to reject her offering, she bounded away, and was soon lost to view in the gloom.

Hastening with all possible speed to the avenue, she boarded the first car that came along, and sank, weak and trembling, into the nearest vacant place, hoping and praying that her timely interference had brought the unhappy stranger to his senses that he would never attempt to repeat the desperate act of that night.

But she told no one of her thrilling adventure; she felt it to be the sacred secret of the man whom she had saved, and she would so regard it as long as she lived.

The following morning she went again to Dr. Weld, to have her teeth attended to, before going away for the summer.

The dentist professed himself very much pleased with the success of his experiment so far, and assured her that he would eventually have her teeth as even as a set of false ones could be made.

He also told her that he would be at Lake George during the month of July, when he would give them further attention, and he hoped that, by October, he would be able to remove the metal clamps, and release her from further discomfort.

"I wonder if you realize how much you are already improved," he observed, as she rose from the chair. "You look like a different person now—projected by those no longer teeth, and, in time, when we get everything into line, I'll wager you'll never want to cover your mouth when you laugh."

Esther flushed at this allusion to the habit she had acquired of putting her hand to her mouth every time she smiled, and, greatly encouraged by Dr. Weld's bright anticipations, she went home with a lighter heart than she had known for months.

(To be continued.)

ANNNOYING.

The annoying thing about it is that when the landlord lets you pick out the wall paper yourself you haven't anybody to blame.

"COME AT ONCE, PLEASE"

"CALLING THE DOCTOR" EAST AND WEST.

Contrast in the Way It is Done in Burmah and in Modern England.

Moung Thway, the honorable timber merchant of Rangoon, had a pain in his stomach and stayed in bed. His wife, Mah Noo, being equally doting and nervous, decided to send for the famous physician, Sayah Hpo Khin.

The Burmese Hippocrates was seated outside his bamboo hut. To him came a naked but perfectly-mannered youngster with the message:

"My master, Mong Thway, complains of sickness in his inside, and prays the honorable and learned Sayah to come to his house!"

SIGNS OF SUCCESS.

Now, as he said this, the messenger happened to rub his left ear. You and I might have thought a mosquito was troubling him, but the trained perception of Hpo Khin saw in the simple action a prodigy that Moung Thway would get well again, and that, therefore, he would win reputation by treating him.

"Your good master invites me to acquire Merit," he replied. "I will come."

Ten minutes before, another messenger had asked the Sayah, with profound respect, to visit his father. But that unlucky lad, as he squatted, blinking, before the effulgence of Wisdom, scratched his left leg—a sure indication, according to Burmese pathology, that the illness would be fatal. Therefore, Hpo Khin had regretted that the many and urgent calls on his time would prevent him from attending.

Taking his bamboo staff, which helped to support his weight or crutched along the dusty roads, the Sayah proceeded to the Moung Thway dwelling.

Squatted at last on the new grass mat which Mah Noo reverently placed by the bedside, he said:

"Let me see, it is so long since I had the honor of attending you that I have quite forgotten the day and hour of your birth."

Moung Thway, of course, knew these details.

It appeared that the patient was born when there was light enough to see the veins in the hand on the eighth day of the waxing of the moon of Tabong, in the year 1218 (Burmese era), a Friday.

"Good! Now I can calculate! Where is my calendar?"

THE RIVER CURE.

The wise man drew a bunch of palm-leaf strips from his pasoh (waistcloth), and ascertained that his patient was born when the planet Mars was in the ascendant. Mars rules the liver. Besides, today was the patient's name-day. Clearly, something must be wrong with the liver. A few questions confirmed this, and then the tongue was examined, and the pulse felt.

Then the Sayah read some Pali rhymes, which he had learned out of a wonderful book, which holds unquestioned sway as the Burmese pharmacopoeia. It is true that neither Hpo Khin nor Moung Thway understood those Pali rhymes, but the book said they were good for a disordered liver, and what more could any reasonable man want?

"I will prepare the medicine for you at the propitious hour to-morrow," said the Sayah.

Then he put his palm-leaf calendar back in the fold of his pasoh, folded his hands over his knees, and looked out into the street with an air of abstraction worthy of such a sage. Mah Noo took advantage of his absent-mindedness to get a rupee out of the box, and place it on the floor at his feet, muttering humbly:

"Learned one, we know you only seek to acquire Merit, but we pray you to take this trifling gift."

