

he did not work out his information, but only his conclusions. My uncle began to think it was time to take me in hand.

"No, Willie," he said. "I must teach you better than that."

I expected him to begin by telling me that God made the wind; but, whether it was that what the old book said about the Prince of the Power of the Air returned upon him, or that he thought it an unfitting occasion for such a lesson when the wind was roaring so as might render its divine origin questionable, he said no more. Bewildered, I fancy, with my ignorance, he turned, after a pause, to my aunt.

"Don't you think it's time for him to go to bed, Jane?" he suggested.

My aunt replied by getting from the cupboard my usual supper—a basin of milk and a slice of bread; which I ate with less circumspection than usual, for I was eager to return to my room. As soon as I had finished, Nannie was called, and I bade them good-night.

"Make haste, Nannie," I said. "Don't you hear how the wind is blowing?"

It was roaring louder than ever, and there was the pendulum swinging away in the window. Nannie took no notice of it, and, I presume, only thought I wanted to get my head under the bed-clothes, and so escape the sound of it. Anyhow, she did make haste, and in a very few minutes I was, as she supposed, snugly settled for the night. But the moment she shut the door, I was out of bed, and at the window. The instant I reached it, a great dash of rain swept against the panes, and the wind howled more fiercely than ever. Believing I had the key of the position, inasmuch as, if I pleased, I could take the pendulum to bed with me, and stifle its motions with the bed-clothes—for this happy idea had dawned upon me while Nannie was undressing me—I was composed enough now to press my face to a pane, and look out. There was a small space amidst the storm dimly illuminated from the windows below, and the moment I looked—out of the darkness into this dim space, as if blown thither by the wind, rushed a figure on horseback, his large cloak flying out before him, and the mane of the animal he rode streaming out over his ears in the fierceness of the blast. He pulled up right under my window, and I thought he looked up, and made threatening gestures at me; but I believe now that horse and man pulled up in sudden danger of dashing against the wall of the house. I shrank back, and when I peeped out again he was gone. The same moment the pendulum gave a click and stopped; one more rattle of rain against the windows, and then the wind stopped also. I crept back to my bed in a new terror, for might not this be the Prince of the Power of the Air, come to see who was meddling with his affairs? Had he not come right out of the storm, and straight from the trees? He must have something to do with it all! Before I had settled the probabilities of the question, however, I was fast asleep.

I awoke—how long after, I cannot tell—with the sound of voices in my ears. It was still dark. The voices came from below. I had been dreaming of the strange horseman, who had turned out to be the awful being concerning whom Nannie had enlightened me as going about at night, to buy little children from their nurses, and make bagpipes of their skins. Awakened from such a dream, it was impossible to lie still without knowing what those voices down below were talking about. The strange one must belong to the being, whatever he was, whom I had seen come out of the storm; and of whom could they be talking but me? I was right in both conclusions.

With a fearful resolution, I slipped out of bed, opened the door as noiselessly as I might, and crept on my bare, silent feet down the creaking stair, which led, with open balustrade, right into the kitchen, at the end farthest from the chimney. The one candle at the other end could not illuminate its darkness, and I sat unseen a few steps from the bottom of the stair, listening with all my ears, and staring with all my eyes. The stranger's huge cloak hung drying before the fire, and he was drinking something out of a tumbler. The light fell full upon his face. It was a curious, and certainly not to me an attractive face. The forehead was very projecting, and the eyes were very small, deep set, and sparkling. The mouth—I had almost said muzzle—was very projecting likewise, and the lower jaw shot in front of the upper. When the man smiled the light was reflected from what seemed to my eyes an inordinate multitude of white teeth. His ears were narrow and long, and set very high upon his head. The hand which he every now and then displayed in the exigencies of his persuasion, was white, but very large, and the thumb was exceedingly long. I had weighty reasons for both suspecting and fearing the man; and, leaving my prejudices out of the question, there was in the conversation itself enough besides to make me take note of dangerous points in his appearance. I never could lay much claim to physical courage, and I attribute my behaviour on this occasion rather to the fascination of terror than to any impulse of self-preservation; I sat there in

utter silence, listening like an ear-trumpet. The first words I could distinguish were to this effect:—

"You do not mean," said the enemy, "to tell me, Mr. Cumbermede, that you intend to bring up the young fellow in absolute ignorance of the decrees of fate?"

