

The Mill on the Floss

By
George Eliot.

BOOK FIRST — BOY AND GIRL.

(XVII. Instalment.)

CHAPTER XII.

Mr. and Mrs. Glegg at Home.

In order to see Mr. and Mrs. Glegg at home, we must enter the town of St. Ogg's—that venerable town with the red tiled roofs and the broad warehouse gables, where the black ships unlade themselves of their burthens from the far North, and carry away, in exchange, the precious inland products, the well-crushed cheese and the soft flannels, which my refined readers have doubtless become acquainted with through the medium of the best classic pastorals.

It is one of those old, old towns which impress one as a continuation and outgrowth of nature, as much as the nests of the bowerbirds or the winding galleries of the white ants: a town which carries the traces of its long growth and history like a millennial tree, and has sprung up and developed in the same spot between the river and the low hill from the time when the Roman legions turned their backs on it from the camp on the hill-side, and the long-haired savagings came up the river and looked with fierce, eager eyes at the fatness of the land. It is a town, familiar, with forgotten years. The shadow of the Saxon herp-king still walks there fitfully, reviewing the scenes of his youth and love-time, and is met by the gloomier shadow of the dreadful heathen Dane, who was stabbed in the midst of his warriors by the sword of an invisible avenger, and who rises on autumn evenings like a white mist from his tumulus on the hill, and hovers in the court of the old hall by the river-side—the spot where he was thus miraculously slain in the days before the old hall was built. It was the Normans who began to build that fine old hall, which is like the town, telling of the thoughts and hands of widely-sundered generations; but it is all so old that we look with loving garden at its inconsistencies, and are well content that they who built the stone oriel, and they who built the Gothic facade and towers of finest small brickwork with the trefoil ornament, and the windows and battlements defined with stone, did not sacrilegiously pull down the ancient half-timbered body, with its oak-roofed banquetting-hall.

But older even than this old hall is perhaps the bit of wall now built into the belfry of the parish church, and said to be a remnant of the original chapel dedicated to St. Ogg, the patron saint of this ancient town, of whose history I possess several manuscript versions. I incline to the briefest, since, if it should not be wholly true, it is at least likely to contain the least falsehood. "Ogg, the son of Boerl," says my private hagiographer, "was a boatman who gained a scanty living by ferrying passengers across the river Floss. And it came to pass, one evening when the winds were high, that there sat moaning by the brink of the river a woman with a child in her arms; and she was clad in rags, and had a worn and withered look, and she craved to be rowed across the river. And the men thereabout questioned her and said, 'Wherefore dost thou desire to cross the river? Tarry till the morning, and take shelter here for the night: so shalt thou be wise and not foolish.' Still she went on to mourn and crave. But Ogg the son of Boerl came up and said, 'I will ferry thee across: it is enough that thy heart needs it.' And he ferried her across. And it came to pass, when she stepped ashore, that her rags were turned into robes of flowing white, and her face became bright with exceeding beauty, and there was a glory around it, so that she shed a light on the water like the moon in its brightness. And she said, 'Ogg, the son of Boerl, thou art blessed in that, thou didst not question and wrangle with the heart's need, but wast smitten with pity, and didst straightway relieve the same. And from henceforth whose steps into thy boat shall be in no peril from the storm; and whenever it puts forth to the res-



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ene, it shall save the lives both of men and beasts. And when the floods came, many were saved by reason of that blessing on the boat. But when Ogg, the son of Boerl, died, behold, in the parting of his soul, the boat loosed itself from its moorings, and was floated with the ebbing tide in great swiftness to the ocean, and was seen no more. Yet it was witnessed in the floods of aftertime, that at the coming on of eventide, Ogg, the son of Boerl, was always seen with his boat upon the wide-spreading waters, and the Blessed Virgin sat in the prow, shedding a light around as of the moon in its brightness, so that the rowers in the gathering darkness took heart and pulled anew."

This legend, one sees, reflects from a far-off time the visitation of the floods, which, even when they left human life untouched, were widely fatal to the helpless cattle, and swept as sudden death over all smaller living things. But the town knew worse troubles even than the floods—troubles of the civil wars, when it was a continual fighting place, where first Puritans thanked God for the blood of the Royalists, and then Royalists thanked God for the blood of the Puritans. Many honest citizens lost all their possessions for conscience' sake in those times, and went forth beggaried from their native town. Doubtless there are many houses standing now on which those honest citizens turned their backs in sorrow: quaint-gabled houses looking on the river, jammer between newer warehouses, and penetrated by surprising passages, which turn and turn at sharp angles till they lead you out on a muddy strand overflowed continually by the rushing tide. Everywhere the brick houses have a mellow look, and in Mrs. Glegg's day there was no incongruous, new-fashioned smartness, no plate-glass in shop-windows, no fresh stucco-facings or other falacious attempts to make fine old red St. Ogg's wear the air of a town that sprang up yesterday. The shop-windows were small and unpretending; for the farmers' wives and daughters, who came to do their regular, well-known shops; and the tradesmen had no wares intended for customers who would go on their way and be seen no more. Ah! even Mrs.

