

An Unexpected Confession;

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

CHAPTER XXVII.—(Cont'd)

She returned with the sparkling nectar, and watched her companion with unalloyed pleasure as she sipped it with an air of intense enjoyment, telling her meanwhile something of her experiences since leaving her Western home.

"But how do you happen to be going to Europe?" Miss Percival inquired curiously, as she drained the last drop from her glass and passed it back to Esther.

"Oh, during the last few weeks I helped to take care of a rich gentleman—an Englishman—who had rooms in the house where I lodged. He died recently, leaving me some money, and now I am going home with his friend and lawyer, to attend school for a few years," she explained.

"Humph! How much money did he leave you?" demanded the spinster, inquisitively.

"I do not know just how much there will be when everything is settled," Esther replied, with demure evasiveness.

"Well, I'm glad you're going to have a little easier time of it for a while," said Miss Percival; "you deserve it, and I'm glad, too, that you're going to use your money sensibly and get a good education. It seems to be your lot, though, to have to take care of sick people, and I should imagine you would begin to feel that you have had about enough of that kind of work. What do you intend to do after you graduate?"

"Oh, Miss Percival, that is looking a long way ahead," said Esther, flushing at the question.

"Don't you think one shrinks from peering so far into the future? I only know that for the next few years, I expect to study very hard, for I have a lot of lost time to make up in that line."

"Well, I think you are a downright plucky girl," said her companion, approvingly, "and I hope you will succeed in whatever you undertake. If you improve mentally in the next three years, as you have improved physically during the last two, you'll be a fine woman, and perhaps you'll make a good match, and won't have to work for your living."

"It is somewhat doubtful about the match," said Esther, a slight shadow flitting over her face; "but have always wanted to make the utmost of myself, although, thus far, I have seemed to be somewhat handicapped. How does the champagne affect you?" she asked, in conclusion, to change the subject.

"First-rate! I have not felt so comfortable since we started," Miss Percival responded, with a sigh of content, but bestowing a longing glance upon the empty glass in Esther's hands.

"Then I am going to prescribe still further for you," said her young nurse, smiling persuasively.

"All right; I'm willing, for I believe I've got into pretty good hands," was the appreciative reply, for the ancient maiden, under the influence of the exhilarating beverage, was in an unmistakably peaceful frame of mind.

"Well, then, I am going to help you dress, Miss Percival, and have a couple of stewards carry you on deck, to get a whiff of fresh air."

"Oh, I never could—the woman began, with a shiver.

"Oh, yes, you can," Esther resolutely interposed; "it is just what you need to build you up. The day is lovely, though cold; but, if you are well wrapped, I know you will enjoy it. Come, now—tell me where your things are, and let me help you into them."

Miss Percival demurred for a while longer; but Esther finally carried her point, and in less than half an hour the timorous invalid was comfortably settled in a sheltered nook on deck, taking in strength with every breath and even showing a bit of color in her sallow cheeks.

Before night she seemed like a different woman, and had walked about a little, leaning upon the arm of Mr. King.

She clung tenaciously to Esther, after that, and the kind-hearted girl found she had her hands full; but she was so accustomed to doing for others it had become almost second nature, and she did not begrudge the lonely traveller a single attention.

But she did get out of patience with her, and thoroughly indignant as well, when, on the last morning of the voyage, she met the stewardess coming out of the woman's stateroom with a very red face and muttering angrily to herself as having received only a couple of shillings for all the time and service she had bestowed upon her.

"Well, miss, I suppose I shouldn't have minded it so much if I hadn't seen her purse chock-full of gold and bank notes," the

stewardess explained, as Esther inquired what was troubling her.

"That is rather a meager allowance," she observed, with curling lips, in view of Miss Percival's meanness; "but," she added, with an alluring smile, "I have discovered that she is an old friend, so let me make up what she ought to have given you," and she slipped a couple of gold pieces into the woman's hand.

The tired face before her flushed with mingled surprise and delight.

"Two pounds!" she exclaimed; "I'm afraid, miss, that's too much, for I haven't done a blessed thing for you since the second day out."