The Sayah awoke to mundane things, picked up the rupee and his staff, and hobbled off home.

Sir John Galen, the famous London specialist in children's ailments, stood by the cot of a little girl in a Park Lane mansion. His immaculate attire combined the latest Bond Street fashion with professional severity. His large, strong-featured face inspired confidence. His keen, steel-grey eyes could twinkle with fun while he talked to his child patient, but they were rather stern when he turned to her mother.

"Really, Lady Janet," he said, "I think you should take my advice, and let me send you a nurse for Marjory. It is rather a serious attack of measles!"

"Oh, but, Sir John, I know all about nursing! I would much rather look after my little darling myself!"

"Very well. On no account forget the constant poulticing. There is a good deal of bronchial and threatened lung complication."

TEMPERATURE TERRIFIC.

"I'll send for you at once if there is any rise in temperature." Lady Janet W— was great on temperature. "I've got a clinical thermometer, and I know quite well how to use it!"

Sir John, thoroughly tired out

with a hard day's work, got into the motor hansom, and went home to bed. Just as he was dropping off to sleep he was awakened by the furious ringing of the telephone bell.

"Hallo! Who's there? Lady Janet W—'s maid. Yes. What! Temperature up to 108! Nonsense, my girl! It can't be! I'll come round at once!"

Sir John was almost dragged upstairs to the sick-room. He found the whole of the family and several of the servants gathered there, awaiting the end of poor Marjory! Her mother was in agony, wringing her hands and sobbing dreadfully. Marjory herself seemed the least concerned of all.

108 IN THE POULTICE.

"Well, what's the temperature now?" Sir John demanded gruffly.

"Oh," the mother sobbed, "I haven't dared to look since! My poor darling! It was 108 when I turned the thermometer a few minutes ago, and rising rapidly! And they say 105 is always fatal!"

Sir John, who is justly famed for his perfect "bedside manner," roughly pushed her aside, and went to the cot. He pulled away the blanket, and found the clinical thermometer had been thrust between the child's side and arm, with the bulb embedded in a freshly-applied hot poultice. He plucked it forth.

"Your child is all right. I shall send you a nurse in the morning, and if you have anything more to do with the case, you may find another doctor!"—London Answers.

PLOTS AGAINST PLOTTERS.

Instances When They Have Been Ousted by a Counterplot.

That the plotters who overthrew the ancient Turkish despotism last summer should have been in their turn plotted against and overthrown, was only what was to have been expected. Hardly ever, in all history, has a successful plot been engineered without breeding its sequel in the shape of a more or less successful counterplot.

Thus, the "Red Terror" of the first French Revolution, when the "aristocrats" were massacred in their thousands, was followed by the "White Terror," when an almost equally dreadful vengeance was wreaked upon the revolutionists by the representatives of their former victims.

In 1871, again, the Communists were ousted from Paris by counterplot, after they had laid half the city in ruins, a crime which was avenged by the execution of 50,000 of them.

The Young Turks call Enver Bey the "Turkish Cromwell." They might do well to bear in mind that even Cromwell went too far in advance of public opinion, so that after a few years' experience of the rigor of his rule, Englishmen were only too glad to exchange it for that of the Stuarts they had previously exiled.

Habit and use count for much. People can get accustomed to despotism. When Masaniella, the Neapolitan fisherman, headed a successful revolt against the tyranny of the Spanish viceroys, the citizens of Naples proclaimed him as something only little less than a god, and actually made him their king. He reigned for precisely seven days. At the end of that time the very people he had fought for revolted against him, murdered him, and flung his body into a ditch.

When working in Deptford (England) dockyard, news was brought to him that the Strelitz (royal body-guard) had revolted and deposed him from his kingdom. But Peter was not a bit alarmed. "Leave them alone," he told the messenger; "my people will soon tire of them."

And they did. A counterplot was hatched against them; and when the Czar returned, it only remained for him to punish, which he did with characteristic thoroughness—torturing and beheading some two thousand of them.

AN ANTIQUARY'S DINNER.

Bread, Butter, Fruit and Wine were Centuries Old.