Glegg's day seems far back in the past now, separated from us by changes that widen the years. War and the rumour of war had then died out from the minds of men, and if they were ever thought of by the farmers in drab greatcoats, who shook the grain out of their ample-bags and buzzed over it in the full market-place, it was as a state of things that belonged to a past golden age, when prices were high. Surely the time was gone for ever when the broad river could bring up unwelcome ships: Russia was only the place where the line-came from—the more the better—making grist for the great vertical millstones with their scythe-like arms, roaring and grinding and carefully sweeping as if an informing soul were in them. The Catholics, bad harvests, and the mysterious fluctuations of trade, were the three evils mankind had to fear: even the floods had not been great of late years. The mind of St. Ogg's did not look extensively before or after. It inherited a long past without thinking of it, and had no eyes for the spirits that walk the streets. Since the centuries when St. Ogg with his boat and the Virgin Mother at the prow had been seen on the wide water, so many memories had been left behind, and had gradually vanished like the receding hill-tops! And the present time was like the level plain where men lose their belief in volcanoes and earthquakes, thinking-to-morrow will be as yesterday, and the giant forces that used to shake the earth are for ever laid to sleep. The days were gone when people could be greatly wrought upon by their faith, still less change it: the Catholics were formidable because they would lay hold of Government and property, and burn men alive; not because any sane and honest parishioner of St. Ogg's could be brought to believe in the Pope. One aged person remembered how a rude multitude had been swayed when John Wesley preached in the cattle-market; but for a long while it had not been expected of preachers that they should shake the souls of men. An occasional burst of fervour, in Dissenting pulpits, on the subject of infant baptism, was the only symptom of a real unsuit to sober times when men had done with change. Protestantism sat at ease, unmindful of schisms, careless of proselytism: Dissent was an inheritance along with a superior pew and a business connection; and Churchmanship only wondered contemptuously at Dissent as a foolish habit that clung greatly to families in the grocery and chandlering lines, though not incompatible with prosperous wholesale dealing. But with the Catholic Question had come a slight wind of controversy to break the calm: the elderly rector had become occasionally historical and argumentative, and Mr. Spray, the Independent minister, had begun to preach political sermons, in which he distinguished with much subtlety between his fervent belief in the right of the Catholics to the franchise and his fervent belief in their eternal perdition. Most of Mr. Spray's hearers, however, were incapable of following his subtleties, and many old-fashioned Dissenters were much pained by his "siding with the Catholics"; while others thought he had better let politics alone.

(To be continued.)



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WOMAN'S WORLD

Training Little Children

Unwise Reading, Story-Telling or Threats Fill the Child With Fear. Often When a Child Lies It Is Because He Is Afraid of Being Misunderstood and Punished.

By Mrs. Alice Barton Harris

The ideals which we wish to develop in our children are chiefly those of courage, truthfulness and unselfishness. I believe that the normal child is born brave, physically and morally, and that out of laziness or ignorance the grown people put fear into his little consciousness. He isn't allowed to climb, for instance, because his mother is afraid he will fall, and his plastic mind is filled, through stories or threats, or actual punishment, with a sense of danger and evil with which he in his helplessness cannot cope.

Lying, of course, comes from the same source. The child lies because he is afraid, either of being misunderstood or punished. Thorau says, "It takes two to speak the truth; one to speak and one to listen." When the child lies the burden of the lie too often rests upon the grown people who have him in charge.

Many persons believe that fear is inevitable to man, that it is a race memory, but I believe that fear of the dark, of solitude, are much more likely to come from mind-pictures of terrible things which unwitting elders have discussed in the child's presence, or as a result of unwise reading or story-telling in very early childhood. This is difficult to avoid perhaps, but quite possible if parents are willing to be sufficiently watchful. The magnificent trust with which a child thus guarded can face the world is a guarantee in itself of success in life.

Unselfishness is one of the virtues which has to be cultivated, for we are not born unselfish. We have to be taught this virtue and of course the greatest teacher of all is love. I am inclined to think love is the only teacher. Henderson says, "To get children interested in impersonal things is to make them unavoidably unselfish. Solitary children, only sons and daughters are as a rule extremely selfish, for the simple reason that their lives have been so overwhelmingly per-

sonal. The way out is through group activities on the part of the whole family, through pleasures as well as through service. If life is to be permanently successful, and happiness genuine and secure, the major interest must be impersonal, must have to do with something bigger than the little self, must concern itself with the abiding and universal things."

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For Our Little Ones

UNCLE WIGGILY AND THE ASHES

Once upon a time, not so very long ago, when Uncle Wiggily Longears, the bunny rabbit gentleman, was out walking in the woods, looking for an adventure, he heard some one call:

"Hi! Look out, there! Hi! Stand out of the way or you might get hurt!"

Uncle Wiggily gave one jump and hid under a pile of leaves, not far from a snowbank, for it was cold and would soon be Christmas.

"My goodness, me, sakes alive and some hot carrot shortcake!" thought the bunny, as he hid under the leaves. "I hope this isn't a hunter, or a moving-picture man after me."

Then he heard another voice say: "Hey there! What you want? Are you hollerin' at me, Johnnie Bushytail?"