"I pledge myself to nothing in the matter," returned my uncle, calmly, but with a something in his tone which was new to me.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the other. "Excuse me, sir, but what right can you have to interfere after such a serious fashion with the young gentleman's future?"

"It seems to me," said my uncle, "that you wish to interfere with it after a much more serious fashion. There are things in which ignorance may be preferable to knowledge."

"But what harm could the knowledge of such a fact do him?"

"Upset all his notions, render him incapable of thinking about anything of importance, occasion an utter —"

"But can anything be more important?" interrupted the visitor. My uncle went on without heeding him.

"Plunge him over head and ears in —"

"Hot water, I grant you," again interrupted the enemy, to my horror; "but it wouldn't be for long. Only give me your sanction, and I promise you to have the case as tight as a drum before I ask you to move a step in it."

"But why should you take so much interest in what is purely our affair?" asked my uncle.

"Why, of course, you would have to pay the piper," said the man.

This was too much! *Pay* the man that played upon me after I was made into bagpipes! The idea was too frightful.

"I must look out for business, you know; and, by Jove! I shall never have such a chance, if I live to the age of Methuselah."

"Well, you shall not have it from me."

"Then," said the man, rising, "you are more of a fool than I took you for."

"Sir!" said my uncle.

"No offence; no offence, I assure you. But it is provoking to find people so blind—so wilfully blind—to their own interest. You may say I have nothing to lose. Give me the boy, and I'll bring him up like my own son; send him to school and college, too—all on the chance of being repaid twice over by —"

I knew this was all a trick to get hold of my skin. The man said it on his way to the door, his ape-face shining dim as he turned it a little back in the direction of my uncle, who followed with the candle. I lost the last part of the sentence in the terror which sent me bounding up the stair in my usual four-footed fashion. I leaped into my bed, shaking with cold and agony combined. But I had the satisfaction presently of hearing the *thud* of the horse's hoofs upon the sward, dying away in the direction whence they had come. After that I soon fell asleep.

I need hardly say that I never set the pendulum swinging again. Many years after, I came upon it when searching for papers, and the thrill which vibrated through my whole frame, announced a strange and unwelcome presence long before my memory could recall its origin.

It must not be supposed that I pretend to remember all the conversation I have just set down. The words are but the forms in which, enlightened by facts which have since come to my knowledge, I clothe certain vague memories and impressions of such an interview as certainly took place.

In the morning, at breakfast, my aunt asked my uncle who it was that paid such an untimely visit the preceding night.

"A fellow from C——" (the county town), "an attorney—what did he say his name was? Yes, I remember. It was the same as the steward's over the way. Coningham, it was."

"Mr. Coningham has a son there—an attorney too, I think," said my aunt.

My uncle seemed struck by the reminder, and became meditative.

"That explains his choosing such a night to come in. His father is getting an old man now. Yes, it must be the same."

"He's a sharp one, folk say," said my aunt, with a pointedness in the remark which showed some anxiety.

"That he cannot conceal, sharp as he is," said my uncle, and there the conversation stopped.

The very next evening my uncle began to teach me. I had a vague notion that this had something to do with my protection against the machinations of the man Coningham, the idea of whom was inextricably associated in my mind with that of the Prince of the Power of the Air, darting from the midst of the churning trees, on a horse whose streaming mane and flashing eyes indicated no true equine origin. I gave myself with diligence to the work my uncle set me.

CHAPTER V. I HAVE LESSONS.