"Never mind; you are very welcome," said Esther, kindly.

"It isn't fair, though, for you to pay other people's debts," was the doubtful response; "but, you see, I've a sick daughter at home, and all I have for our living is what the passengers give me, back and forth."

"Do you live in London?" Esther inquired.

"Yes, miss; but I'd be glad if I could get Nell into the country; poor folks have to do as they can, though."

"You must give me your address, for I am going to be in London for a while, and I will go to see your daughter some day," Esther returned, with ready sympathy.

"You are very good," said the weary mother, tears springing to her eyes. "We live in Jacobson court, No. 5, up three flights, and it would do Nell's heart good to see a bright, comely face like yours."

"I'll surely go to see her," replied Esther, making a note of the address, and then she passed on her way, her face glowing with delight, her eyes shining with enthusiasm.

"Oh, it is just lovely to have plenty of money!" she murmured, with a sigh of keen enjoyment. "I wouldn't have missed seeing that poor woman's anxious, disappointed face grow bright and hopeful for the world. And yet I can hardly realize that I—who have had to pinch all my life—have it in my power to make other people so happy in this way."

But, better than all, although she was unconscious of it, was the fact that Miss Percival had overheard all that had passed between her and the stewardess.

She had caught the sound of voices outside her door, and, being curious to know what was being said, she had put her ear to the keyhole and listened.

A sense of shame suffused her face with a hot flush and made her very uncomfortable, as the contrast between Esther's sweet spirit of charity and her own penuriousness was made apparent to her.

"Humph!" she muttered, irritably, as she arose from her knees, "maybe she's got money to burn; but I haven't. She's true blue, though."

A little later Esther came upon her, sitting by herself on deck, a grave and preoccupied look on her thin face.

"A penny for your thoughts, Miss Percival," she gaily cried, as she leaned over the back of her chair, and, gazing brightly down into her eyes, smoothed a stray lock of hair from her cheek.

"Well," said the woman, with a tired sigh, "if I could get rid of them for a penny, I'd be very willing to sell them."

"What! Are they so burdensome as that?" questioned the girl, merrily.

She was very light-hearted and happy, for after her little experience with the stewardess, she had indulged herself still further in the luxury of dispensing her bounty among a couple of stewards, who had been kind to her, and some steerage passengers, in whom she had become especially interested during the voyage.

"Let me be your father-confessor for the time being, and absolve you from your load," she concluded, in the same strain.

"Well, then, some time I am going to tell you a secret," thoughtfully observed the spinster—"now now—the next time I see you, perhaps; but I'd like to ask you a question now—"

"Yes," Esther, encouragingly, as she appeared to falter.

"Suppose, if you can—that you were an old woman, like me," pursued the spinster, with a sigh, "and that away back in the past you had done something, which, though it had never been found out, you knew was a great wrong to another, what would you do?"

Esther came around to the woman's side and knelt upon the deck, thus bringing her lovely, earnest face upon a level with that of her companion.

"Dear Miss Percival, do you really want me, who am so much younger than you, to tell you what I think should be done in such a case?" she earnestly inquired.

"Yes, or I should not have asked you."

"Well, then, if it were possible to right the wrong, I should make a clean breast of everything, and free my conscience of its burden."

"Humph! I might have known that you would say that," was the somewhat snappish retort.

"But you asked me," said Esther gravely.

"I know I did; but let me tell you, Esther Wellington, I have a terrible secret on my conscience—a secret that I have borne for nearly forty years, and it isn't an easy matter for a woman of my age and spirit to eat humble pie. There—Mr. King is looking for you; go to him and leave me alone, for I don't feel like talking to anyone just now."

Esther saw that she was deeply agitated, and her tenderest sympathies were aroused for the lonely, burdened woman.

She leaned forward, softly touched her scarlet lips to the wrinkled, averted face, then, springing to her feet, she went to meet Mr. King, who had come to tell her that it was almost time to land, and she had better get her belongings in order as soon as possible.

She told him that they were all ready, and she would bring them at once.