"Yes, I am," answered the first voice. "Come on out and have some fun! Here's a snowball! I'll throw it at you, but look out it doesn't hit you!"

Something fell with a thud to the ground, and, looking out from under his pile of leaves, Uncle Wiggily saw a round white ball. Then he saw Johnnie Bushytail, the squirrel boy in his grey overcoat, scampering along. And next he saw Jackie Bow Wow, the puppy-dog boy. It was Johnnie's calling to Jackie to get out of the way that had frightened Uncle Wiggily, but, of course, there really was no need for that. They wouldn't have hurt him.

"Come out and play," said the squirrel to the puppy dog boy.

"Can't," answered Jackie. "I've got to sift ashes."

"What's that I heard you say you had to do?" asked Uncle Wiggily, as he hopped out from under the leaves. "Why can't you go to play with Johnnie?"

"Because I have to sift ashes," answered Jackie Bow Wow. "I have to do it every week, and this is the day. You see," he went on, "so much good coal comes down through our stove that my father makes me sift the ashes. We ought to save coal, you know."

"That's right," agreed Uncle Wiggily. "Susie and Lulu and Alice saved my old coat by putting red, white and blue patches on it, and I can wear it over again. If you sift the good coal out of the ashes you can burn it over again."

"Now I'll tell you what I'll do, Jackie. You run along and play snowball with Johnnie. I'll sift your ashes for you and learn how it's done. Then I'll get a sieve of my own and sift ashes for Nurse Jane. It will save lots of coal, and we must never waste anything."

"Hurrah!" barked Jackie, though whether he said that because he was glad Uncle Wiggily didn't want to waste anything or whether the puppy dog boy was glad because some one else was going to sift ashes for him, I really can't say.

Anyhow, Uncle Wiggily hopped along to the kennel house where the puppy dog boy lived, and out in the yard he saw a dusty barrel with a pile of ashes, another pile of partly burned coal and a sifter or sieve.

"Now, I'll sift ashes!" said the bunny, and he began. The dust of the ashes flew all over him, but he didn't mind that, as he was wearing his second best coat, with the red, white and blue patches on, that had once scared away the Pipsisewah and the fox. Only now you couldn't see the patches on account of the dust of ashes.

The bunny was sifting away, getting a lot of good coal out of the ashes, and he was thinking what he could save this way at his own hollow stump bungalow when he bought himself a sieve, when, all of a sudden, something happened.

A little while before this the bad old Pipsisewah made up his mind he'd have one more try at getting

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some souse off Uncle Wiggily's ears. He had followed the bunny from the hollow stump bungalow, and hid behind a bush when Mr. Longears was talking to Johnnie and Jackie. But the Pipsisewah didn't hear what was said.

Then, when Uncle Wiggily started off again the Pipsisewah followed. He was very hungry for souse, and soon he came to where Uncle Wiggily was sifting ashes.

But the bunny gentleman was so covered with the white dust, and his paws were so black from picking over the cinders, that the Pipsisewah didn't know him, and couldn't see the red, white and blue patches on the rabbit's coat.

"Excuse me, Mr. Ashman," said the Pipsisewah to the bunny, "but do you see Mr. Longears around here? I thought he came this way, and I'd like to meet him."

"Ha! Uncle Wiggily? No, I don't see him," said the bunny himself, and not having a looking glass, of course, he couldn't see any one but the Pipsisewah.

"Well, I guess I missed him," said the bad animal. "I'll have to go on hunting!" And away he ran, not even dreaming that he was talking to Uncle Wiggily, all covered with ashes.

"Well, it's a good thing I learned to save coal this way," said Uncle Wiggily, as the Pipsisewah disappeared in the woods. "Now I'm going to get a sieve of my own. And if the scrubbing brush doesn't rub all the red paint off the doll's nose when it washes her face for the lollypop party, I'll tell you another story about Uncle Wiggily very soon."

JOIN BOLSHIEVICS TO ESCAPE STARVATION

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27. — Information reaching the state department today from Bucharest describes the main force of the Bolshievi army in Russia as consisting of Austro-Hungarians, war prisoners, 50,000 men from the Balkan provinces, 40,000 Chinese workmen and about 500,000 Russian soldiers forced to join the Bolshievi by fear of starvation.

It is reported that food is very scarce in Moscow and even the Bolshievi are unable to obtain enough of it for themselves.

There is fear of a Bolshievi uprising in Odessa and Kiev, according to these advices.

A Swedish press report which reached the state department today described conditions in Petrograd as desperate. The captain of a Swedish steamer, which has just reached a Swedish port from Petrograd, reports that the men engaged to load his ship were so emaciated they could hardly work six hours daily. They were so hungry that they eagerly seized food from garbage barrels.

MILITARISTS IN EXILE

BERLIN, Dec. 28. — The former kaiser's chief supporters of militarism are like himself in exile.

Ludendorff is hiding in Sweden, while von Tirpitz fled to Switzerland. Von Papen, former military attache at the German embassy in Washington, is supposed to be in Constantinople, and Boy-Ed, former naval attache in the United States, has retired to a Baltic island.