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CHAPTER IX.

Spells.

THERE was a dinner that included creations not found in cheap boarding houses—fried chicken, for example, tender and flaky and brown, and crisp waffles with honey, and sweet potatoes in the southern style.

Then there were cigars, mild and very good, smoked on the porch, both ladies protesting that they liked the fragrance of tobacco. And then the host, with the air of having come to the real business of the meeting, rose and said:

"Shall we have some music now?" "Oh, by all means!" said David politely, wondering how much credence he ought to place in the advance notices.

They went into the parlor, where Jonathan turned to Miss Summers. "Do you feel like singing this evening?"

"Yes," she said and went at once to the piano.

She played a few chords softly, and then her voice rose in a low crooning note that went straight to David's heart.

For she sang as the thrush sings—because God had put music in her heart and shaped her throat to give forth pure rich liquid sounds and meant her to be revealed through song. And that evening in the simple little slumber song she sang first there was no faltering or roughened note to tell that part of her gift had been taken from her. While she sang there was nothing in the world but melody and the rest of which she sang—and the singer.

She ended. But over at least one of her audience the spell of her voice lingered. For a long moment David sat motionless, lips parted, staring wonderingly at her even after she had swung around to face them.

"Why—he stammered foolishly—

"why—I didn't think—"

The rose pink in her cheeks became rose madder, and it was easy to see that she was happy over something. "Oh," she said, "it just happens to be one of my good days! Sometimes my voice leaves me in the middle of a note and lets me down flat." She laughed as though there were humor in that.

David did not laugh. He saw no humor in that. He could not believe that it had ever happened.

And so she became the iris girl. But he did not suspect that yet. He was not looking for iris girls. It is much to his credit.

They did not notice the excitement glistening in Jonathan's eyes.

"You have been practicing again," he declared.

"Just a little. And only for the fun of it. Not in earnest, of course. It's your turn now."

He said no more about her practice, but got out his violin, tuned it carefully, opened a book of music before her and waited for her to play the prelude. Then, tucking the violin under his chin with an eager, caressing gesture, he began to play.

That was a night of wonders to David. He was transported from a world of failures and disappointments into a

delectable land where a dinky little man, armed with nothing but a horse-hair bow and his own nimble fingers, compelled a gut strung box to sing songs of love and throb with pain and dark passions and splendid triumphs. That is always magic, though some call it genius. And the magic did not cease there. It touched the player—transformed him. The homely manikin, a bit ridiculous with his mannerisms and whiskers, a trifle too obvious in his good will to others, disappeared. Where he had been stood a man strong but fine and gentle in his strength, proud and passionate, as strong men are apt to be, but brave enough to turn willingly from his chosen path



That Was a Night of Wonders to David.

because another way seemed best. David, watching the player's swaying body and transfused face, understood, as even the blind little mother could never understand, how much her son had given to her.

"If only he could be playing always!"

Jonathan's mother slept. But for two hours the man who was no longer manikin and the girl who in real life was only a frail little bookkeeper played to David—a brilliant polonaise, a nocturne that was moonlight and shadow set to music, a concerto that the masters attempt, a few noble old classics. Between them she sang thrice, songs chosen by Jonathan, each a little more taxing than the one before. Not once did she falter, and only once, in the last song, where her contralto voice had to take a flat above middle c, was there a hint of strain.

More than rare harmonies and melodies and rhythms were coming to David. Player and singer, though they did not know it, were giving themselves to him. This was the man and that the girl whom—rather patronizingly, as though he were conferring a favor—he had let proffer their simple, unaffected friendship! "He gave up his work of his own accord for that poor old woman who can't even guess at what it cost him. She was forced out of her when success was in sight. I don't know which is worse. And they don't make gloomy grandeur out of it."

The last song, to which Jonathan improvised an obbligato, ended the music. Esther—for that was her name—pointed in dismay toward the clock and the sleeping hostess.

"Thank you," said David from his heart. He was thanking them for more than the music.

Mrs. Radbourne stirred, yawning daintily. "Are you stopping so soon? My dear, you sang very prettily. Jonathan, you surpassed yourself, particularly in the Largo. I remember Ole Bull in '67."

When that anecdote was concluded the guests rose to leave. Because it was very late Mrs. Radbourne prevailed upon Esther to stay overnight. David would not be persuaded. So they gathered around him at the door. And, having shaken hands, he said again:

"Thank you. And I should like to say—"

A sudden awkward lump jumped into his throat. He began anew, "I should like to say—"

But what he would like to say would not be said. "Good night," he forced out abruptly and hurried into the night.