It is a simple fact that up to this time I did not know my letters. It was, I believe, part of my uncle's theory of education, that as little pain as possible should be associated with merely intellectual effort; he would not

allow me, therefore, to commence my studies until the task of learning should be an easy one. Henceforth, every evening, after tea, he took me to his own room, the walls of which were nearly covered with books, and there taught me.

One peculiar instance of his mode I will give, and let it stand rather as a pledge for the rest of his system than an index to it. It was only the other day it came back to me. Like Jean Paul, he would utter the name of God to a child only at grand moments; but there was a great difference in the moments the two men would have chosen. Jean Paul would choose a thunder-storm, for instance; the following will show the kind of my uncle's choice. One Sunday evening he took me for a longer walk than usual. We had climbed a little hill: I believe it was the first time I ever had a wide view of the earth. The horses were all loose in the fields; the cattle were gathering their supper as the sun went down; there was an indescribable hush in the air, as if Nature herself knew the seventh day; there was no sound even of water, for here the water crept slowly to the far-off sea, and the slant sunlight shone back from just one bend of a canal-like river; the haystacks and ricks of the last year gleamed golden in the farmyards; great fields of wheat stood up stately around us, the glow in their yellow brought out by the red poppies that sheltered in the forest of their stems; the odour of the grass and clover came in pulses; and the soft blue sky was flecked with white clouds tinged with pink, which deepened until it gathered into a flaming rose in the west, where the sun was welling out oceans of liquid red.

I looked up in my uncle's face. It shone in a calm glow, like an answering rosy moon. The eyes of my mind were opened: I saw that he felt something, and then I felt it too. His soul, with the glory for an interpreter, kindled mine. He, in turn, caught the sight of my face, and his soul broke forth in one word:—"God! Will; God!" was all he said; and surely it was enough.

It was only then in moments of strong repose, that my uncle spoke to me of God.

Although he never petted me, that is, never showed me any animal affection, my uncle was like a father to me in this, that he was about and above me, a pure benevolence. It is no wonder that I should learn rapidly under his teaching, for I was quick enough, and possessed the more energy that it had not been wasted on unpleasant tasks.

Whether from indifference or intent I cannot tell, but he never forbade me to touch any of his books. Upon more occasions than one he found me on the floor with a folio between my knees; but he only smiled and said—

"Ah, Willie! mind you don't crumple the leaves."

About this time also I had a new experience of another kind, which impressed me almost with the force of a revelation.

I had not yet explored the boundaries of the prairie-like level on which I found myself. As soon as I got about a certain distance from home, I always turned and ran back. Fear is sometimes the first recognition of freedom. Delighting in liberty, I yet shrank from the unknown spaces around me, and rushed back to the shelter of the home-walls. But as I grew older I became more adventurous; and one evening, although the shadows were beginning to lengthen, I went on and on until I made a discovery. I found a half-spherical hollow in the grassy surface. I rushed into its depth as if it had been a mine of marvels, threw myself on the ground, and gazed into the sky as if I had now for the first time discovered its true relation to the earth. The earth was a cup, and the sky its cover.

There were lovely daisies in this hollow—not too many to spoil the grass, and they were red-tipped daisies. There was besides, in the very heart of it, one plant of the finest pimpernel I have ever seen, and this was my introduction to the flower. Nor were these all the treasures of the spot. A late primrose, a tiny child, born out of due time, opened its timid petals in the same hollow. Here then were gathered red-tipped daisies, large pimpernels, and one tiny primrose. I lay and looked at them in delight—not at all inclined to pull them, for they were where I loved to see them. I never had much inclination to gather flowers. I see them as a part of a whole, and rejoice in them in their own place without any desire to appropriate them. I lay and looked at these for a long time. Perhaps I fell asleep. I do not know. I have often waked in the open air. All at once I looked up and saw a vision.

To be continued.

