



As long as we love we serve; so long as we are loved by others I would say we are indispensable; and no man is useless while he has a friend.—*Voltaire*.

## The Leak in the Morse House Roof

By ROSE D. NEALLEY

(Continued from last week)

ELZADE lived about a mile beyond the next village. It was two miles from the Morse place to the station. Phoebe knew she could find someone at Wiley Village to carry her to her daughter's.

"Elzada ain't sick, is she?" inquired Mr. Scott.

"No, but I find I've got to see her about something, so it come to me as long 's Lonzio's gone for the day I could take the time to go over if I could find someone to drive me to the depot."

"Sure! I'll drive you down," replied Mr. Scott. "How soon will you be ready?"

"In about an hour," said Phoebe.

Elzada from her kitchen window saw the "depot waggon" turning into her door yard about noon. "Land alive!" she ejaculated, as she saw the straight black figure dismounting. "If there ain't mother! What on earth's happened, I wonder!"

Phoebe calmly greeted her daughter and deposited her wraps on the spare room bed before she made any explanation of her unexpected appearance.

"I've come to stay awhile, Elzada," she announced when she had seated herself in the big rocking chair in the sitting room. "I've left your father."

"Left father?" Elzada stared in incomprehending astonishment.

"Mother, what are you talking about?"

Phoebe went on as if she had not been interrupted. "I'm tired of being rained on through leaky roofs and spraining my ankles with the holes in the floors, and trying to do my work with a little million of cats always under foot, that oughter have been drowned long ago. I'm tired of a clutter in the yard, and of nag, nag, nagging, to get anything done. I'm going to stay here till your father comes to his senses and gets things straightened out."

"Poor father! said Elzada. "How could you leave him like that? You know he don't mean any harm."

"Now don't you fret, Elzada. I left a lot of stuff cooked up so he needn't go hungry, an' I wrote on a piece of paper, and left it on the kitchen table that I was comin' over here an' he needn't come after me till he'd mended the floor and cleared up the barnyard. I gave him plenty of warnin' before I come away what would happen if he didn't get those things done, but he thought 'twas jest talk. Now I'll take my things out of the suitcase so they won't get wrinkled, an' then I'll help you get dinner on to the table."

The next day a rainstorm set in and it rained steadily for three days.

"No chance for Lonzio to fix the roof," thought Phoebe.

Elzada was up early every morning and worked steadily all day long. Her husband owned a big farm and there was a great deal of work to be done, both inside and outside the house. Elzada could get no help, and consequently she had all the housework to do herself. She took care of the milk dishes, made butter, cooked for the hired men, washed, ironed

but oh, mother! You know how I was brought up?"

Phoebe nodded. She remembered how Elzada had been sent to play when most girls were put to washing dishes and making beds. She had always followed her father about like a pet kitten. She had been her father's chum. "Pap's little girl," he had called her, and the name had clung to her until she had become a young woman and had been courted by the most promising young man in the neighborhood; for John Stearns was called "forehanded" by the community and spoken of as a hustler.

Phoebe had been glad that John was a hustler. "Elzada won't have to live under a leaky roof and crumbling ceiling," thought her mother. "I'd never give my consent to her marrying a shiftless man."

But now Phoebe looked at Elzada and sighed. Elzada's blue eyes used to have a twinkle of fun in them, but they were sober eyes now and the blue in them was clouded. The bronze lights had departed from her brown hair, which looked lustreless and uncared for. One couldn't stop to give it a hundred strokes of the brush if one had to get up before daylight in the morning and cook a hearty breakfast for hired men.

Elzada hadn't cried for a long time, but before she knew it she found her head on her mother's shoulder and she was sobbing.

Phoebe stroked her hair. "Tbere,

p'raps, Elzada, I've been a little too hard. We can't change our natures so easily. I was born 'pisen neat' and he was born—the other way. I dunno but it's best to compromise."

"I think that's best, too," returned Elzada, lifting her head and smiling at her mother. "I think I should tell John just how I feel, too, he would compromise. He'd let the butter go—maybe, and not keep so many cows, and—"

"What time does that forenoon train go to-morrow, Elzada?" interrupted her mother.