David walked home. When that absurd lump had been conquered he began to whistle determinedly, as became a young man who was no longer to make gloomy grandeur out of his failure. He kept it up until he reached the apartment and its chill loneliness smote him.

"Oh, Shirley," he cried, "if only you were!" And that was another saying

he did not complete, because it might have been lacking in loyalty.

A new tenant for the apartment had been found. The next Saturday David turned the key for the last time on a scene of defeat. He was not sorry to leave. That night he took a train for an over Sunday visit with Shirley. She had been urging him to come.

"I know it's an extravagance," she wrote. "All the nice things are. But David's heart cut no capers at that even before he read what followed. 'I'm afraid people will think it queer, your not coming, and of course I can't tell them it's because we are poor.'"

It was an unsuccessful trip from the beginning, though Shirley, all smiles and exclamations, met him at the station and hugged him so hard that she wrinkled his collar. She took him to Aunt Clara's in that lady's new car, saying, "Home, Charles," as if she had been born to automobiles and chauffeurs. There the day was taken up



"When do you think Mr. Radbourne will raise your salary?"

by many guests, including the resplendent Sam Hardy, in cutaway and silk waistcoat, New York made, that made David feel shabbier than he looked—come to inspect Shirley's husband. The only real "aside" he had was with Aunt Clara, who quizzed him concerning the state of his debts.

"You are doing quite well," she was pleased to approve. "I begin to believe there's something in you, after all."

"Thank you," David murmured as politely as the case allowed.

"Now don't get huffy with me, young man," she said. "That's saying a great deal, from me to you. You can't expect me to fall on your neck."

"Not exactly," said David. "Sounds much like 'God forbid!' which isn't grateful. You've much to thank me for if you only knew it. Shirley's better off here—and you're much better off having her here—than back there pinching pennies with you. There are some things Shirley never could understand."

David answered nothing, but a little voice within was piping: "It is true! It is true!"

Aunt Clara looked at him sharply, then suddenly, to her own great surprise, blew a trumpet blast from her long nose and said:

"Tut, tut! Don't mind my impertinent old tongue. I like you better than I sound. You may never set the river afire, but you have a pretty patience I never had. And I could be a fool over you if I let myself. Do you want me to send her back home? I will if you say the word."

David hesitated a moment.

"Do you want her to go?"

"No," said Aunt Clara. "Shirley can be good company when things go to her taste."

"Does she want to go?"

"If she does," said Aunt Clara, quite herself once more, "she's bearing up under the disappointment remarkably well—for Shirley. I take it my question is answered."

Shirley and David went to the station as they had gone from it—alone in Aunt Clara's car. All the way he was trying to tell her of the new resolve he had taken when Jonathan and Esther Summers made music for him. It was strangely hard to tell.

"Shirley, I'm afraid you thought I was pretty babyish—about giving up my profession. I—I was babyish. I'd like you to know I've got my nerve back."

"Shirley was very sweet about it. 'I did think you were a little foolish to take it so hard, dear, when the old architecture never brought us anything but disappointments. I always knew you would come to look at it sensibly.' And she dismissed the subject with the carelessness it may have deserved. 'When do you think Mr. Radbourne will raise your salary?'"

"Probably before I have earned it."

"David, do you think we'll ever be rich?"

"I suppose not. There seems little chance of it."

She sighed.

"There is nothing in the world but money, is there?"

Tears of self pity were coming into her eyes. "It's terrible, having to look forward to being poor forever."

(To Be Continued)

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CONDITIONING HORSES

Must Start Four to Six Weeks Before Spring Work Begins.

Time Now to Build Hotbeds—How to Construct It, Ventilation and Watering Most Difficult Problems, Injure Early Vegetables.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

THE experienced farmer knows the importance of having his horses in the best possible condition to stand the strenuous work of spring. Upon his horse power depends, in no small degree, his success in getting his seed sown early in a well-prepared seed bed in the proper tith to bring best possible returns, for early seeding and a deep, fine seed-bed mean more bushels in the granary in the fall.

