

# An Unexpected Confession;

Or, The Story of Miss Percival's Early Life.

## CHAPTER VII.—(Cont'd)

Madge watched her in silence for a moment or two, then she observed:

"What a heavy head of hair you have! It is very even, too—the end of your braid is almost as thick as where it starts."

"Yes, mamma taught me to take good care of my hair, and never to break a single one, if I could avoid it. That is why it is so even," Esther explained, but wishing that Madge would go away.

"It is a pity about your teeth, though," the rude girl continued; "they are horribly uneven, and those great tusks make you a perfect fright."

Tears now rushed hotly to Esther's eyes, and a sob choked her so that she could not have replied had she been so inclined.

It seemed, too, as if cruel fate had ordained that those obnoxious words, "a perfect fright," should be thrown in her face upon every possible occasion.

"Why don't you have them straightened?" Madge pursued, after a moment of awkward silence.

Now Esther forgot herself, and turned an eager face upon her tormentor.

"My teeth. Oh, can I have them straightened?" she exclaimed.

"Of course you can—didn't you know it?"

"No—tell me how!"

"Why, the crack dentists do it right along," said Madge. "Some of them might have to be taken out to make room for the others to go into place, and then you'd have to wear a metal arrangement in your mouth for months, perhaps; they say it hurts like everything, though."

"I should not mind that if I could have my teeth even," said Esther, with repressed excitement. "Do you know of anyone who has had such work done?" she added, eagerly.

"Yes; Annie Aldrich had her under teeth fixed beautifully, though they were not as bad as yours—I never saw any teeth so crooked before," Madge unfeelingly supplemented, as she arose to go. "I suppose you know," she added, as she reached the door and looked back over her shoulder, "that it costs awfully."

Esther sighed heavily as she disappeared, for Madge had made her feel her forlorn situation as an orphan and a dependent a hundred-fold. Still, the conversation about the operation of straightening uneven teeth had given her something interesting to think about, and she found herself considering the pros and cons of such an experiment, in connection with herself, as she sat sewing that afternoon, while Daisy was having her nap.

Once she arose and went to the glass to examine the offending teeth.

"They are not bad, if they were only even," she said; "they are strong, well-shaped and as white as milk—there are simply too many of them for my mouth. I'll have a talk with some good dentist before I'm a month older," she concluded, decisively.

Fortune favored her earlier than that, in this plan, for a week later, Mrs. Cushman ordered her to take Master Frank to the family dentist for the regular half-yearly inspection of his teeth. But upon arriving at the office, it was found there was no work to be done, greatly to that youth's delight, and then Esther made bold to broach the subject so near her heart.

"Do you ever straighten uneven teeth?" she inquired.

"Yes," responded the dentist, now observing her with interest, for when she had entered he had taken her for a common maid.

But now her lady-like manner, her well-chosen language, together with her mouthful of irregular teeth, claimed his closer attention.

"Would it be possible to make mine a little more symmetrical?" Esther pursued.

"Sit down," said Dr. Weld, indicating the operating chair; "let me have a look at them, and I will soon tell you."

Esther unhesitatingly mounted the throne of torture, and gave herself into his hands with the utmost cheerfulness.

"You have beautiful teeth," said the dentist, after examining them carefully, "and they can be made as straight as a die, but it would be a tough job for you."

"How long would it take?"

"Several months—I can't say just how long; but you would look like a different person afterward."

"How much would it cost?" inquired Esther, trembling with excitement.

"A hundred dollars," was the reply, and the girl's face grew blank.

"Oh, then I can never have it done," she cried, a pathetic quaver

in her voice that smote her listener with a feeling of sympathy.

"Even if you cannot afford the operation at present, it would help your appearance greatly if you would have some of them removed," he observed. "There is a bicuspid on either side, which, if removed, would allow the eye teeth more room, and those supernumeraries, touching the unsightly tusks, ought not to be allowed here another day."

"What do you ask for extracting teeth?" Esther quietly inquired.

"Fifty cents apiece without gas; one dollar with."

Esther opened her purse and silently inspected its contents for a moment or two.

Then, looking steadily into the dentist's eyes, she remarked, without a quiver of a muscle:

"You may take out the teeth which you think ought to be removed, if you please."

"And that is what?"