"Never mind the train, mother," Elzada replied. "I've been thinking."

She went to her bedroom to look to work to-morrow. They'll take their dinners with them and I'll ask John to let me have old Nell and I'll drive you home. It will do me heaps of good."

Phoebe beamed at her daughter. "You was always a master-hand at plannin', Elzada. We'll start early so's to get home in time for dinner."

The next day mother and daughter drove over the country roads were impressed with the glory of the spring morning. They sniffed the fragrant air with delight. The earth was moist after the heavy rain, and the green of the young grass comes only with the spring. The willows were aglow with a golden haze. Bubbling rivulets ran in the ditches on either side of the road. The heavy clouds of old horse sank with rhythmic regularity into the soft, muddy road. Elzada's eyes were brightening, a soft pink began to tinge her pale cheeks. "I guess father'll be surprised to see us," she laughed.

Phoebe's eyes were bright, too, and she also laughed very happily. When they came in sight of home, they found the spring had thrown a glamor, too, over the weather-beaten old place. It looked picturesque in the golden light. The trees hid many an unsightly spot. The vivid green of the lilacs covered the crumbling clapboards, and concealed the broken front doorsteps.

A sweeping glance disclosed a tidy barnyard. No trace of discarded rack, broken plow or useless farm tool of any kind blotted the neatness of the enclosure.

"He's cleaned up the yard," cried Phoebe in exaltation.

"Don't it look nice!" smiled Elzada admiringly.

Phoebe clutched Elzada's arm and gasped. "Look, Elzada! If there isn't your father mending the roof!"

And, sure enough; high up above the lilacs, limned against the sky like a madonna with feet upon the clouds, stood Alonzo Morse. The big, grizzled ladder that supported him. His back was toward the approaching carriage and the steady swing of the hammer, together with his absorption in his task, had kept him from observing the arrival of his wife and daughter.

"I'm afraid he'll fall," faltered Phoebe. "Be careful not to startle him, so's he'll turn sudden."

She descended from the carriage as she spoke and walked noiselessly to the foot of the ladder. "Father," she called quietly. He didn't hear her at first, and called again.

"If it's Wilks that's," he shouted, and then looking down and seeing his wife below with upturned face full of affectionate greeting, he dropped the hammer and began to descend.

"Phoebe," he said. "It was good



The Possibilities of Vines for Home Beautifying

The vine covering the walls of this home is Japan or Boston Ivy, a vine that clings to brick or stone without assistance. The vine around the veranda are Clematis, Pansies, and Clematis Virginiana, two hardy, easy growing, free flowering and fragrant climbers. These vines are listed in almost any nursery or seed catalogue. Where could a couple of dollars be invested to better advantage than in vines to beautify the home as has been done in this case by Mr. H. Simmers, the well known seed merchant of Toronto?

and scrubbed from morning till night. Her hands were red and work-worn, her complexion faded, her hair greying.

"What makes you work so, Elzada?" queried her mother one day. "You and John have got enough ahead to take care of you and you've nary a chick nor child to provide for. Why not live easier and take comfort?"

"You know, mother, I can't get help out here in the country."

"Well, but cut down your stock; send your milk to the creamery; don't make butter."

"John thinks there's no butter like mine. He won't eat anyone's else. And he's proud of his stock and his milk farm. But all the hard work comes on me. He don't realize it. I don't like to complain, for John is a good husband and he loves me,

don't cry. We all have our troubles. P'raps mine ain't any worse than other folks'. You were petted a good deal when you were a child, Elzada. You know you were always—"

"Pap's little girl," finished Elzada, laughing through her sobs. "I guess I've never forgotten it, and I often long to be a child once more and hear him call me that. Mother, there's one thing that's of more value than being forehanded and a hustler, and that's—well, I guess it's tenderness."

Phoebe still stroked Elzada's hair with a gentle touch. It was some moments before she spoke and her voice sounded husky. She answered: "I don't know but you're right, Elzada. I've been kinder stiff in my notions sometimes."

Phoebe's rather stern but faded eyes wore a softened expression. "Your father was always tender. I guess—"

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