

Captain Olcutts served in the same regiment all through the stirring time of the Mutiny. He took part in many severe engagements, in which he displayed all the virtues of a good soldier. He was well supported by his men, and generally succeeded in all he undertook.

After the Mutiny was subdued he came to England on furlough to see his father and family. He was Major then. His stay in England was a very short one, for though a young man he was so strongly recommended by gentlemen of influence in India, both military and civil, as an officer likely to do good service in the pacification of the country, that he was made administrator of a large province, with the rank of Colonel.

Col. Olcutts was quite as successful with the natives as he had been with his soldiers. They trusted him entirely, and from being disaffected they became loyal and true both to their chief and the British Government.

After five years Col. Oldcutt came to England again, when he was raised to the rank of General, and knighted. He had a longer stay this time, for his province was in a state of peace and contentment, and when he returned to India he was accompanied by a daughter of his old friend, General Courtenay, as his wife. She was a good wife and mother, and he was a good husband and father, and they both devoted themselves to their several duties, at the same time trying to benefit everyone who came within the sphere of their influence.

A Life not Lived in Vain

(By Miss Grier, in 'The Alliance News.')

CHAPTER I.

'I say, Effie, your hair is just like a lot of curling sunbeams, and your eyes like two straight ones.'

The girl broke into a peal of merry laughter. 'What a fearful little flatterer you are, Frank,' she said; 'and oh! Frank, curly sunbeams! Whoever heard of such things?'

Frank laughed, too, but his face suddenly became grave again. 'Effie,' he said earnestly, 'you know I'm going off to school to-morrow, and mother will be left alone when Reggie goes back to college: you will go and cheer her up, won't you?'

'Of course I will, Frank dear, for I know she will miss you and Reggie terribly; and, Frank, I have got something to tell you. You know Reggie is talking of taking a practice here; at least, of going into partnership with old Dr. Reynolds when he has taken his medical degree and left the University. Well, I have promised that I will marry him then.' And having given this piece of information rather more abruptly than she had meant to, she covered her face with both her hands to hide her blushes.

'Promised to marry Reggie,' cried Frank, springing to his feet. 'Oh! I am so awfully glad, hoorah,' he shouted, dancing round her in huge delight, 'then of course you will be mother's daughter and my sister; how lovely it will all be. But I must be off now; I promised mother I wouldn't stop long because it is my last night. Good-bye, Effie, I am so very, very glad about you and Reggie.'

After a few good-byes the merry, handsome lad of fourteen went off, leaving Effie Vandeleur looking after him with kindly beaming eyes, and a loving heart, the attention of which was soon claimed by a new comer, Reginald Cramer, who quickly absorbed all her attention.

The next day Frank left his home for the first time to begin life at a public school, and his widowed mother was left alone with

a very sorrowful heart; for he was her pet and her darling, this chivalrous, spirited boy, for he had been her constant companion ever since his father's death five years before, while her elder son, Reginald, had been at school, and she knew she would miss him more than she would own, far more.

CHAPTER II.

Two years have passed since Frank first went to school, and now he is at home for his long summer holidays. Time and public school life have altered him very little; he is still his mother's pride and joy, and he is rising fast in the school. Reginald has also come home. He has finished his last term at the University, and is now about to enter into partnership with Dr. Reynolds. It is a lovely summer's evening, and Mrs. Cramer has been wandering round her beautiful little garden which overlooks the river Asher, from which the small town she lives in takes its name. Her son's arm was round her waist, and at last he had drawn her gently into the house, saying, as he closed the long French window which opened out on the trim little lawn, 'It is getting too chilly for you to be out any longer, mother; besides you are looking tired, hadn't you better go to bed?'

'Yes, dear,' she answered, 'I think I had better go. Reginald has not come in yet, but I suppose you will stay up for him? We must not expect young lovers to keep very early hours!'