After she had done so, several of the passengers gathered about her to exchange farewells, and while thus engaged the steamer touched her pier.

Of course confusion reigned supreme for a while after that, and while Mr. King was looking for their trunks, Esther went below again to see if she could assist Miss Percival in any way.

She was both astonished and dismayed to find her stateroom empty—the woman and every article she possessed having disappeared.

She rushed back on deck, hoping to find her there; but she was nowhere visible—she had mysteriously vanished, without a word of appreciation or farewell to her or to anyone!

(To be continued.)

FADS OF MURDERERS.

Their Thoughts Turn Mostly Towards Food.

Oscar Slater who murdered Miss Gilchrist in her Glasgow flat, proved himself a typical dandy even in the condemned cell, and also a stickler for the properties. He insisted, for instance, from the very beginning, in being called "Mr. Slater, and each morning he changed his linen, varied his lookwear, and demanded polished boots.

Similar exhibitions of strutting, peacock vanity are not uncommon on the part of men doomed to die on the gallows. Wainwright, on the day preceding his execution, absolutely refused to dress because his clean linen had not arrived from the laundry, and a new shirt and collar had to be bought for him. When the evening arrived—his last on earth—he craved a smoke. A pipe and tobacco were brought to him, but he rejected them with disdain. He would have a cigar. And he got it.

Lefroy, who murdered poor old Mr. Gold in a railway carriage on the way to Brighton, wore an evening dress suit during the whole of the period that elapsed between his condemnation and his execution. Also he was greatly upset at the refusal of the authorities to allow him to be hanged in a new silk hat presented to him in court.

As a rule, however, the thoughts of the condemned turn mostly towards food. Rush, the Stanfield Hall murderer, was an educated man. "I want my slippers and the Times" were his first words on returning to gaol after his conviction. But a little later he called for pen and paper, and wrote out an order for his next day's dinner, "Pig and plenty of apple sauce."

In those days it was the custom to give capital convicts whatever they asked for in the way of food. But the rule was abolished soon afterwards, one of the first delinquents to come under the new regulations being a certain Jeffrey, who murdered his six-year-old child by hanging him in a cellar in Seven Dials. He was unaware of the alteration, and called for a roast duck directly he entered the condemned cell, and when it was refused him he behaved so violently that he had to be put in a strait-jacket.—Pearson's Weekly.

The Farm

DEMAND FOR TURKEYS.

According to reports from Great Britain and to the opinions expressed by traders in the United Kingdom who are well informed regarding the progress of the poultry and game trade, there is every indication that the supplies of British-reared turkeys this season will fall short of the demand. The weather conditions in the British Isles have been against the production of turkeys, while the grouse, partridge and similar game are by no means plentiful.

In a short time there is likely to be a strong demand for Canadian turkeys, and it is to be hoped that our sources of supply in this country will be equal to the opportunity. It is advocated that twelve birds should be packed to the case, not frozen too hard, and with positions alternately reversed.

As to whether the turkeys should be shipped feather or dressed, this is of course, a matter for arrangement between the importer and exporter, much variance of opinion having arisen in the past as to what really constitutes a dressed turkey, the idea most favored in this district being that the bird should be plucked clean up to the collar of the neck, leaving the head and wings untouched.

It may be interesting to Canadian farmers to note that not only is the demand for dressed poultry, except water fowl, likely to be very heavy this season; but there is a universal shortage of eggs. In Great Britain the importation of eggs has declined within a few months fully 7 per cent., while the prices have materially advanced. It is to be hoped that increasing numbers of Canadian farmers will give more attention to poultry-raising during 1910.

A GOOD MILK TANK.

A writer tells how to make a tank in which to cool milk. These are his directions: Where milk is kept in shot gun cans it can be kept cool by having the water run through wooden boxes two cans wide and high enough to shut slat lids over cans, long enough to hold all cans necessary. Make galvanized iron tank with inside box. Divide tank into six by two sticks to make individual stalls for each can. Divide into sections by three slats up and down right distance to keep half empty cans from tipping over. Hang slat door over each can and fasten with button. The outlet a little below top of cans and large enough to let out quite a bit of water at once when full cans are put in, otherwise the secured cans will be flooded. If in a milk house this will serve well for milk tank.