The actual practice of conditioning for spring work should commence from four to six weeks before the land is likely to be ready for the plough or cultivator. All changes in feeding should be made gradually. Straw in the roughage ration should gradually be replaced by hay until finally nothing but good quality hay is being fed. Careful feeders generally save their best hay for the spring work. The horse that has been getting little or no grain must not be immediately put on a full ration. Commence with a small feed, say half a gallon of rolled oats or, at most, twice per day and gradually increase this as spring draws near until the horse is approaching full feed. While the horse is still idle the percentage of roughage fed to the whole ration may be continued large. That is, a full feed of concentrates is not necessary until work begins but something approaching a full feed should be reached just before seeding opens. Once hard work has begun the grain or concentrate ration must be gradually increased and the roughage proportionately decreased. The more severe the labor the smaller the proportion of roughage and the larger the proportion of concentrates should be fed. From eight to fourteen pounds of oats per day, according to weight of animal, should be enough for the average farm horse just before seeding starts and something in the neighborhood of one pound to one and one-half pounds of roughage per 100 pounds of the animal's weight should be fair feeding. Regular cleaning is important as it aids shedding and improves the coat of the animal. As the feed is increased so should the exercise increase.

Farm teams should be hitched daily during the "conditioning" period that their muscles become hardened and that their shoulders gain the power of resistance to prevent galls and sore later on. Preparation for the spring work should be a fleshing and hardening process, and it cannot be accomplished without good feeding, grooming and regular light work in harness. When heavy work begins, gradually increase the grain feed up to from ten to eighteen pounds daily according to the weight of the horse, and the hay to such an extent that the animal is getting a total ration of grain and roughage of from two to three pounds per hundred pounds of horse, this depending on condition and amount of work done. Always give plenty of pure water, mostly before feeding grain if possible.—Prof. Wade Toole, O. A. College, Guelph, Ont.

Starting Early Plants.

Growers desire to have vegetables as early as possible, and for this reason it is necessary to start plants like cabbage, cauliflower and beets in hotbeds. Others like tomatoes and peppers have too long a season of growth to ripen a sufficient amount of the crop to make it pay. This method gives us from four to six weeks start.

Hot beds should be on the south side of a fence or building. Obtain good fresh manure, turn twice to get fermentation well started. Put it in a pile about eighteen inches to two feet in height, and a foot larger each way than the frame, being careful to tramp it thoroughly. To do this put it up in layers of six inches. Then put on the frame, which should be eighteen inches at the back and twelve inches at the front, facing south. Put in four to six inches of soil and put on the glass. Air every day for the first four days to get rid of the gases generated by the fermentation. The soil is then raked and made ready for seed sowing.

The seed is generally sown in rows three inches apart, about 10 seeds to the inch. When the seedlings are showing the first true leaf they are transplanted to other beds, the plants being set two inches apart each way. With cabbage, cauliflower, beets and lettuce, this one transplanting is all that is necessary. Tomatoes, egg plants, pepper and such plants require two transplantings, the last one four inches apart each way, or into four inch clay pots or quart berry baskets.

Ventilation and watering are the two most difficult problems in hot-bed management. Ventilation should be given whenever possible. Even on stormy days the sash should be lifted even if it is only the thickness of a lath that is placed under it. Many growers use a piece of lath three inches long. This gives them three different distances of ventilation, and it may be laid on the glass when not in use, and will be always ready. Always have the opening away from the wind. You should also ventilate after watering to prevent scalding.

Water carefully, only give what the plant requires, especially in the early season, and only in bright days, in the morning. The plants must be dried off by night. As the plants grow the watering will, of necessity, be oftener, but care and thought should be used at all times.

—A. H. MacLennan, Vegetable Specialist.

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

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LESSON FOR MARCH 30

REVIEW.

GOD'S HAND IN A NATION'S LIFE

SELECTION FOR READING—John 24: 14-24.

GOLDEN TEXT—Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people.—Proverbs 14:34.

PRIMARY TOPIC—How God led his people (Psalms 77:20).

JUNIOR TOPIC—Recognizing God's leading.

INTERMEDIATE TOPIC—Evidences of God's guidance.

Since Israel was a theocratic nation, perhaps the best method of review will be to trace God's hand in that nation's life. Israel was led, fed, clothed and disciplined by God.