'All right, mother; I will stay up for him. I have some reading I want to do.' But after he had said good-night to his mother, and the door had closed behind her, a troubled look came into his face, and he muttered to himself: 'I can't make out about Reggie, I wish he wouldn't be so dreadfully late. I don't believe it's all love-making, for the Vandeleurs don't keep such late hours as all that. Mother says she has often to go to bed before he came in while I have been away, and last time I was supposed to sit up for him he was so late that I went to bed before he came, and he didn't seem to half like it when I said something about it to him next day. He is with that young fellow, Pryce, a great deal more than I like. I can't think how Reggie can stand such a fellow! Of course, I daren't say anything to mother; she would worry herself so dreadfully.' So saying, he got his books and began to work. The night is beautifully still and calm, there is a soft murmur amongst the trees, a gentle rippling in the river. The night draws on, and yet Reginald does not come. Frank is apparently absorbed in his books, but as it becomes later he casts an uneasy glance at the clock now and then, and sometimes he goes to the door to listen for his brother's footsteps. At last he closes his books altogether and seizes his hat; he can wait no longer; he must go and find Reginald, and then when his hand is on the door handle he pauses, for he hears the unsteady steps of some man upon the road close by. 'I had better just wait till that fellow has gone past,' he says to himself, but the steps pause at the little gate, and almost before Frank knows what has happened a man has thrown himself against the half-open door, and lurched heavily into the little hall. 'What are you doing? What do you mean by this?' shouts Frank, seizing him by the shoulder. The man turns round, and Frank finds himself face to face with his brother Reginald. The two men gaze at one another, both half stupefied—one with horror, and the other with drink, and it is some time before Frank can pull himself together

enough to help his brother upstairs and into bed as quietly as possible for fear of disturbing his mother. Then he steals downstairs and bars the door, and when all is safe he goes to his own room, and flings himself down by a large chair, in which he buries his head. 'Too much, oh God! too much, oh have pity on my mother,' he moans, and there let us leave him kneeling before his God far on into the next morning, praying with a passionate entreaty that his mother might somehow be spared from this terrible blow. He knew only too well that his father had drunk himself to death, and that was the reason that no alcohol of any kind had ever been allowed within their home. In all his uneasiness about his brother he had never thought of this most terrible of all causes for it, because he had thought that, like himself, Reginald had never tasted any alcohol at all. Now, when he began to think of it, there were many things by which he might have guessed it, now that, as he said bitterly to himself, it was too late. And Effie? As he thought of her he sprang up and paced up and down the room with clenched hands, and as he did so a feeling of great anger sprang up in his heart towards his brother, which did not pass away until he went down on his knees again, when it was gradually replaced by feelings of the deepest pity and sorrow.

CHAPTER III.

The next morning Reginald came down to breakfast with a heavy, sullen face. Mrs. Cramer could not imagine what was amiss with her two sons, for she could not help noticing that all was not well with Frank, in spite of his forced efforts at cheerfulness. When Reginald left the room Frank followed him, saying, 'I must speak to you for a moment.' Reginald shrugged his shoulders and led the way into the room which had been given up to them for a long time as their study.

'Well, what do you want?' said Reginald, turning round on his brother; 'make haste, for I want to go out.' 'You know very well what I want,' said Frank, with a new look of determination on his face, though his voice was shaking; 'I want to know how long you have been going on in this way; I want to know whether you mean to break our mother's heart; I want—' 'Stop,' shouted Reggie, a very evil, passionate look coming into his face as he made a quick step towards his brother. Then he stopped suddenly, and said, as he flung himself into an easy chair, with a sneering laugh, 'Pray don't get theatrical, my dear little fellow, you haven't been brought up for it, and it doesn't suit you at all. When I want you for my "father confessor" I'll be sure and let you have a postcard.' 'Reggie,' cried Frank, his cheeks growing red and his eyes flashing. 'Yes, Frankie,' said his brother, mockingly. 'What about Effie?' Frank asked, looking straight into Reginald's face. 'That is none of your business,' he answered sulkily, but Frank could see that at the mention of Effie's name he had winced as he had done at nothing else, and Frank knew that here at least he had touched a tender point, and he immediately took advantage of it.

'Do you think it would be right for you to marry Effie when you have such a terrible habit, and she knows nothing about it?'

'Let me tell you again that it is none of your business,' said Reginald doggedly.

'But it is my business, and I mean to make it my business,' Frank answered firmly. 'Listen to me. If you don't give this up, and if you don't promise me never to