SOME GOOD ADVICE.

Nine cases out of ten where a farmer kicks about too low a test he will become reconciled if you can show him that he is getting all he is entitled to. If he is inclined to doubt your word call in a state inspector and have him make a test. If his readings are like yours (they should be) the farmer—that is the average farmer—will be satisfied and you will have no more trouble with him. It is poor policy to resent a patron's inquiry about his test by becoming angry. Explain to him as much as possible, and show him the test. He needs to be shown.

HARD-MOUTH HORSES.

An exchange is responsible for the following: Here is something of practical value to any one driving a horse that pulls on the bit. Fasten a small ring to each side of the bridle and as near the browband as possible. Pass lines through bit ring and snap them into a common jointed bit, with enable a child to hold a "puller" or hard-mouthed horse with ease under almost all circumstances. It can be used on a fast horse, in double team or on both, as desired. It is cheap and easily applied, and it won't make the mouth sore. It is better than any patent bit.

LIVE STOCK NOTES.

It is a surprise to see how many farmers neglect to keep salt in their horses' mangers. It is very inexpensive and very beneficial. A lump or chunk should be kept in every manger.

Never overload a young horse. He should never know that there is a load that he can not pull. Overloading at first is almost sure to make him a balk. Never load at first heavier than the horse that is hitched with the colt can pull alone, and this horse should always be a reliable puller.

If hens are properly cared for, they will lay eggs occasionally during the winter, but when they are forced by unnatural food and conditions to lay continually, it is at the expense of their health and vitality, and they will not lay as

Why not take a cup of BOVRIL

every morning through the fall and winter?
BOVRIL IS ALL BEEF

It contains all the nutriment of the beef in a concentrated and tasty form.

It will renew your blood and give you strength of nerve and muscle.

It will tone up the whole system.

Bovril Gives Health and Strength

many eggs the following spring and summer as will the hens that have had their natural rest and vacation.

Do not compel animals to pass the winter in uncomfortable stalls. Remember that the horse should not stand with his forefeet on a lower plane than the hind ones; the neglect of the stall is a common cause of lameness and deformities, especially in the young, growing animal. Now is a good time to fix the stalls in good shape for winter. It is none less important that the cow stalls receive attention, also, the slope should be just enough to secure good drainage, the most common defect is in having the stall too low behind.

PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS.

A Few Stories About Well-Known People.

A good story is being told of the days when the Earl of Crewe was Viceroy of Ireland. He had a considerable sense of the importance of the Viceroyalty, and when out walking one morning with a lady he passed first through a small gate. "The Prince of Wales always opens a door for me," said his companion approvingly. "That may be," returned Lord Crewe; "but I represent the Queen."

Professor John Muirhead, of Birmingham University, was once examining some children in moral teaching, and he asked them to write an essay on the three stages of life. One bright child sent in the following: "There are three stages in life. The first is when we are very young, and think of the wicked things which we shall be able to do when we are older; and this is the age of innocence. The second is when we are older, and are able to do the wicked things which we thought about when we were young; and this is the prime of life. The third is when we are dotty and repent the wicked things which we did when we were younger; and this is the dotage."

Madame Melba, the prima donna, has recently confessed that, as a child, she never possessed any dolls. "I never had a wish for dolls," she has said, "nor the time to play with them. My favorite toys were my tiny harp and violin, and in their company I spent thousands of blissful hours as a little girl. I was only four years old when my father began to teach me music, and at eight I could play almost any piece at sight. At twelve I was leading soprano in a church at Albany, and a little later I became organist and choirmaster."