"That if your experiment proves a perfect success, you will allow me to pay you the hundred dollars, if I am ever able to do so," replied the girl, with quiet dignity.

"Well," responded her new friend, laughing, "we will not contest that point now; we will take the first step toward success, and before she left his office, he had fitted a metal arrangement into her mouth, for the purpose of forcing the stragglers into line.

"Now you will have to be brave," he said, just as she was going out. "Your mouth will be very sore and troublesome for a time—I am almost afraid you will give up the battle."

"I'm not afraid," said Esther, spiritedly, a wave of hot color suffusing her cheeks; "I've been called 'a perfect fright' to many times not to be willing to make a desperate effort to improve my appearance," and without waiting to note the effect of her words upon her companion, she abruptly quitted the office.

But she found her strength of purpose tested to the utmost during the next few weeks. There were times when she was almost ill from the pain and soreness; when she could eat no solid food, and was obliged to live upon liquids.

But she dared not complain, or make any sign to betray her suffering, lest Mrs. Cushman should forbid her to persevere in her undertaking, and so she patiently bore her pain, making heroic efforts to be sweet and gentle with Daisy's freaks and whims, and to do her work faithfully.

The middle of May drew on apace, when Mrs. Cushman and her family usually went, for the summer, to Lake George, where they had a fine cottage, with every modern improvement.

Dr. Weld, meantime, had been arranging his instruments, and was now ready to do his part, his face glowing with admiration for his plucky patient.

In less time than it takes to tell it, the four offending teeth lay upon the tray, and the worst was over.

Esther was as white as chalk, but by no other sign did she betray how terrible had been the ordeal to which she had submitted.

"You are a brave girl," said the dentist, as he brought her a glass of water; "I know how hard those teeth come, as well as you. Now, if you can manage to run in, to let me look at the others, in a week or ten days, I should like to have you do so."

"I will," said Esther, as she arose and resumed her hat.

She paid her modest bill, the man flushing almost guiltily, as he took the money from her. He was tempted to return it to her, but something warned him that the girl was proud, and would resent the act.

Passing into the reception room, Esther went to Frank's side, and touched him on the shoulder.

"Are they out?" he cried, starting to his feet, and regarding her curiously.

"Yes."

"Did you scream?"

"No."

"Well, you are a brick, Esther," said Frank, admiringly.

"You are right, young man," Dr. Weld observed; "she neither moved nor made a sound. And the next time you come to have some work done, I hope you'll remember how brave she was, and try not to squirm out of the chair."

When Frank told his mother what had occurred she shrugged her shoulders indifferently, and the subject was never again referred to in Esther's presence.

Her gums healed nicely, and a little over a week after the operation, she presented herself again in Dr. Weld's office, according to appointment.

He examined her mouth very thoroughly, and when he was through, remarked:

"Miss Wellington, I have never had just such a case as this, although I have done a great deal of similar work. You said, when you were here last week, that you

could not afford to pay the price I stated, and so I am going to make you a proposition. If you will allow me to experiment upon your teeth, for the sake of the good I may be able to do others in the future, I will charge you nothing for my work. What do you say—will you trust yourself in my hands?"

Esther flushed vividly as he concluded, but did not reply immediately. She felt that she could trust him implicitly, for she knew that he was accounted one of the best dentists in the city. But her proud young heart rebelled at the thought of having so much done for nothing, and yet to her temptation was a very great one.

At length she remarked with a thoughtful air:

"Dr. Weld, it is very kind of you to make such a proposition, but if the work should prove successful, I should feel under great obligation to you, and wish to remunerate you."

"Nevertheless, you are risking something in according to my proposal," the man smilingly returned, "and I do not insure you perfect success—I can only promise to do my best for you, while it will require a great deal of patience and courage upon your part."

"I am certainly willing to trust my fate in your hands," said Esther, gravely, "and I will accept your kind offer—upon one condition."

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One morning, during the week previous to their departure, Mrs. Cushman entered the sewing-room, where Esther was busy at work upon Daisy's dainty outfit, and laid a dozen white aprons and some caps upon the table.

"Esther," she began, but without looking at the girl, "while we are at Lake George you will not have much to do but to look after Daisy, and I shall want you to wear the cap and aprons of a nurse, both in the house and when you go upon the street."