Lesson I. God's hand is clearly discernible in the experiences of Israel in Egypt. Israel was to be the religious teacher of the world, therefore the nation must sojourn in Egypt, the most advanced in learning of any nation at that time. In order that Moses the great lawgiver might be equipped with the best possible education God used Pharaoh to oppress the people. This oppression served a threefold purpose: (1) It served the testimony to the Egyptian nation that the living God was the God of Israel. The more they oppressed them, the more they multiplied. (2) It served a beneficent purpose in bringing the nation into its own. It required the crucible of suffering to bring humanity into its own. (3) It made the nation willing to leave Egypt and go to Canaan, the promised land. Had not the hand of oppression been upon them they would have chosen to remain in Goshen.

Lesson II. When Israel was ready to go to Canaan God had a leader ready for the difficult task. His parentage, education at his mother's knee and at Pharaoh's court, and communication with God in the desert of Midian had equipped him for this work.

Lesson III. Though enslaved by a powerful nation, God undertook freedom for Israel, and by ten telling strokes—the plagues—he tore the shackles from their hands and set them free. The Passover is a memorial of that blessed deliverance.

Lesson IV. God opened the Red sea and made a path of safety for Israel to cross, but overwhelmed Pharaoh and his hosts in the sea.

Lesson V. Israel bitterly complained when they faced the wilderness without food. God sent them manna and quails. The manna did not fall until they came into Canaan.

Lesson VI. God sent Jethro to give needed counsel to Moses. The strength of Moses was about to break. God took one outside of the commonwealth of Israel and through him communicated the wisdom which Moses needed to save him from collapse through overwork.

Lesson VII. At Sinai Israel is organized into a nation, and the ten commandments are given as their constitution. In this constitution is clearly set forth man's duty to God and his obligation to his fellow men.

Lesson VIII. God's hand is seen in his burning anger against the nation for turning away from him to worship the golden calf. He is a jealous God; he will not tolerate a rival.

Lesson IX. Through unbelief the spies are sent to search out Canaan. When they were urged to take possession of the land according to God's promise they rebelled. Because of this failure God caused them to wander in the wilderness for 38 years.

Lesson X. When God's disciplinary measures had run their course the people were back again upon the borders of Canaan. Joshua was chosen by God to lead the people, as Moses' time to depart had come.

Lesson XI. In the cities of refuge God provided that revenge should not take the place of justice.

Lesson XII. Before Joshua's death God through him set forth the conditions upon which the nation's welfare could be maintained, namely, wholehearted obedience to God and separation from their wicked neighbors.

A Prayer.

Our Father, we bless thee that thou hast not waited to be asked but knowing our need, hast permitted us, in thy great mercy, to make our requests known unto thee, as well as our adoration and joy in thee, so we pray thee for the things that are requisite and necessary. Thou knowest what things we have need of before we ask thee, but thou hast bidden us ask thee because thou delightest in our consciousness of dependence upon thee, and wouldst have us feel our needs that we may be fit to receive their supply. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Sphere of His Holiness.

If this sphere of his mercy and wrath, tenderness and severity, is so beautiful, what shall be the splendor of the sphere of his holiness? What the glory of the presence chamber, judged by the excellence of this distant boundary lodge?

Going to Church.

We cannot take advantage of the church without going to church, any more than we could take advantage of a week-day school, without going to classes each day.



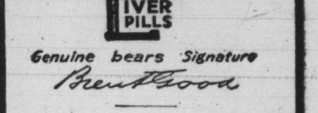
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Two Brave Seamen Commended.

Two men of the United States navy have recently been commended for risking their lives to save shipmates. Turner S. Lux, boatswain's mate, national naval volunteers, saved a painter who fell overboard from the United States Steamer Houston. A life belt had been thrown to the man, but he failed to grasp it and was going down for the second time when Lux came to his rescue. Lux gave as his nearest kin G. H. Lux, 1827 Valencia street, Birmingham, Ala. A similar service was performed by Chief Boatswain John M. Penix, whose mother, Mrs. Mary Stout, lives in Kingston, Ala.

First Drink Merely a Sample.

It was a hot day, and two sailors had just been released from a long spell of duty on a mine-sweeper. They made a bee-line for the first public-house they saw, and one of them ordered two quarts of ale. The men emptied their mugs in one draught while the barmaid looked on in undisguised admiration.

The man who had paid stood for a second or two wiping his lips meditatively, and then turned to his comrade with a grin.

"Tain't so bad, Bill, is it?" he remarked. "Shall we 'ave some?"—London Tit-Bits.

Inconsistent.

Doctor—Well, now remember what I said. Just take your wife and start on a vacation.

Patient—But, doctor, you spoke of rest.—Boston Transcript.

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