A professor in a certain college had taken his class out, on a pleasant afternoon, to exercise them in practical surveying. The next morning they were to be examined on the same. The first man was called up. Said the professor: "How would you go to work to survey a lot of land?" (Deep thinking, but no answer.) "If a man should come to you to get you to survey a lot of land, what would you do?" "I think," said the student, thoughtfully, "I should tell him he had better get somebody else."

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TALES

OF THE

LINKS OF LOVE.

BY ALEXANDER SOMERVILLE.

LILLYMERE.

CHAPTER XXVII.—Continued.

"Since Inkle purchased the estate they have prepared to leave and are now, as you may observe, removing the Temple on planks. They first raised it by jack-screws, laying wooden rollers under. Anchors are carried out ahead two hundred yards with a cable. A capstan, held by the anchors, is worked by horses going round as in a mill course. The capstan winding in the cable hauls forward the house. It's width covers the entire breadth of the road, as you see, sixty feet. It is about twice that length; two floors high, some of it. The rest is a hall.

To all this De Lacy Lillymere listened eagerly, and asked:

"When will the Redwald arrive at the boy's grave?"

Renshaw directing the field glass to the lone bush on side of the hill, near which gold prospectors were digging, said:

"She is there now. I see the tall figure holding the white cross that stood by the grave. She points to where friends are to dig for the boy's remains. Let us hasten up beside them."

Turning to gain an upward path, their faces came to south-west, in direction of the river. A quarter of a mile distant the temple was in view with its white cupola and gala day flags, mostly red.

The flags were displayed as tokens of defiance to enemies of the society, or of triumph that the structure had been removed from its site against a notified prohibition of the new proprietor of the estate. A point of land abutting on an angle above a slope reaching down to Rama lake was its destination; the distance to go being now a hundred feet.

Young Inkle, comprehending the illegal act, rode up to protest. Zena and other residents, who travelled as inside passengers, keeping possession, heard Inkle's demand for explanations. With head from an upper window, the lady, an elderly yet comely person, remarked quietly:

"You are looking for Anna Liffey, did you say? She is not here, sir? Look in the cellar under the bank to home; guess Anna's bones and clothes may be found there; and her beautiful form, chemically consumed, in the garden compost. Your mother is like to have good vegetables in the corn patch next season. No, young man; Anna Liffey is not here."

Cicero Jubal, a man of long thin visage, who spoke little, and then in a low soft voice, looked from another window saying:

"Nay, neow, nay; why should the ye-ung man be he-ung on a tree? Nay, don't get a halter and conduct him to the river. Explain to the gentleman, Zena, why this removal is necessary."

"Explain!" rejoined Tom, "I'll listen to anything in reason on behalf of the proprietor, my father."

"The society," said Zena, "occupied this tumble-down temple, expecting to be in legal possession of a territory of mineral lands. Ere completing the purchase it was desirable to ascertain the probable value of the mineral lands. The society had no design to remain under monarchy. They desired to find the minerals and depart to civilization, whence they came. But Mr. Inkle, being an Englishman, knew the lines of your old institutions, and how to pull lines not known to the society. Mr. Inkle got possession of the mineral lands. The society, not incorporated, failed to complete the purchase sooner. And now this tumble-down temple is all that your old institutions, and very smart father, have left the society. Guess this tumble-down temple is to go along into this waste corner, till such time as the society decides about purchasing other mineral lands. No, sir; really you needn't be at trouble to follow; Anna Liffey is not with us. Look in the compost heap, to home, for Anna's beautiful form, chemically dissolved to be in good season for the corn patch next year. Guess you have her bones and clothes."

To which Cicero Jubal, as before:

"Nay, neow, nay; why should the ye-ung man be he-ung on a tree? Nay, don't get a halter and conduct him to the river."

Inkle spurred and would have ridden past the long wooden structure to get in front, but it filled the roadway.

He dismounted, making sign to the grooms that one might come and take the horse. They did not then see him. In a rage Tom set his steel loose, and leapt the fence on foot to get ahead of the temple and stop progress.

Men of the 'leading' or 'prospecting' class sat on the rails. They heard distinctly what