A great shock went quivering through the proud, sensitive girl at this new departure.

But after a minute she laid down her work, and looked squarely into the woman's face.

"Mrs. Cushman," she said, very quietly, but with a note of defiance in her tones, "I do not mind wearing white aprons in the house—I like them, but I do object to a cap, and I shall never wear either upon the street."

The woman was dumb for a moment, in view of the girl's attitude. She had not expected the slightest opposition to her wishes, for Esther usually received her commands in silence, and was always accommodating.

(To be continued.)

## The Farm

### VALUE OF LIVE STOCK.

The marketing of grain is always attended by the loss of the elemental constituents of the soil which means fertility. These once lost, are always rather difficult of satisfactory restoration, and the re-energetic cropped-out soil, is a matter calling for a great deal more of common sense and application than any man guilty of the offence of juvenation of an old worn-out or allowing impoverishment of the soil to happen would probably be capable of. It calls for judgment and determination, and it is a matter of years of time at best.

The breeding and feeding of live stock offers the most ready avenue for an uncial realization of the products of the soil, without at the same time selling off the fertility. The man who buys both animals and feed to finish them with upon his farm, has always the extra penny in the transaction of the added fertility.

The feeding of hogs, and the production of pork returns to the soil the food elements which the grain had taken away from it, but there are still further possibilities in the feeding and finishing of cattle or sheep, as in feeding them the crops which give the value to crop rotation, clover, alfalfa and corn, are made very profitable use of, and it is the growing of those which makes the modern crop rotation such a powerful factor in conserving and increasing the fertility of the fields.

The fertility of the soil is only maintained at the expense of thorough cultivation. It is cheaper and better to grow one's own horses than to buy them, as the horses which are eating the products of the farm are thus, like the cattle, growing into money instead of out of it.

The keeping of a few sheep means a great and valuable assistant in keeping weeds down. Their cost in actual feed is small, and the balance is almost always on the right side of the ledger.

This is the true doctrine of mixed farming. It does not embody any insane attempt to produce profitably from the same herd of cattle both milk and beef, any more than it does the production of prize-winning, heavy drafts and two-minute trotters from the same stock of the farm.

GROW CORN ON SUMMER-FALLOW.

Grow corn on the summer-fallow. In other words use corn as a cleaning crop. If well attended, as it may be with comparatively little expense, by using a two-horse riding corn cultivator the field will be as thoroughly rid of weeds and grass as though cultivated all summer with a crop, and the owner will have a thirty, forty or fifty-dollar corn harvest to show for his work. Fall-wheat growers may object that corn is not off the land in time to sow wheat, and yet secure a good top. In some cases this is true, but the purpose can be accomplished by sowing wheat after peas, and spring grain after corn, alternating with each course of the rotation the areas on which the corn and the peas are planted.

Thus, if the rotation be a three-course one, each field may have peas, as well as corn, once in six years, or once in eight years, according as the land is left one or two years in sod. Corn, well cultivated, will clean the land; peas will add nitrogen and supply a most valuable feed in the form of both grain and straw; and if the produce of the farm be devoted mainly to the raising of stock, and the manure carefully saved and applied fresh, the farm will grow richer year by year, and it will be found progressively easier to grow large crops of wheat and secure good catches

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of clover, without wasting a year in bare fallow. Only in fields badly infested with bindweed, perennial sow thistle, or some equally-noxious plant pest, is bare following really called for, and even then the wisdom of it is open to debate.—Farmer's Advocate.

### SMART BOY FINANCIER.

On Small Salary Speculated Far Into the Thousands.

It was stated at the Guildhall, London, England, recently that Charles Ruthven Dealtry, a boy clerk, of Brunswick Gardens, Kensington, although only in receipt of £1 a week, had speculated in the year to the extent of £50,000.

Dealtry and another clerk, William Rayner Jenkins, were charged with conspiring to defraud their employer, Mr. Maurice Blood, a stockbroker, of Warrford court, E. C., and falsifying his books.

Mr. Basil Watson, who prosecuted, said Mr. Blood discovered that his banking account was lower than it should have been, and questioned his clerks. He then found that Dealtry had opened an account in the clients' ledger without his knowledge, and had speculated in various American stocks and shares.