One of the most singular meals ever eaten was that given to a select few by an antiquary named Goebel in Brussels some years ago. The bread was made from wheat grown before the children of Israel passed out of Egypt and it was spread with butter made when Elizabeth ruled England. For fruit there were apples which ripened before the Christian era and the wine was older than the white man's knowledge of the new world. The bread was made from wheat taken from a chamber in one of the pyramids, the butter (of which there were several pounds) had been found in an earthen crock on a stone shelf under the icy waters of a well in Scotland. A pantry in the ruins of Pompeii had furnished the par of apples (which were as sweet and finely flavored as if only a few months old), and the flagon of wine had been recovered from an old vault in the Corinth. Six guests enjoyed this amazing meal.

The Farm

INCREASING FODDER SUPPLY.

Fine and well-rotted stable manure will often pay in the increase of rowen when spread on the land shortly after the first crop is secured. Another method of obtaining a good second crop, as advised by Professor C. S. Phelps in the Report of the Massachusetts Board of Agriculture, is to cut early, plow and seed at once to clover and mixed grasses, using at least fifteen pounds of clover to the acre. With seeding done early in July, a good crop of clover should be obtained late in September or early in October, and a strong growth of grass and clover the following year.

Taking up the specific crops that can be grown to supplement the hay crop, Professor Phelps gives those that are best adapted to the purpose, time of seeding, quantity of seed per acre, time of cutting and method of use, whether for hay, silage or green fodder. The crops mentioned are corn, Hungarian grass, the millets, soy beans, oats and peas, barley and peas, winter vetch, rape and cabbage. Corn can be sown as late as July 10 and still produce a fair growth of fodder. Hungarian grass is, all things considered, probably the best crop that could be sown in July for hay, and should be cut early, even before all the heads are formed, as it tends to grow woody as it ripens. Soy beans are a valuable crop, particularly for silage. Late cabbage can often be grown to a profit as a market crop, and the unmarketable portions will furnish valuable fodder. Professor Phelps says that he has found apple pomace to be a valuable feed for milk cows, and there are many sections where it can be obtained for the hauling.

The article closes with some excellent advice as to feeding the hay crop after all possible has been done to supplement it. To obtain the best results, about one half the dry matter of the ration should come from the grain feeds. The cheaper dry fodders, such as corn stover or oat straw, may then be fed in connection with liberal silage and grain feeding, and good results will follow.

DAIRY TALK.

Dairying and hog raising are a good combination. When cream fails to churn into butter, it is usually due to the milk coming from cows that are near the close of their period of lactation.

One of the first requirements of successful dairying is for the successful dairyman to have a liking for cattle and understand their nature and wants.

A heifer is likely to form her milking habit after the birth of her first calf. A little extra time spent then by her owner will mean money later.

Only the best of salt should be used in salting dairy butter. It may cost a little more, but it will pay to get it in order to improve the quality of the butter.

When a cow is said to have lost her cud, it is only a case of indigestion. Usually the cause is not far to seek. Change the feed and feed sparingly for a few days.

When washing milk vessels it is best to wash them in cold or warm water first and then scald them afterwards. This insures their being absolutely clean and no living germs left.

If cows freshen in the fall, the winter ration should consist of at least one-third grain, one-third succulent feeds, like silage and roots, and the balance corn, clover hay, or other roughage. When winter dairying is to be made a success the cows must be housed in warm, well ventilated stables.

The majority of farmers should depend upon raising their own dairy stock. This should be done more cheaply than cows could be bought, especially at the present time. And the advantage is that heifers can be raised in a proper manner and adapted to the farm, which will not come from frequent changes in ownership.

When the cows freshen in the fall they will yield milk more days of the year than when they freshen in the early spring. This is because they are fed heavier, which puts them in best condition to produce a good flow of milk the summer following. The result is that the cows will yield milk almost up to the time of calving.

A pound of salt will be sufficient for sixteen to twenty pounds of butter. The difference is cost between the very best salt and the very poorest is but the merest fraction of a cent per pound. How foolish it is to use anything but the best. In buying the best that can be had and figure on price afterwards.

An average orange-tree produces about 50,000 oranges, and a lemon-tree 8,000 lemons.