Here is the latest story concerning Mr. Rudyard Kipling. Recently he was a guest at a literary dinner at which one of the guests started a discussion concerning the spelling and pronunciation of the English language. "Have you ever noticed, Mr. Kipling," he said, "that in the entire English language there are only two words beginning with 'su' that are pronounced as though beginning with 'sh'! Those two are sumach and sugar. Having made an exhaustive study of the subject, you may take it from me that this is so." Bored though he was, Kipling's politeness did not desert him. Assuming an expression of interest, although his eyes twinkled behind his glasses, he quietly asked, "Are you sure?"

Cheer up! All the good people don't die young; lots of them live to a ripe old age and die poor.

The life of a famous artist is not always a bed of roses, and Mischa Elman, the famous violinist, once had a somewhat nasty practical joke played upon him by some musical students. They became jealous of his superior talent, and determined to take a mean revenge. At one of his concerts he retired to a small room at the back of the building in order to run through an especially difficult passage in a piece he was to play during the evening. While he was engaged in doing this, the key was turned in the door, making him a prisoner. "I tried in vain to escape," says Mischa Elman, "and presently heard voices calling 'Mischa! Mischa!' But it was not until the audience and orchestra had waited

over twenty minutes that I was found and released."

AN ADEPT IN CRIME.

Most Notorious of Spanish Bandits in the Toils.

Jose Tsaisra, the boldest and most dangerous of Spanish bandits, has been captured at Algeciras.

The history of this criminal is remarkable. Twenty years ago he killed a priest at Palau and burned the corpse. For this he was condemned to death, but was pardoned while on his way to execution. He was transported to the prison at Ceuta, but soon effected his escape.

Then for some time he lived among the Moors, but so numerous were his depredations that he was forced to flee. Shortly after he fell into the hands of the Spanish authorities, but succeeded in escaping a second time, though in so doing he was severely wounded.

His next step was to ingratiate himself with the Moorish bandit Valiente, but his desperate robberies and crimes eclipsed those of that blood-thirsty ruffian. Valiente became jealous of Tsaisra, and sent him to Tangier where the engaged himself to an agriculturist in a large way. Soon the bandit had plundered his employer to such an extent that the latter denounced him to the authorities, and he had to take refuge in flight.

Tsaisra's next scene of operations was Guadajajara, where he met a former dissolute companion. The two quarreled, and Tsaisra killed his old friend with a couple of revolver shots. The police arrested him and were conveying him to Madrid by train when he jumped from the carriage, and badly injured himself in the fall. He managed, however, to break his chains, and drag himself to Gerona. After his recovery he began a series of robberies—in one case raiding a tax office and getting away with £2,000—but he again fell into the hands of the police. He was taken to Ceuta, but last July he made his fourth escape.

GLORIOUS PIG STICKING.

An East Indian Sport Full of Thrills and Danger.

Of all sports the most exciting, the most wildly exhilarating, says a writer in Bally's Magazine, is surely pig sticking. While waiting for the beaters to come up when driving for deer or bison or tiger, the pulses gallop, time flies and excitement quivers in every nerve and muscle, but it is nothing to the tension attendant on the wait at the edge of the jungle for the break of the grey boar as he comes out, usually in a reluctant, surly manner, and proceeds to cross the open towards the next bit of cover.

Then the gathering up of your reins and the fresh grasp of your spear as you look with straining eyes—now in the direction of the captain of the hunt for the signal to go, now to the animal itself, inwardly praying that he may not turn back into cover. And then when the word "Ride!" is given—the mad rush, the utter inability to see anything to stop you, the overpowering anxiety to heat every one, he it your greatest friend or greatest enemy, and get first spear.

Your heart is in your head. There is nothing in the world to you but you lanky grey monster striding away in front and your frantic desire to run him through. Hours are lived in moments. Your horse and you are one animal, with but one unfulfilled wish in the world, a wish you are both doing your very utmost to gratify.

In not other sport perhaps is there so much real danger, yet, strange to say, accidents are really very few. I have ridden in cold blood—very carefully—over ground that I and my comrades have ridden over helter skelter after a pig previously, and to say that I have been astonished is but to describe my feelings in the very feeblest way. How the horses kept their footing it is impossible to say. All I know is that they did.

We worry too much about the expected that never happens.