"According to a statement which Jenkins made, the account was a joint one; he and Dealtry had been speculating in Dealtry's name," Mr. Watson continued. "When they could not pay the difference, they opened other accounts in the names of Mrs. Sharman and Mrs. Dealtry, in order to cover the losses."

"Things became worse and worse, and they opened additional accounts in the names of Schultz and Mrs. Walter Smith. This boy Dealtry, who was being paid £1 a week, naturally bought and sold on his own account something like £50,000

worth of shares between March, 1908, and February last."

Mr. Blood said he took Dealtry into his office in order to oblige the boy's father, who was a client of his, and he paid him £1 a week, although he did no useful work.

"I would not have permitted him to open an account," he declared. "The loss I have discovered on the existing account is £1,700, and I estimate my total loss at £3,000." The case was adjourned.

**NO TIPS IN FINLAND.**

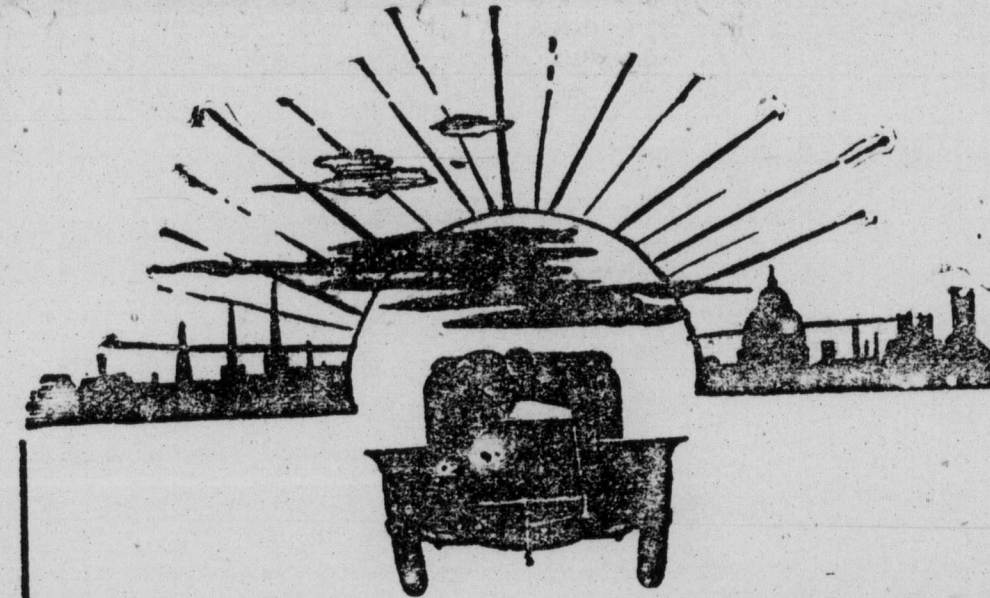
**Maid's Surprise Upon Receiving Money From Guests.**

A country where there are no tips and where small services are rendered to the stranger without hope of reward would seem hard to find—yet such a country is Finland, says the London Post.

So far the tourist has not appeared in any great numbers, and consequently the commercial spirit which his advent always marks has been absent. As an example of this Mme. Aino Malmberg, a Finnish lady who is paying a visit to this country, tells an amusing story. Two English friends whom she had met while over here had been staying with her at her house in Helsingfors, and on leaving gave the maid a tip.

She was very much astonished and did not know what it meant. Seeing Mme. Malmberg's son coming downstairs, she ran to him and said, "They gave me money. Did they give you any?" Hearing that they had not done so, she was much mystified. "I cannot understand why they should give it to me and not to you, when they know you much better than me," was her perplexed comment on the incident.

A baseball team can't win with a pitcher full of beer.



## The New DAIMLER


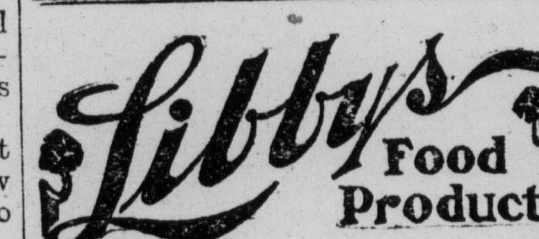
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